



Williamstown Town Plan

April 11th, 2016

We want to thank the following people for all their help and support putting together the Williamstown Town Plan, April 2016

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VERMONT GENERAL HIGHWAY MAP

Town of Williamstown

ORANGE COUNTY

Transportation District #6

Prepared by the
Vermont Agency of Transportation
Division of Policy, Planning and Intermodal Development
in cooperation with
U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration

Mileage as of February 10, 2015

Map prepared June 09, 2015

SCALE 1:31,680



MILEAGE SUMMARY

CLASS 2		
TH-1	3,960	
TH-2	8,870	
TH-3	4,020	
TH-4	3,320	
TH-5	2,150	
TH-6	1,870	
TH-7	8,850	
TH-8	1,400	
TOTAL CLASS 2	18,240	
CLASS 3		
VT-14	6,833	
VT-64	4,223	
TOTAL STATE HIGHWAY	11,056	
TOTAL STATE	11,056	
INTERSTATE		
I-89	5,525	
TOTAL INTERSTATE	5,525	
INTERSTATE - Ramps		
I-89	1,054	
TOTAL INTERSTATE - Ramps	1,054	
TOTAL INTERSTATE	6,579	
TOTAL, TRAVELED HIGHWAYS, FEB. 10, 2015:	88,325	

(Excludes Class 4 Local Road, and Intermodal Center Mobility)

Vermont State Plane Coordinate System
North American Datum of 1983
SPCR Zone Identifier: 4400
Geodetic Reference System 80
4,000-meter grid, Easting - Northing

- ROADWAYS**
- INTERSTATE
 - STATE - HARD SURFACE OR PAVED
 - TOWN - HARD SURFACE OR PAVED
 - U.S. ROUTE
 - STATE ROUTE
 - CLASS 1
 - CLASS 2
 - CLASS 3
 - CLASS 4
 - LEGAL TRAIL
 - UNIMPROVED OR PRIMITIVE
 - IMPASSABLE OR UNTRAVELED
 - LEGAL TRAIL
 - DISCONTINUED
 - HIGHWAY CLASS CHANGE
 - RAILROAD
 - RAILROAD
 - NFR
 - SPH
 - P

- POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS**
- STATE BOUNDARY
 - COUNTY BOUNDARY
 - TOWN BOUNDARY
 - VILLAGE BOUNDARY
 - URBAN COMPACT BOUNDARY
 - WATER BODY
 - STREAM OR BROOK
 - BRIDGE OR CULVERT
 - BRIDGE OR CULVERT
 - VOBCIT BRIDGE
 - VOBCIT CULVERT
 - STATE BRIDGE OR CULVERT IDENTIFIER
 - TOWN BRIDGE OR CULVERT IDENTIFIER

- FEDERAL CLASSIFICATION IDENTIFIER**
- FAU
 - MA
 - MJC
 - MNC
 - PA

DISCLAIMER:
The untraveled highways (dashed town highways), discontinued highways, and legal trails herein are those of which the Agency of Transportation has record; others may exist.
Highway and bridge data by the Agency of Transportation. Town street structures are drawn from the Vermont Online Bridge & Culvert Inventory Tool (VOBCIT) database. All other data from the Vermont Center for Geographic Information. Only named streams are shown.

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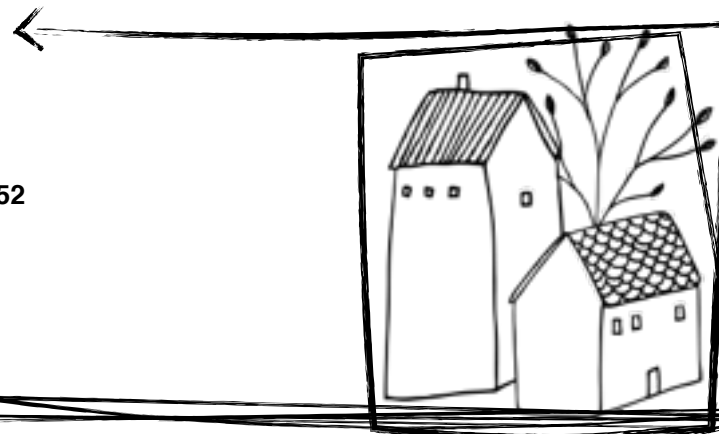
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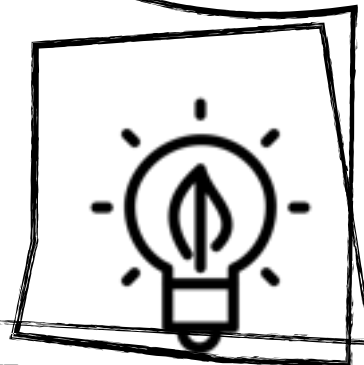
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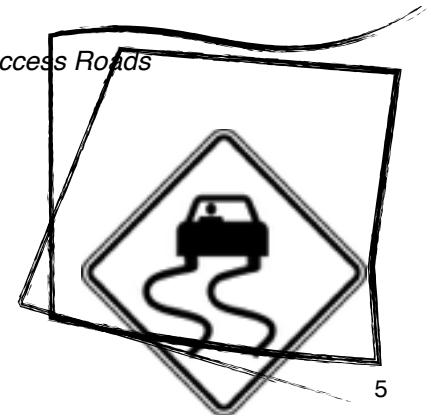
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Chapter 1. *Purpose*

A. Why Plan?

Town planning is required by law. The town plan is a major component of the information used by Act 250 commissioners in making decisions. A town plan is NOT zoning and zoning is NOT required by law.

Planning is the act of designing a strategy, in advance, to avoid errors and seize opportunities. Land use decisions made without a clear direction can result in haphazard, inefficient development. Unplanned growth can cause conflicts between neighbors, engender unnecessary public expenditures, cause environmental damage, erode the character of a community and generally reduce quality of life for residents. This document makes recommendations about how Williamstown residents and town officials can support the overall health of our town. Williamstown can achieve great things by planning, learning, growing, and prospering together.



Act 250 is Vermont's land use and development law, established in 1970. The law provides a public, quasi-judicial process for reviewing and managing the environmental, social and fiscal consequences of major subdivisions and development in Vermont through the issuance of land use permits. The Governor appoints citizens to the nine District Commissions and the Natural Resources Board. Activities include review of land use permit applications for conformance with the Act's ten environmental criteria, issuance of opinions concerning the applicability of Act 250 to developments and subdivisions, monitoring for compliance with the Act and with land use permit conditions, and public education.

B. Required Goals & Elements

Two major pieces of legislation and amendments have determined the structure for planning in Vermont. Act 250, Vermont's development review law regulates new development projects over a certain threshold size,

The Vermont Municipal and Regional Planning Act (aka 24 VSA, Chapter 117) enables municipalities to adopt local plans and land use regulation and provide guidelines for the development, adoption and enforcement of the same.

Amendments to the Act in 1988, known as Act 200, included provisions designed to help agriculture and forestry remain viable by encouraging new growth to be developed in conformance with the historic settlement pattern of compact villages and towns surrounded by countryside. Act 200 also offered incentives to towns for drafting comprehensive plans that are consistent with the state's recommendations.

C. Implementation

A municipal plan is a guidance document. It is generally not legally binding. The Town Plan, however, can provide a town with a legal framework for any municipal ordinance. In addition it has legal standing in the Act 250 process. Williamstown intends to use this Plan for the following purposes over its five year statutory life:

- Informing residents and others about Williamstown
- Guiding the community towards its short (5 year) and long-range goals by assisting town officials in making smart and responsible decisions for community development
- Providing the town with a unified voice in the Act 250 and Act 248 proceedings and a framework for evaluating development projects
- Ensure the continuing viability of the community's cultural, historical, and rural character
- Helping the Town qualify for, and prepare, state and federal planning grants
- Prioritizing and planning for public expenditures

- Providing strategies for the revitalization of Williamstown Village
- Balancing competing interests and demands in a fair and equitable manner that recognizes the rights of individuals and protects the welfare of the general public

D. The Planning Process

The Vermont Municipal and Regional Planning Act (24 VSA, Chapter 117) states that municipal plans must be re-examined, updated, and readopted every 5 years. This document replaces Williamstown's previous plan, adopted on June 11, 2010. During the development and preparation of that plan, members of the Williamstown Planning Commission met with the community to gather information through focus groups, individual interviews, and surveys. They also held a public map display and a workshop on land use. Answers to open-ended questions reflected a wide range of views and provided valuable insights. During this same time period, the newly developed Economic Development Committee also distributed a survey. The information gathered identified a community vision and the results were incorporated in the plan.

Among the common values and themes expressed in the surveys were:

- Protecting the lifestyles and traditions of Williamstown
- Promoting good citizenship
- Revitalizing the Villages
- Preserving Williamstown's rural character
- Improving the business climate
- Providing citizens with a good education
- Protecting the public health, safety and welfare

Historically residents have wanted all of these goals accomplished in a cost effective manner and with minimal infringement on individual land rights. The current planning commission believes these ideals still reflect the opinions and desires of the community. As such, they will be guiding principles for this, the 2016 Plan, as well.

E. Vision Statement

Change is inevitable, Williamstown like other communities is changing. A town plan is a way for us all to visualize what we want Williamstown to be in 5, 10, 25 or perhaps 50 years from now. It's where we want to be living in the short-term and where our children will be living. Williamstown is a rural community adjacent to Berlin, Barre and Montpelier with mostly homes and little in the way of business. The Planning Commission would like Williamstown to be a vibrant village center with an outlying landscape of open farm lands and forests.

Your planning commission feels that the road toward that future landscape starts now, with this plan. We hope you will join us in envisioning the town's future.



Chapter 2. Community Profile

A. Overview

Williamstown was established on November 6, 1780 (by Elijah Paine who later became Justice of the State Supreme Court and a United States Senator) and was chartered on August 9, 1781 by the Republic of Vermont. The first settlements took place in 1784 on the West Hill, along the present day Stone Road.

The town is located in the northwest portion of Orange County, abutting Washington County on its northeastern and western borders. Covering an area of around 28,180 acres (40 square miles), it has a quiet beauty conjuring images of buckets hanging from sugar maple trees and stone walls following pasture lines; with its patchwork field patterns so very common in New England. It is surrounded by the towns of Berlin and Barre Town (on the north), by Northfield (on the west), by Washington (on the east) by the towns of Brookfield and Chelsea (on the south). The Green Mountains shape much of the town's land into hills and valleys. Near the middle of the southern boundary is a deep gorge known as Williamstown Gulf that has cut its way through two steep mountains.

Williamstown is fortunate to have beautiful geography, rural qualities and a convenient centralized location with a good balance of residential, small businesses, agricultural, recreational, forested, and open spaces. It is only a short drive to cultural facilities (Barre Opera House and others), Berlin Mall, Central Vermont Hospital, outdoor activities, small specialty shops located in surrounding towns, and nearby New York, New Hampshire and Canada.

The town is anchored by two villages, Foxville and Williamstown. Foxville, locally known as Graniteville, is located about 4 miles from Williamstown Village and borders the town of Barre. A dense cluster of residential uses define the hamlet. Forests in this area are shaped by discarded granite deposits from neighboring quarries. Williamstown Village is situated 6 miles south of Barre City and 13 miles southeast of Montpelier. The village sits along a valley floor at the base of a long, winding hill and is accessed from Interstate 89 via

Route 64 or by Route 14. Chartered in 1781, the village has managed to retain some of its historical features. The following old Main Street homes and buildings remain: the churches, Beckett Block, the town hall, Historical Society, and feed store buildings. Williamstown Village offers a mix of stores, library, homes, businesses, churches, and town offices, but has no traffic signals and people can still park along Main Street. (See Chapter IX)

B. Demographics

1. Population Trends

Williamstown's current total 3,376 residents population until recently, has grown steadily since the first settlers arrived around 1780, changing it from a wilderness to a modern community. According to the U.S. 2010 Census, Williamstown's population grew by 85 between 2000 to 2010, a change of .04%.

Only five of Vermont's 14 counties have more residents today than they had when the 2010 Census was taken. In fact, Williamstown population almost tripled from 1,038 in 1980 to 3,389 in 2010. The Vermont Department of Health estimate suggests that population growth in Williamstown has stalled in the current decade. In spite of this lull, CVRPC projections (made by the consulting firm EPR) forecast that Williamstown's population will be around 4,224 in 2020. If Department of Health estimates are accurate, this projection appears highly unlikely.

One of the sources of the declining population is that deaths outnumber number births; what demographers call the natural rate of increase—or in this case, the natural rate of decrease. In over half of Vermont's counties deaths outnumber births, and even where population is growing, in Addison and Grand Isle Counties, the difference between births and deaths is very small. Williamstown lost 40 residents in 2014 and 26 new residents were welcomed.

If you drew a circle, centered in Burlington, with a radius of about 40 miles, it would take in all of the growing counties in the state — Addison, Franklin, Grand Isle and Lamoille counties. Orange County ranks 8th with a loss of 82 residents or a .03% decline.



2012 Population Growth and Population Statistics	Williamstown, VT 05679	Vermont	United States
Total Population	3,281	626,874	312,796,426
Square Miles	39.12	9,627.16	
Population Density	83.90	68.00	88.60
1990 Population	2,727	562,873	248,704,247
2000 Population	3,124	608,820	281,421,535
2010 Population	3,252	625,741	308,745,538
5 Year Population Projection (2017)	3,297	630,509	324,478,770
Population Change Since 1990	20.35%	11.37%	25.77%
Population Change Since 2010	0.91%	0.18%	1.31%
Forecasted Population Change by 2017	0.49%	0.58%	3.73%
Median Age	42.40	42.00	37.50

Williamstown had a “rural” status until our population grew in excess of 2,500 residents in 1990, which resulted in changing our town’s legal status into an urban municipality. Residents, however, still identified with their rural roots and were uncomfortable with the status change. Accordingly, the town voted on the question at town meeting by Australian ballot {24 V.S.A § 4303 (10)} converting itself back into a rural town.

According to the state, “A rural town is described as a municipality with a population of less than 2,500 persons, or one that has voted, by Australian Ballot to be considered a rural town.

2. Population Density and Characteristics

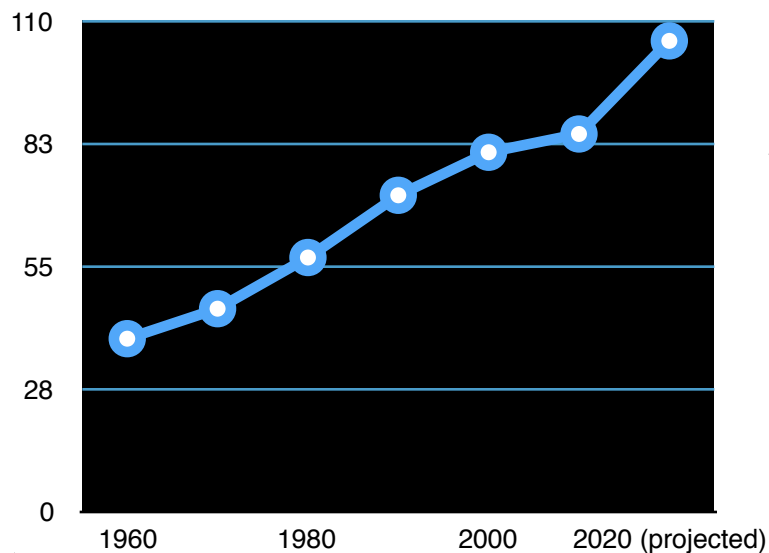
Williamstown’s land area has not changed, with increasing population comes an increasing population density. The chart to the left shows the average number of inhabitants per square mile for Williamstown.

These figures were derived by dividing the total number of residents by the number of square miles of land area in the specified geographic area. The Census Bureau data shows that from 1810 to 1950 the population density was stable. Population density has been dramatically increasing since the 1970s, and currently stands at just over 84.2 person/square mile (2010 Census).

Statistics indicate that Americans are living longer. According to Vermont Department of Health projections, by the year 2030, there will likely be twice as many elders as there were in 1996. According to this projection, people age 65 and older will make up 20% of the population.



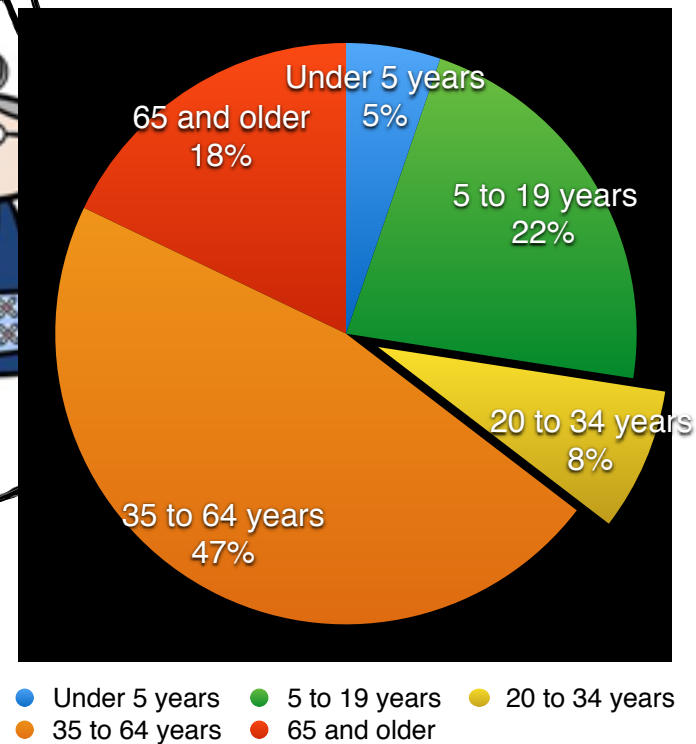
People per Square Mile



- In Williamstown, according to the 2010 Census:
- Children under five years made up 5% of our population
- Children five to nineteen years made 22% of our population
- Adults twenty to thirty-four years made up only 8% of our population
- Adults thirty-five to 64 years made up 47% of our population
- People sixty-five and older made up 18% of our population

The natural decrease in population is exacerbated by an even more severe problem here at home. Within Vermont the major factor accounting for the decline in county populations is that more people are moving out than moving in. Between 2010 and 2014, 4,000 more people left Vermont for other states than moved here from other states. Burlington Free Press

Age Distribution



A goal of this plan is to get more people actively involved in their town by organizing citizen groups to educate themselves on complex issues and work together to solve them. Such citizen groups may be an untapped resource and can become a potent force for dealing with these and other local problems. Williamstown citizens will make, or break, our future.

3. Regional Comparisons

According to the 2010 Central Vermont Chamber of Commerce Profile, Williamstown ranks as follows out of 23 Towns and Cities in the Central Vermont Region:

- 6th in land area (40 square miles)
- 6th in population (3,204, slight decrease)
- 6th in number of students (543, slight decrease)
- 6th in households (1,285, decreasing)
- 6th in labor force (1,920, steady)
- 10th in number of employers (63, slight increase)
- 10th in employment (570, increasing)
- 13th in average annual wage (\$33,604, increasing)

Williamstown has an unusually high percentage of residents who are native born Vermonters (77% vs. 41% for Orange County and 52% for the State)

C. Community Identity

Williamstown is starting to feel the impacts of growth and associated development. Unplanned development can cause stress on our community by limiting jobs and housing, placing more demands on the town's infrastructure, increasing the demand for our schools, increasing conflict regarding privacy and space issues, and by threatening those scenic areas we enjoy so much. In recent years, citizens have had some conflicting ideas about their town.

Williamstown residents still have a strong sense of tradition and pride. They highly value seeing their neighbors pass by to get updates about their family members, and storekeepers still know all about what is going on in town. Many of our residents offer community dinners and annual events that bring people together. These rural values make Williamstown a great place to grow up and to remain.

The Town celebrates Memorial Day with a parade put on by the Fire Department and Town. Residents enjoy a chicken barbecue at the new Public Safety Building. At dusk a glorious fireworks display starts with people claiming their spots to watch early in the day.

This year Williamstown celebrated and honored its Veterans with the dedication of the Veteran's Memorial Park. The dedication was held on 11/11/2015 at 11:00 am, the day and hour in 1918 the war ended. This memorial was a long time in the making, decades of committees being formed, then falling apart with nothing to show for their efforts. Three years ago a committee was formed and on Veteran's Day the Town was able to celebrate the monument to the Town's Veterans the committee made possible, with help from the community. School children, Town's Officials, Fire Department and Ambulance crews all participated in the dedication ceremony. Despite a cold, rainy day there was a large gathering. Afterwards there was a reception in the Public Safety building with cider and donuts. This speaks of Williamstown's community identity and pride in their Town.



D. Community: Goals, Policies & Tasks



Goal 1:

Encourage ways to enhance and maintain a strong sense of community in Williamstown

Fire Department &
Auxiliary
Memorial Day
2016-2020

Planning
Commission
2016

Planning
Commission
2017

Goal 1 Tasks:

- A. Organize an annual Celebration of Williamstown
- B. Maintain the Farmer's Market in the Village
- C. Encourage the Town's and Business sector utilization of Williamstown's Village Center Designation's funding and benefits for landscaping design, historically aesthetic improvements and Celebrations
- D. Enlist the media to promote the Charming and Pleasant town Williamstown is

Goal 2:

Create an environment where people deal with conflict productively and respectfully

Goal 2 Tasks:

- A. Maintain a high level of professionalism in Town Government and an atmosphere for mutual respect between

Selectboard
& Town
Officials
Ongoing



Chapter III. *Natural Resources, Features & Hazards*

A. Overview

Natural resources (plants, animals, soils, minerals, air, and water) provide us with the foundation of our basic life supports: the air we breathe, the water we drink, the land we live on, and the food we eat. They also play an important role in dictating where we build our houses and develop our streets. Our quality of life, including our health, depends upon the quality and quantity of these natural resources and their role in the larger ecosystem. We expect that these natural resources will be available when needed, sometimes without a great understanding or appreciation of how fragile they are.

Unfortunately, natural resources are limited and our everyday activities can impact them profoundly. The consequences of our actions are not always apparent until resources are gone, diminished, or unusable. Natural areas have intangible benefits, as well, as sources of inspiration, learning, and beauty. It is in the town's best interest to use its critical resources wisely and protect those that are most vulnerable, fragile and irreplaceable.

B. History of the Landscape

In the late 1700's, when settlers first came to Vermont, they saw thick forests of both hardwood and softwood, filled with wildlife. The topsoil was organic and soft. Settlers soon began clearing the forests to make pastures for sheep to graze in and so their crops could grow. After cultivation of the land, the topsoil was stony and thin (frost heaving caused bedrock to lift to the surface). By the early 1800's, residents deforested 75% percent of the land and exterminated much of the wildlife. Clearing the trees caused a variety of problems. Topsoil eroded into the streams polluting them and killing many fish as a result. Wetlands and ponds dried. Food became scarce and crops refused to grow.

Families were unable to heat their homes. Unable to survive in this harsh environment, many people left Vermont for the west with the promise of a new life. Only the hearty stayed behind.

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries turkey, deer, beaver, moose, fish, and other eradicated wildlife species were reintroduced to Vermont. The deer population quickly multiplied; and by 1896 the state was able to establish a hunting season. White pine trees began to grow back in the open land and by the late 1900's the trees had grown large enough to harvest. Eventually the logging industry recovered. Today, 78% of Vermont, (and a similar percentage of Williamstown), is forested, providing habitat for wildlife and other benefits for the community. Although we have no old growth forests left, our forested landscape affords us an abundance of outdoor activities, beautiful landscapes, and a great quality of life.

C. Productive Resources

1. *Forest Lands*

In Williamstown, citizens are never out of sight of the forests. Forests shelter us against wind, rain, sun, and heat, provide us with food sources, protect our watershed, produce oxygen, and are important for timber and heating our homes. Hunters, maple syrup sugar makers, outdoor enthusiasts, and leaf peepers enjoy our forests. At the heart of our forests, are the complex relationships between plants, animals and microbes that enable the ecosystem to function almost like a living organism.

Williamstown's forests are a mix of hardwoods and softwoods. Tree species include maple, beech, birch, cherry, basswood, aspen, spruce, balsam fir, hemlock, ash, elm, and many others. This mix of tree species is valuable for wildlife and helps to reduce the impact of species specific diseases or insects.

Currently, Williamstown's forests are healthy and sustainable, but there are concerns for the future, including forest fragmentation and conversion to other uses. Williamstown currently has about 20,000 acres of forested land, nearly a thousand acres of which is protected within the boundaries of Ainsworth State Park.



Another 9,355 acres receive some protection from development and enforced management through Vermont's Use Value appraisal Program.

Well managed multiple use lands play a major role in conserving and enhancing biological diversity maintaining options for future generations. (Please refer to Appendix II, **Map 2 Wetlands, Wildlife Habitat and Natural resources.**)

2. Agricultural Lands

As small in numbers as our hardworking farmers are, Williamstown residents still care deeply about them. Without them, we realize that much of our rural character would be lost. Our farms are also very important for other more practical reasons – they are an important part of our economy providing food and sustenance.

There are 1,840 acres of important farmland soils in Williamstown, 27 acres categorized as “prime” and 1,647 considered to be of “Statewide significance” (see Appendix II, **Map 4 Earth and Mineral Resources**). Ironically, the best agricultural soils are often the easiest to develop as they are generally flat, well drained and stable. It is important to understand that local sources of food could become critical given the uncertainties of our nation's energy/transportation future. The town's agricultural potential could be significantly diminished if farmlands are excessively built upon, paved, or divided into small, unworkable parcels. For the moment, however, Williamstown's agricultural base is relatively healthy, stable and diverse. There are a handful of full time farms, approximately 20 “working” farms, and a number of “hobby” or part time farms. The increasing tax burden on large landowners is often cited as a reason for the sale of farmland and its subsequent conversion to other uses. Landowners can reduce their tax burden by applying for the Vermont Current Use Value Appraisal Program.

The program helps owners of productive forest or agricultural land by lowering their taxes to reflect their actual use opposed to most profitable use. Current Williamstown landowners have approximately 9,355 acres of land enrolled in this program.

Land trusts can also help landowners who wish to continue to work their land to remain solvent. These organizations will work with willing landowners to purchase the development rights to important parcels. The owner will usually retain title and will often use the sale price as reinvestment capital to keep operations modern and productive. In 1997, Williamstown had 255 acres protected by the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board. In 2003, the Agency negotiated a farm conservation project with another Williamstown family and now holds the easement on another 343 acres of land.

D. Earth Resources

1. Topography/ Slope

Geological upheavals and glacial weathering, which took place millions of years ago, sculptured the land of Williamstown into mountains, hills, wetlands, rivers, and lakes. Currently, elevations in Williamstown range from under 800 feet along Steven's Branch to the highest at 2,060 feet at Mount Pleasant in the northeast corner of town. Elevations of land in combination with soil factors are important factors in land use planning.

Improper development in areas with excessive erosion and instability can cause nutrient loading, stream siltation and groundwater contamination. Development in areas with excessively steep slopes may also have hidden financial burdens for the town.

New roads on unsuitable slopes may be costly to construct and maintain. In addition, access by fire, emergency medical, law enforcement and service vehicles is more difficult in these areas. Slopes over 25% are considered unsuitable for most development and septic systems.

2. Geology

Most of the rock deposits in the Williamstown area are a mixture of limestone, schist, and granite. Williamstown residents once quarried granite on a grand scale. Pike Industries established in 2004, is a 30 acre quarry operation (on a 90 acre farm) in Williamstown.

This operation removed approximately 100,000 tons of material per year. Rock of Ages owns about 170 acres used as a granite quarry near Foxville and a large quarry is located near the border of Williamstown and Berlin on Route 63. The town also has a few sandpits and gravel deposits that supply commercial extraction operations, including:

- Two large sand pits located in Williamstown on Jay Lane off Route 14.
- A gravel and sand pit owned by the town situated on a 23 acre site located at the Barre town line on Vermont Route 14 north of the village.
- A 23 acre gravel pit in Williamstown owned by the town of Barre. (This pit has been in operation for nearly 30 years. Gravel reserves above the groundwater table in the original 10 acre section of the gravel pit are nearly exhausted. Barre plans to close down this gravel pit in the near future, thus it should be closely monitored. In 1990, Barre purchased a little over 13 acres nearby).
- Several borrow pits and small private gravel/sand pits.

Operation of the town gravel pit has saved the town a great deal of money. This site provides winter sand and is a source of crushed gravel for the town and its 69 miles of gravel roads. Approximately 8,500 cubic yards of winter sand is stored annually.

Sand, gravel, and quarry operations supply much needed materials for road maintenance and construction; but if not properly developed and managed, they can result in unstable slopes and slides. Furthermore, they have the potential to adversely affect surface and groundwater quality and quantity, increase noise, dust, traffic levels and accidents on local roads, and affect the lives of people and animals that live nearby.

It is vital that town officials pay close attention to the potential location and operation of future mining and extraction operations to avoid land use conflicts, environmental damage and habitat damage.

Additionally, the town should avoid areas that will cause unreasonable congestion or unsafe conditions with respect to the use of highways, intersections, and access roads. (Refer to Appendix II, **Map 4 Earth and Mineral Resources** for more detailed information).

3. Soils

Soil provides fertility, stores water, holds rain and runoff for later release, cleans and filters pathogens and toxins, buffers acidity, and decomposes waste and some litter. Soils are the most important environmental factor that governs the use of land in rural areas. Soil scientists classify soils based on structure, form, composition, and suitability for various types of development. Four characteristics are of primary concern for planning: the bearing capacity, erodibility, drainage, and resource value of soils. Some soils are suitable for structures and highways, while other soils are well suited for growing plants and vegetables.

Other soil conditions constrain development and/or the placement of onsite septic systems. Most of Williamstown is comprised of a layer of glacial till over bedrock. This till is usually thin (less than 20 feet) particularly in the higher elevations, and is composed of materials from clay to boulders.



E. Protective Resources

1. Surface Water

Surface waters are abundant in Williamstown. The town is dotted with many ponds, interconnected systems of streams and rivers, and many acres of wetlands. These surface waters offer scenic beauty and recreational opportunities. They draw fishermen, canoeists and boaters to our town, and provide a livelihood to the residents of our town. Furthermore, these bodies of water are literally wellsprings and reservoirs of life for the insects, fish, microorganisms, birds, and wildlife that share our town.

Staples, Cutter, and Rood ponds are located along the Steven's Branch and the Second Branch of the White River in the Southern part of Williamstown. Limehurst Pond, a 500 yard long, narrow shaped body of water is rimmed on the west by gentle hillsides. Other ponds include Rouleau, Whitcomb, and Lotus Lake. Ainsworth State Park has a small one acre shallow pond. There are also a number of smaller private ponds and brooks scattered throughout the town (Martin Brook, Cold Spring Brook, among several others).

Rivers and streams are interconnected systems, at a broad, watershed scale the Stevens Branch of the Winooski River flows northward to the Winooski River and ends up in Lake Champlain. Meanwhile, the Second Branch flows southward to the White River system.

2. Wetlands

Wetlands are numerous in Williamstown (see **Map 2**). They include areas commonly known as marshes, swamps, bogs, fens, shrub swamps and wooded swamps, or wet meadows. The water may be visible standing water or unseen ground water. Many of our wetland areas tend to be small because of the hilly topography and are located at the margins of larger upland water systems like lakes, ponds, rivers, and streams. Wetland areas are important because they store floodwater, reduce the impact of downstream flooding and erosion, provide habitat for wildlife, support erosion control, and improve water quality by filtering out impurities.

Currently, 90% of Williamstown's wetland areas are on private land. In the Northwestern corner section of Williamstown (at the corners of Bador and Hebert Road) is a very private, secluded swamp, located deep in a forest that has over 20 acres of surface water. Known locally as Beaver Meadow Swamp, this area is rich in wildlife and, not surprisingly, has an especially large habitat of beavers.

Wetland protection programs and regulating laws exist at the federal, state, and local levels of Vermont. Community members must contact officials for any work activity that influences water levels in the wetland area that involves draining, dredging, filling, or grading.

Upon request, the Department of Environmental Conservation may determine wetland boundaries through field investigation. Citizens may contact the Wetlands Office at (802) 241-3770 for more information on state wetland rules and Conditional Use Determinations (CUD).

<http://anr.vermont.gov/>

Vermont Wetland Rules classify all wetlands into one of three classes:

- **Class One wetland areas are those that are exceptional or irreplaceable in contribution so they merit the highest level of protection.**
- **Class Two wetland areas are those wetlands which are found to be significant enough so they merit some protection (50 foot buffer zones).**
- **Class Three wetland areas are those wetlands that have not been determined to be sufficiently significant enough to merit any protection. However, these wetlands may be protected by other federal, state, or local regulations. For example, they may be mapped as a significant habitat area.**

3. Natural Heritage Sites

Throughout Williamstown, there are many peat lands (areas with partially decayed, moisture absorbing plant matter), including bogs and fens. In these peat lands there are a number of sites of ecological importance because they host protected communities of rare and uncommon native plants, mosses, shrubs, and grasses. These plants are unique because they have very particular habitat requirements. Others are at the edges of their ranges, are vulnerable to disturbance or collection, or have difficulty reproducing for unknown reasons.

The state protects these rare plants with a status of “threatened” or “endangered” under the Vermont Endangered Species Law. The Federal Endangered Species Act also protects these sites of ecological importance.

In 1995, a study was done by the United States Environmental Protection Agency to explore fen (wetland, deep peat sites) and riverside seep (groundwater seepage) communities in Williamstown that host protected communities. This study concluded that there are two sites that met criteria for “threatened” status, including a fen area on Birch Lane and another marshy area located on Pleasant Street. These wetland areas have rare plants and qualities that are threatened, or endangered and are protected by the Federal Government. Several other sites were explored by researchers and identified as “highly ranked as fen and seep sites”, including locations on South Stone Road, Birch Lane Road, Middle Stone Road, and North Stone Road.

Other significant areas with rare ecological communities are located on Berlin Pond Road, and Mill Hill Road. The state listed a marsh on Pleasant Street as having a rare plant that is “threatened”. These significant habitats are depicted in Appendix II on **Map 2**.

4. Wildlife Habitat

In Williamstown, wildlife is always close by and residents have learned to respect them. Many residents look forward to leaving a hard day of work and going home to see deer grazing in their backfield or a red fox crossing the street. Luckily, moose, white-tailed deer, bobcat, and beaver populations continue to expand in the Williamstown area. This increase has resulted in increased viewing and hunting opportunities. See Appendix II, **Map 2** for locations of deer wintering areas.

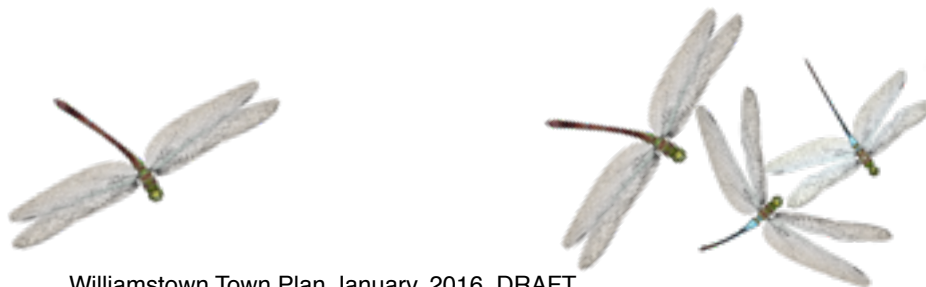
Many birds have adapted quite well to our village habitat. They eat at our bird feeders, nest in our barns, hop around on our lawns, and eat berries off our ornamental trees. The wild turkey, ruffed grouse, and woodcock continue to expand. Many people report seeing large flocks of up to fifty wild turkeys in their backyards. Other birds prefer areas anywhere near humans like the Blue Heron who frequent our wetland areas and Canada Geese who enjoy the cornfields.



Other creatures of the forest and wetlands are plentiful and equally important contributing to our web of life in their own special way. Significant among these are reptiles, amphibians, fish and insects many of which pollinate our fruit trees and crops.

5. Scenic Areas

Williamstown’s scenic beauty is defined by a landscape of soft hills and valleys, wetlands, open pastures, stone walls, thick forestland, and dirt roads lined with maple trees. Many of our back roads still offer beautiful open pastures filled with horses, sheep, and cows. As the town moves forward with its planning activities, the Planning Commission encourages conducting a landscape assessment to determine what areas are most critical to community’s visual character.



F. Environmental Hazards in Williamstown

1. Overview

Natural and manmade disasters can strike a community with little or no warning. Communities across the country are struggling to prepare for these possible events.

The Williamstown select board adopted a customized Hazard Inventory/Vulnerability Assessment in June 2004, and as a result, a Pre Disaster Mitigation Plan was developed. In 2011, the Selectboard adopted a Flood Hazard Mitigation Plan. A Hazard/Crisis team has been organized and participates in trainings and practice sessions essential for the continued success of the Flood Hazard Mitigation Plan. Community leaders and teachers have ready access to the plan so they can understand its components and act on them to be prepared for a potential crisis.

2. Soil/ Water/ Air Pollution

Contaminants in our soil, water and air can find their way into our bodies by contact, ingestion or respiration, causing both long term and short term health impacts. Williamstown has witnessed the dangers of pollution firsthand. State officials have found contamination within the proximity of the school. From 1973 through 1983, the (Interstate Industrial Uniform Laundry aka –UniFirst) UniFirst facility operated a laundry and dry cleaning business located on Hebert Road. The facility borders a residential neighborhood to the east, public schools to the north and south, and residences and agricultural land to the west. In 1983, the State discovered soil and water contamination coming from the uniform cleaning facility just above the elementary school. Soil contamination flows downward along the slope and seeps deep into cracks in the bedrock. Thus in 1984, to avoid and protect public health concerns, the town hooked up the nearby homes to the town's water supply. The state installed a network of collection drains and expanded them in 1985 and 1990. Monitoring is ongoing. In 2014 the building was demolished and the property was capped and seeded.

The old town landfill site on VT Route 14 closed down as a Williamstown landfill as ordered in a consent decree (official legal agreement) from the State of Vermont during the UniFirst contamination problems. The old landfill section has been covered and sealed, but one portion of the site is still contaminated and is restricted. Additional site monitoring and investigation will continue by the Department of Environmental Conservation (VDEC). There are three monitoring wells that continue to be tested every other year. Removal and transport of gravel contaminated by hazardous waste is in violation of federal RCRA regulations as well as a violation of the Williamstown Consent Decree. Another adjacent section of the town landfill is also contaminated. The solid waste rule on landfills enacted by the Vermont Department of Natural Resources requires that landfills closed after 1989 must sample their monitoring wells. The Williamstown Landfill closed around 1992. Another 2 acre wetland section of the town landfill was used as a CVSWD trash depository transfer station until 2003 and was closed because of potential water contamination. All restrictions on this land have been removed as of 2009. This land can potentially be used for recreational use.

There are many private junkyards (any property with 3 or more unregistered vehicles) and dumpsites in Williamstown. Samples at some of these sites found concentrations of methyl tertiary butyl ether, trimethylbenzene, benzene, toluene, and other gasoline range

Williamstown has some potential ground water quality problems. The contaminated UniFirst facility site is located on the Rouleau Brook Watershed. Rouleau Brook is a tributary to the Stevens Branch, which flows into the Winooski River. The Town amended its water policy ensuring public safety requiring all buildings in this area be connected to the town's municipal water system. To protect the future public health, on March 8th, 2004, the Agency of Natural Resources' proposed reclassifying the site groundwater (about 85 acres) from a Class III (drinkable water) to Class IV (not suitable for potable water).

After numerous meetings, between ANR (Agency of Natural Resources) and a small group of concerned (and some effected) town citizens, ANR agreed to consider withdrawal of the reclassification order if the town would expand the water service area to include all the effected properties and adopt an ordinance which prohibited well drilling in the area.

The citizens brought this option to the Select Board. The board then moved forward and negotiated with the ANR. The ordinance became effective January 3rd, 2009 and ANR withdrew its position to reclassify April 17th, 2009.

Other potential sources of ground water quality problems originate from developed land, agricultural, atmospheric deposition, lawn/dump run-off, parking lots, construction sites, disturbed areas, road salt, and failed septic systems. Based on the Environmental Protection Agency's current data, 17% of surface waters in Orange County are impaired or threatened. Some are impaired by pathogens (bacteria and viruses), metals (mercury, copper, and lead), and by sediments. Others are impaired by high acidity levels.

According to Environmental Protection Agency sources, Williamstown's general air quality meets national standards. Air quality is currently not monitored in Williamstown.

In the future we must continue to strive to protect our citizens from both the incidence of, and exposure to, environmental toxins. In recent years the federal government has been investing in the analysis and remediation of so called "brownfield" sites. Brownfields are defined by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) as "real property, the expansion, redevelopment or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant or contaminant." Typical prior uses that may fall into this category in Central Vermont include old town dumps, photo developing sites, mill complexes, factories, dry cleaners, auto repair shops, gas stations and even some agricultural sites. Sites in Williamstown include, but are not restricted to, our two old town dumps and the UniFirst property. There is concern that there

may be other properties in Williamstown that have not been designated as brownfield sites.

Brownfield sites often remain vacant and underutilized due to concerns over liability and unknown environmental assessment and clean-up costs; yet many sites can be rehabilitated. Redevelopment or re-use of potentially contaminated sites has many benefits, including:

- Elimination of eyesore properties
- Promotes/ supports historic use patterns
- Protect human and environmental health
- Strengthens the local economy

Since brownfield sites are often in already developed areas, their reuse can help to promote compact land use and in-fill development. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's web site "for every acre of brownfields redeveloped, it is estimated that an average of 4.5 acres of green fields are saved."

The CVRPC has been very active in the area of brownfield rehabilitation, having received over a half million dollars in EPA grants since 2004 to assist towns in assessing and reclaiming important properties. Williamstown should consider taking advantage of the Commission's expertise to identify and evaluate sites within the community for inclusion in the program. This year CVRPC received an additional grant of \$80,000 from the EPA to conduct environmental assessments.

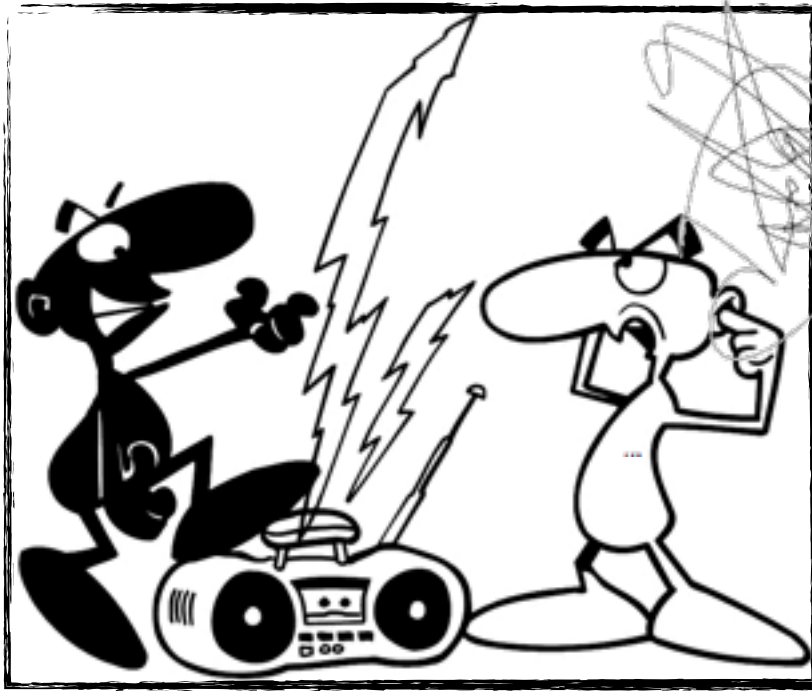
Williamstown should consider describing any particular areas of town that the community envisions for redevelopment in the Town Plan. Identification of these areas and a description of the community's vision for them would strengthen an application for Brownfields funding, should the town pursue it.

CVRPC is currently in the process of assembling our Brownfields steering committee and developing the program application criteria. Please stay tuned for the announcement that the program is open for applications.



3. Noise Pollution

Any undesired loud and/or continuous sound can be considered “noise.” Noise pollution is defined as “continuous and unrelenting sounds at all levels or episodic and excessively loud sounds.” Higher noise levels may be appropriate and unavoidable within designated industrial, commercial, and mixed use areas. While it must be recognized that noise necessarily accompanies certain business and transportation operations, new development should make all reasonable efforts to minimize noise impacts and shall not exceed acceptable standards in residential areas. Among the strategies for the town to consider are: restricting hours of operation or construction, using vegetated buffer zones to filter sound, taking advantage of topography in designing projects to provide sound barriers, the use of structural barriers (i.e. earth berms and sound walls), and architectural design and material.



NOTES:

Chapter 3.A: Flood Resiliency

In 2012, the Vermont Legislature adopted Act 138 establishing the Flood Resilient Communities Program and establishing incentives for municipalities to join the NFIP, adopt an HMP, and avoid new encroachments into river corridors.

A. Introduction

A Flood Resilience section is to be included in any Town Plan written or substantially rewritten after July 1, 2014, as mandated by the state of Vermont (Act No. 16).

(14) To encourage flood resilient communities.

(A) New development in identified flood hazard, fluvial erosion, and river corridor protection areas should be avoided. If new development is to be built in such areas, it should not exacerbate flooding and fluvial erosion.

(B) The protection and restoration of floodplains and upland forested areas that attenuate and moderate flooding and fluvial erosion should be encouraged.

(C) Flood emergency preparedness and response planning should be encouraged.

To support the overarching goal of flood resilience, Act 16 added subdivision (12)(A) to the plan for a municipality as effective July 1, 2014. §4382

(12)(A) A flood resilience plan that:

(i) identifies flood hazard and fluvial erosion hazard areas, based on river corridor maps provided by the Secretary of Natural Resources pursuant to 10 V.S.A. § 1428(a) or maps recommended by the Secretary, and designates those areas to

be protected, including floodplains, river corridors, land adjacent to streams, wetlands, and upland forests, to reduce the risk of flood damage to infrastructure and improved property; and

(ii) recommends policies and strategies to protect the areas identified and designated under subdivision (12)(A)(i) of this subsection and to mitigate risks to public safety, critical infrastructure, historic structures, and municipal investments.

(B) A flood resilience plan may reference an existing local hazard mitigation plan approved under 44 C.F.R. § 201.6

The impact of expected, but unpredictable natural and human caused flooding can be reduced through community planning. For the purpose of this chapter, Flood Resilience, refers to Williamstown's ability to withstand a flooding event, minimize damage and rapidly recover from disruptions to the town and its residents. Addressing local flood risks now and creating a prioritized list of actionable tasks is the smartest way to prevent a crisis. Any action is a smart budgetary investment, that can help to protect public safety and avoid the astronomical costs of fixing damage from natural disasters after they occur.

Williamstown strives to be in accordance with the strategies, goals and objectives of the State Hazard Mitigation Plan with an emphasis on proactive pre-disaster flood resiliency planning¹.



Why act now?

State assistance increases when you act

Weather is intensifying

Planning ahead avoids crisis and cost

Mitigation funds come to those who plan

The best solutions may not be available in the future



¹Town of Williamstown, Vt -Local Hazard Mitigation Plan Update adopted Jan. 9th, 2013

B. History

Date	Event	Location	Extent
8/28/2011	Flood/Tropical Storm	Statewide/Williamston	Montpelier flood gauge at 19.05' (flood stage is 15') DR 4002 (DR- Declarations #)
5/27/2011	Flash Flood	Williamstown	Montpelier flood gauge at 17.59', DR 4001
8/02/2008	Flash Flood	Williamstown	No extent data
7/11/2007	Flash Flood	Williamstown	3-6" of rain in 2 hrs. DR 175
12/17/2000	Flood	County Wide	3" inches of rain, \$1 Million in damages
9/16/1999	Tropical storm Floyd	County Wide	Montpelier flood gauge at 9.30', 5-7" of rain county wide, DR 1307
6/27/1998	Flash Flood	County Wide	\$5 Million in damages, 3-6" of rain county wide, DR 1228
1/19/1996	Flood/Ice Jam	County Wide	Montpelier flood gauge at 14.64'
8/4/1995	Flood	County Wide	Montpelier flood gauge at 6.94'
8/5/1976	Flood	County Wide	Montpelier flood gauge at 12.31' DR 518
6/30/1973	Flash Flood	Williamstown	Montpelier flood gauge at 17.55'. DR 397
9/22/1938	Floyd/Hurricane	County Wide	Montpelier flood gauge at 14.11'
11/03/1927	Flood	County Wide	Montpelier flood gauge at 27.10'
http://plancentralvermont.org/wordpress1/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/Past_Flood_Events_Website.pdf			



Williamstown, like the rest of Vermont suffered in the great flood of 1927. Occurring November 2nd, 1927 through November 4th, 1927, the Great Flood is known as one of the most devastating natural disasters in Vermont's history. Between 4-9" of rain fell over a period of 3 days. An abnormally rainy October caused soils to be completely saturated prior to the Great Flood's arrival. Statewide, over 1,000 bridges and miles of roads and railroads were washed out, countless homes and businesses were destroyed, and 84 people were killed as a result of the flooding from the extreme rain that fell in early November.

The more recent flood events of July 11th, and 12th, 2007, July 21st through August 12th, 2008, were caused by steady, heavy rains and saturated water tables. The southern part of the town incurred extensive damage. South Hill, Graham Road, Winchester Hill, Baptist Street and Chelsea Road were damaged and impassable with a price tag of \$480,000. A Presidential disaster area was declared July, 2011. As much as 3" of rain fell in a two hour time period causing flooding in Williamstown. Several roads were washed out and several homes flooded causing significant structural damage. In Central Vermont there was \$1.5 million dollars in structural and property damages.

Tropical Storm Irene moved across New York and New England during the morning of August 28th, 2011 and headed north along the Connecticut River Valley in Vermont during the afternoon and evening. Strong, damaging winds in excess of 60 mph were observed within several miles of Lake Champlain and Northwestern Vermont, as well as exposed, higher elevation terrain in Southern Vermont. Wind gusts were approaching 50 mph in other parts of Vermont. There were nearly 2400 roads, 800 homes and businesses, 300 bridges and a half dozen railroad tracks destroyed or damaged from the flooding caused by Irene.

Flooding downed trees throughout the state by afternoon. A peak wind gust of 85 mph was measured at the summit of Mount Mansfield in Lamoille County. Approximately 100,000 customers were without power during the storm. The main impact from Irene was widespread, devastating flooding, especially in Central and Southern Vermont. Widespread rainfall amounts of 3-5" occurred across Vermont with 5-7" or more across much of Southern, Central Vermont and

elevations above 1000 feet along the spine of Vermont's Green Mountains and the Worcester range. Flash flooding occurred across much of Central and Southern Vermont's mountain valleys with substantial and record-breaking flood stages on larger rivers. Williamstown felt Irene's fury. This flood event will likely rank second to the November 1927 flood in the scope of meteorological and hydrological conditions/impacts as well as loss of life (84 in 1927), but likely first in monetary damage (approximately \$500 million statewide versus \$350 million [1927 in 2010 dollars]).

Washington and Orange Counties were inundated with severe storms and flooding June 25th, 2013 through July 11th, 2013. Throughout the Central Vermont Region and Williamstown rainfall accumulation was 300% above normal for that time of year. It was the second wettest June on record. Soils were saturated. A Major Disaster Declaration was declared on August 2nd. Flash flooding on July 4th evolved into river flooding. Excessive runoff from heavy thunderstorm rainfall caused more flash flooding during the overnight hours of July 8th into July 9th. In Williamstown the Jail Branch flooded local homes and businesses, Routes 14 and 64, as well as other local roads. \$4 million was provided in Public Assistance funds to address impacts statewide.

C. Hazard Identification

The following natural disasters were discussed in Town mitigation planning and the worst threats were identified based on the likelihood of the event and Williamstown's vulnerability to the event.

1. *Dam Failure*

The Rouleau Pond Dam is privately owned and located outside the Village. The dam is 15' high, 3' thick concrete with a considerable amount of silt behind it. The dam has had a State performed engineering study. There are no known occurrences of the dam breaching. During the May, 2011 Spring storm water came over the top of the dam.

The Town is concerned if the dam was breached the library and approximately 12 private properties would be flooded.

The impoundment area of the dam (a dam is a barrier that impounds water, creating a body of water) and extent of flooding are not known due to lack of historical breeches. The Town shall work with the State to determine impoundment areas and depths, developing inundation models.

2. Flash Flooding/Fluvial Erosion

Flooding/flash-flooding and flash-flooding/fluvial erosion are Williamstown's most commonly recurring hazards. Specific data for flood levels in Williamstown is lacking. The closest flood gauge is located in Montpelier. During Storm Irene the Montpelier gauge was 4 feet above flood level stage as 3-5" of rain were dumped on the Town. Lesser but more regular flooding occurs in Williamstown with generally 1-2 feet of water in areas designated on the areas of concern map. The Town can expect to experience damages at flood depths of 3 feet. Flash flooding in nature is the cause of most of Williamstown's flooding. The main bodies of water in Town are: The Stevens Branch of the Winooski River, Martin Brook, Cold Springs Brook, Cutler Pond, Limehurst Lake, Staples Pond and Rood Pond. The Steven's Branch dominates the drainage pattern, flowing North to the Winooski River, while the southern section of Town drains into the White River watershed.

In May 2011, there was severe flash flooding in Williamstown and Orange County. One inch hail, 3-5" of rain fell, 50 knot winds and the Montpelier flood gauge peaked at 17.59 feet. Flood stage is at 15 feet. Declarations numbers (DR) were 4,001. Williamstown suffered the most damage in the May 2011 flood when 3-5" of rain fell causing severe flash flooding. The total damages to Williamstown were \$150,000. The following roads sustained extensive damage and incurred substantial costs:

- Falls Bridge Road - \$23,054.20
- South Hill Road - \$11,304.78
- Gilbert Road - \$6,287.78
- Winchester Hill Road - \$4,122.20
- Flint Road - \$35,954.56

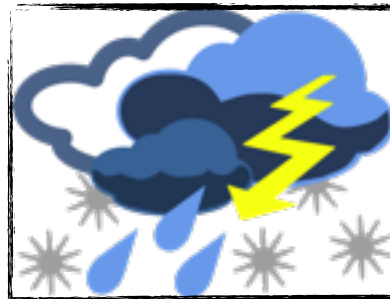
- Rood Pond Road - \$6,028.02
- Baptist Street - \$2,265.29
- Robar Road - \$7,997.82
- Brockway Hill Road - \$24,988.19
- McGlynn Road - \$8,179.91
- Brush Hill Road - \$2,214.32

During Tropical Storm Irene in August of 2011, 6" inches of rain fell. Montpelier flood gauge rose to 19.05 feet. DR was 4022. Flooding damage occurred on Flint Road (\$6,733.09) and Stone Road (\$1,890.60).

Williamstown is not immune to either of these hazards. Over the years the town has experienced several damaging floods and high water events. The most recent events, which included the spring flooding May 2011, Tropical Storm Irene in August 2011 and the flood in July 2013 were devastating to the town, its residents and businesses.

The cost of flooding to the Town is significant. Updating the Flood Hazard Bylaws and securing funds to improve roads, repairing/replacing culverts to make them more flood resilient is imperative for the safety of our residents and keeping costs of flooding events to a minimum. Updating current flood bylaws is a priority of the Town's Local Hazard Mitigation Plan along with limiting development in inundation areas.

The Williamstown Local Hazard Mitigation Plan is updated annually at a January Selectboard meeting along with the review of the Basic Emergency Operations Plan. Updates and evaluation by the Selectboard will occur within three months after every disaster declaration and as updates to town plan/zoning and river corridor plans come into effect. The Selectboard, Town Officials and residents will review the updated plan(s). Currently, the Town Manager is responsible for enforcement of the bylaws.



3. Hurricanes and Tropical Storms

Hurricanes and Tropical Storms are violent rain storms with strong winds with large amounts of rainfall. Winds can reach a speed of 200 m.p.h. The impact of Hurricanes and Tropical Storms is usually flooding and high winds, hail, rain, trees and tree limbs causing roads to be impassable, loss of power and water damage. The worst anticipated wind event predicted for Williamstown is a Class 1 hurricane with wind speeds 75-95 m.p.h.

D. Understanding Risks of Flooding

Between 1996 and 2006, the National Climatic Data Center reported 267 major storm events in the Central Vermont Region, all of which resulted in the loss of life or property. In total, these storm events cost Central Vermont \$21,083 million in property damage and resulted in 5 deaths. Based on this data, it is evident that Central Vermont is vulnerable to major storms and the damage resulting from them.

Flash floods can occur within a few minutes or hours of excessive rainfall, a dam or levee failure, or a sudden release of water held by

an ice jam. Flash floods often have a dangerous wall of roaring water carrying rocks, mud and other debris

Overland flooding, the most common type of flooding event typically occurs when waterways such as rivers or streams overflow their banks as a result of rainwater or a possible levee breach and cause flooding in surrounding areas. It can also occur when rainfall or snowmelt exceeds the capacity of underground pipes, or the capacity of streets and drains designed to carry flood water away.

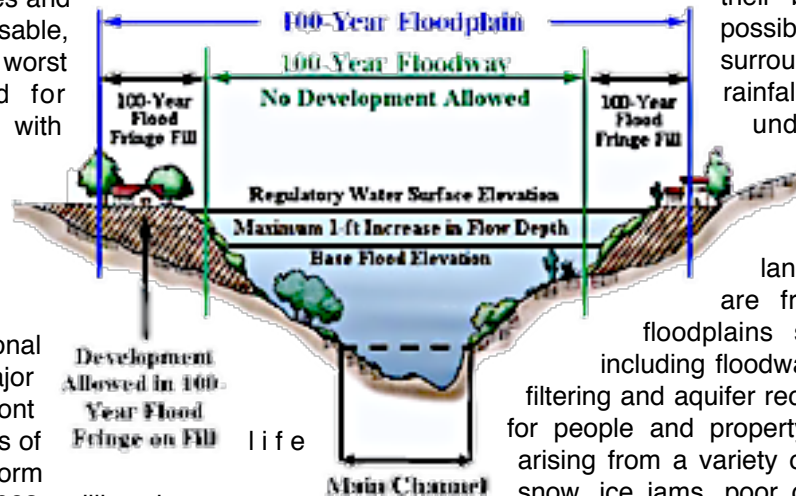
Floodplains are low lying areas of land adjacent to a stream and rivers that are frequently inundated by water. While floodplains serve important ecological functions, including floodwater storage, sediment trapping, nutrient filtering and aquifer recharge, they can be hazardous locations for people and property. Flooding (and flood related events) arising from a variety of causes, including heavy rain, melting snow, ice jams, poor drainage and dam breaks, is the most frequent, damaging and costly type of natural disaster experienced in the state, region and Williamstown.

High water causes damage in two distinct, but related, ways. *Inundation* can fill structures with water and cause property damage and drowning. It is a great concern for those living in or near Flood Hazard Zones (the area inundated by water during a flood with a statistical probability of occurring once every 100 years – i.e., the “One Hundred Year Flood”).

Fluvial erosion (i.e. flash flooding) actually causes greater damage. Within the area of a stream or river’s active channel movement, known as the Fluvial Erosion Hazard Zone (or FEH), bank failures and changes in river channel courses during floods can undermine buildings, roads, farm fields, and utility infrastructure.

Flooding is the overflow of rivers, streams, drains, and lakes due to excessive rain, rapid snow melt or ice jams. Flash flooding is a rapidly occurring event usually from excessive rain. Fluvial erosion, the process of natural stream channel adjustments, causes erosion of sediment in some areas while causing aggradation of sediment in others. Fluvial erosion processes occur more quickly and severely during flooding events.

Fluvial erosion is erosion caused by rivers and streams, and can range from gradual bank erosion to catastrophic changes in river channel location and dimension during flood events.



E. Identify Vulnerable Areas & Determine Consequences

We all know people whose lives were turned upside down after Irene. Homes washed away. Bridges and roads were decimated. The costs for a small state were immense – about \$63 million in insurance claims, \$153 million in state and local costs, and a staggering \$603 million in federal outlays – all from one storm, Irene.

While the FEMA Flood Hazard Zones are important maps for town planning and for mortgage lenders in deciding which properties need flood insurance protection, they do not address fluvial erosion hazards. Unfortunately, the National Flood Insurance Plan (NFIP) maps are elevation-based, delineating inundation hazards only. The NFIP maps also represent a static impression of a dynamic system. The maps do not consider fluvial erosion hazards or the dynamic nature of river systems due to the physical channel adjustment processes, providing little guidance to a town or landowner assessing fluvial erosion-related flood risks.

Communities only need to adopt FEMA's minimum standards for flood hazard area regulation in order for their residents to be eligible to purchase flood insurance.²

To assume that the Fluvial Erosion Hazard (FEH) area is mostly captured by the FEMA regulated inundation floodplain area may be dangerous and costly. The NFIP minimum standards allow for new development into mapped flood hazard areas without regard for the FEH potential. This disregard for potential FEH exacerbates flood loss, degrades river conditions, and increases costs associated with flood recovery. During 2008, one-third of all flood insurance claims nationwide were from areas outside of the 100-year floodplain. FEMA's regulations recognize that the National Flood Insurance Plan (NFIP) standards offer minimal protection against inundation and erosion hazards, and they explicitly encourage communities to

adopt more protective standards.

The Department of Environmental Conservation, and many Regional Planning Commissions, have been busy conducting fluvial erosion hazard assessments for many river and stream segments statewide. Towns can use erosion hazard mapping information to help avoid future life and property damage by allowing rivers and streams the area they need to maintain or re-establish their natural "equilibrium" (or stability). These actions decrease the need for costly, and potentially environmentally damaging stream channelization and bank stabilization measures. While Flood Hazard and Fluvial Erosion Hazard Zones (FEH) typically have large areas of coincidence, they are seldom, if ever, identical.



Flooding damage on Beckett St. and Hoyt-Seaver Field -July, 2013

² EPA 231-R-14-003 July 2014
www.epa.gov/smartgrowth

The “current” FEMA maps, provided to the town almost 40 years ago, depict 100 year flood levels, primarily identifying areas subject to the threat of inundation along the valley that parallels Route 14, the Steven’s Branch and a few other areas scattered within the town.

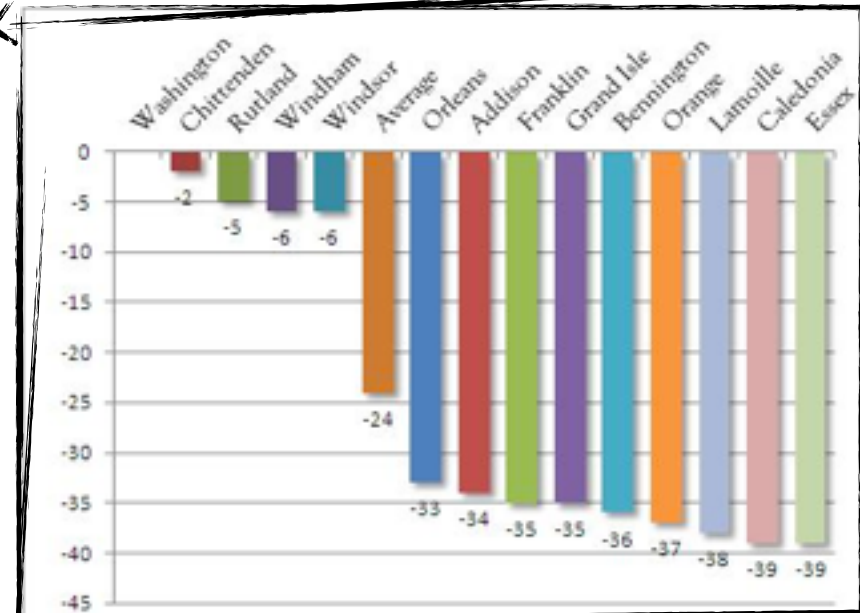
At this time roughly half the state does not have access to Digital Flood Insurance Rate Maps (DFIRMs) this includes most of Addison, Grand Isle, Franklin, Lamoille, Orleans, Essex, Caledonia and Orange Counties. Most of the FEMA maps are over 30 years old. FEMA currently has no plans for mapping in Vermont. When funding does become available for mapping in Vermont it will be through the process and standards of Risk MAP. Through Risk MAP new flood hazard maps need to have high quality topography (i.e. the equivalent of two foot contour intervals) and a model-based delineation of flood hazards. The Risk map work will focus on watersheds, weather patterns and other factors to reduce (mitigate) flood risk.

Williamstown’s Flood Hazard Area Bylaws restrict development in flood hazard and FEH zones in order to prevent water pollution and damage to life and property. Agriculture, recreation, forestry, and other similar low intensity activities are permitted. This does not solve every problem the Town has with flooding.

Historically, the town has also witnessed damage from upland streams that have not been mapped by either of the above programs. Mountainous or hilly areas tend to have narrow, confined channels through which flood waters move rapidly and travel downstream more quickly than in flat areas.

Even though a building is not located in a valley where a rising river could overflow its banks and inundate the structure, it is not necessarily safe from flood damage. Williamstown can prevent people from building structures too close to rivers by enforcing established development setbacks.

Finally, it is important to consider how land use within a watershed impacts flooding. Vermont’s erosion hazard problems are also due to pervasive, human-caused alteration of our waterways and landscapes they drain during the past 150 to 200 years.



By the end of the 19th century, forests had been cleared from many watersheds, resulting in major changes in watershed hydrology and sediment production. Towns and villages grew on the banks of rivers, whose role in power generation and transportation outweighed flood risks. In addition, many rivers were moved and channelized to accommodate development, agriculture, log drives, roads and railways.

The largest single source of flood losses, both in terms of cost and number of people affected, is damage to transportation infrastructure. Infrastructure damage also represents the greatest public safety hazard. All three flood-related fatalities in Vermont since 1995 were associated with washed out culverts on town highways. Over 75% of damages in Vermont caused by the five major floods of the 1990s were due to fluvial erosion. Public health and safety is also at risk when access to homes and businesses is unavailable.

The legacy of this landscape manipulation is rivers and streams which are unstable and prone to fluvial erosion. (See General Constructions Conditions in the Barre-Montpelier Region map at the end of this chapter)

Land in the Stevens Branch basin is primarily forested. Any disturbance of the soil or any change in topography may increase erosion potential. Building development and soil tillage are two primary causes of soil disturbance in Williamstown. Two more factors, agriculture and beavers, have contributed to the presence of a relatively narrow forested riparian buffer along much of the main-stem between Barre and Williamstown. A wider forested buffer would have multiple benefits including: water quality, habitat for fish and reduction of property damage from erosion during floods.³

Excessive logging, logging roads, can leave hillsides open to erosion, removing the forest canopy that would have absorbed and retained much of the water. Improperly constructed logging roads may lead to increased erosion, particularly on poorly drained soils. (Refer to Surficial Materials in the Barre-Montpelier Area map at the end of this chapter)

Road density in the Stevens Branch watershed is 3.0 miles of road per square mile, while the stream density is 2.4 miles per square mile. Roads channelize flow, changing slow-moving groundwater into fast moving surface water. Roads can increase flow during floods and can increase flood damage.⁴ Impervious surfaces, such as roads, driveways, parking areas and buildings prevent water from soaking into the ground, increasing runoff and erosion potential. Driveways which are improperly graded and ditched can direct water onto the main road, increasing highway maintenance costs. Private driveway culverts if undersized, can cause washouts and road damage.

Soil and vegetation allowed to build up on the edges of roads prevent water from running into ditches. Most of the surface water from a major rain event is eventually collected in roadside ditches and/or streams. Vegetative buffers along the banks of these streams can hold soils from the eroding effects of rapid water flow.

The town has a process in place to review all drive accesses and development roads where they intersect Town roads, as authorized under 19 V.S.A. § 1111. Improper maintenance of town roads and roadway culverts can lead to washouts. Clogged culverts restrict water flow. Investments in municipal infrastructure allows for repairing /replacing problems such as undersized (or too few) culverts, inadequate ditches, and the lack of headwalls/wing walls on culverts. The Town currently has a Culvert Program to repair/replace culverts to current State and Federal standards.



Vermont Gov. Peter Shumlin, center, surveys flood damage in Williamstown in July 2013. Toby Talbot / AP.

³ Stream Geomorphic Assessment of the Stevens Branch, Williamstown and Barre city Upstream of the Confluence with the Jail Branch, Prepared by: Lori Barg, Step by Step Community Environmental

⁴ Stream Geomorphic Assessment of the Stevens Branch, Williamstown and Barre city Upstream of the Confluence with the Jail Branch, Prepared by: Lori Barg, Step by Step Community Environmental

F. Mitigation

The goal of Williamstown's Hazard Mitigation Plan is: To take actions to reduce or eliminate the long-term risk to human life and property from dam failure, flash/flood, flash-flood/fluvial erosion and severe hurricane/severe storms/tropical storms⁵.

The Town has accomplished several of its 2009 mitigation goals beginning with the adoption of Vermont Agency of Transportation's "Code and Standards for Roads". Upgrades on South Hill and Chelsea Rd. have been completed. Town Officials and departments are participating in flood/NFIP related trainings. NFIP, insurance and building codes pamphlets are available at the Town Hall. Town Departments continue to improve communication between them and update the process as needed. The Fire Department and EMS established a list of frequencies and chain of command call list.

The Town uses the Fire Department alarm and is looking into the schools robo-call system as all hazard warning systems. The Fire Department is training town departments in hazardous materials response and protocols as well as training staff in active response in the event of a disaster.

The Town's Mitigation Plan Update outlines and prioritizes actions to continue to reduce or eliminate long-term risk to its residents lives and property damage from dam failure, flash/flood, flood/fluvial erosion and severe hurricane and tropical storms. Specific hazard mitigation strategies related to goals of the Williamstown Plan include:

- Ensure existing and future drainage systems are adequate and functioning properly
- Preserve and prevent development in areas where natural hazard potential is high
- Ensure that all residents and business owners are aware of the hazards that exist within Williamstown and know how they can protect themselves and insure their property

⁵ Town of Williamstown, Vt -Local Hazard Mitigation Plan Update adopted Jan. 9th, 2013

- Ensure emergency services and critical facilities functions are not interrupted by natural hazards.
- Hazard Mitigation Programs, projects and activities that were identified for implementation to eliminate the long-term risk to human life and property from hazards existing in the Town:

Identified High Priority Projects:

- Continue Culvert Program to upgrade and expand damaged culverts on Upper and Lower Flint Road, Winchester Road, Gilbert Road, Chelsea Road, McGlynn and Route 14, Main Street.
- Upgrade and expand bridge on Brush Hill Road.
- Update Rapid Response/Emergency Operations Plan

Identified Medium Priority Projects:

- Improve communications and coordination with the State regarding Rouleau Pond and Rood Pond. Develop inundation plan/models for Rood Pond.
- Improve, update and amend existing Flood Hazard Bylaws to limit development in inundation areas.
- Continue work on Steven's Branch Corridor Plan
- Provide looped or other redundancies in the electrical service to critical facilities

In the **Town and Bridge Standards Town of Williamstown, Vermont**, (April 1st 2013) the Town adopted the following policies that apply to the construction, repair, and maintenance of all Town roads and bridges.

- Replacements of culverts any new culvert must have a minimum culvert diameter of 18".



- Replacement of existing bridges and culverts and any new bridges and culverts must be designed in accordance with VTrans Hydraulics manual, and in the case of perennial streams conform to the statewide Stream Alteration standards .
- All new driveway culverts must have a minimum diameter of 15". When installing or replacing culverts, use appropriate techniques such as headwalls, and wing walls, where there is erosion or undermining or where it is expected to occur.
- Install a splash pad or plunge pool at the outlet of new or repaired drainage culverts where there is erosion or where erosion may occur. Splash pads and plunge pools are not appropriate for use in streams supporting life.⁶

According to the *The Town of Williamstown Local Hazard Mitigation Plan Update*, May 29, 2012, the majority of Williamstown is located within the Winooski Watershed and the Stevens Branch off the Winooski River following Route 14 from Cutter Pond in the southern portion of Town and exits the town at the Barre Town border. Other principle rivers include Martin Brook and Cold Springs Brook, both of which are located in the northern portion of Town and serve as tributaries of the Stevens Branch. A portion of the southern sections of town drains into the White River Basin. The majority of the Town's NFIP designated 100-year floodplain is located along Steven's Branch.

There are 79 properties in the Town which are vulnerable to potential flooding. The estimated loss with a severe flooding event for all properties located within the 100 year floodplain is approximately \$9,930,300. This flood loss represents 4.75% of all properties in Williamstown. The Town does not have any repetitive loss properties. There are 12 active policies with a total coverage of \$1,456,000. Williamstown has 529 properties in the fluvial erosion hazard zone. The potential loss for these properties is: \$66,495,300 which represents 2% of the total land area in the Town. The Town has a regionally approved mitigation plan but does not have zoning bylaws.

Williamstown does have stand alone Flood Hazard Bylaws adopted in 1990 and updated in 2013.

Perhaps the best known mitigation program is the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). This program, administered through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), identifies areas within the Flood Hazard Zone and prescribes development review standards and procedures for lands within regulated areas. Municipalities that comply with Federal standards can qualify their residents through the National Flood Mitigation Program for flood insurance at rates far below what would be available on the private market. It is essential that Williamstown maintain its eligibility for this program. It is important to note that under this program, reduced insurance rates are available town-wide, not just to those located within the Flood Hazard Zones.

<http://www.ready.gov/be-informed>

<https://www.floodsmart.gov/floodsmart/>

Williamstown is in compliance with NFIP. FEMA is currently updating regulatory standards – actions that will require amending local bylaws in many cases, if eligibility is to be maintained. CVRPC has been assisting communities in responding to these new mandates. Municipalities in Central Vermont have a variety of tools and programs to assist them with mitigation activities. The Town shall also consider reviewing future Stevens/Jail Branch planning documents for future mitigation projects and hazard areas.

Our Community relies on state and federal Public Assistance grants to repair damage after flooding. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), through Vermont Emergency Management (VEM), administers the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP). The State of Vermont, State Emergency Assistance Fund (ERAF) also contributes funds. This program allocates funding to municipalities, following a Presidential-declared disaster, to implement mitigation projects.

⁶ According to the *The Town of Williamstown Local Hazard Mitigation Plan Update*, May 29, 2012,



The Emergency Relief and Assistance Fund (ERAF) provides Public Assistance grants through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to Vermont cities and towns to repair damaged infrastructure after a presidentially declared disaster. The state typically contributes half of the required 25 percent non-federal match for approved projects. Under the new ERAF rule, which went into effect on October 23, 2012, municipalities have 24 months to adopt additional flood hazard mitigation measures to maintain the state cost share for FEMA Public Assistance grants. Municipalities that adopt higher standards can achieve a higher percentage of state funding for post-disaster repair projects – from 12.5 percent to 17.5 percent. Municipalities that adopt the standard set of hazard mitigation measures will continue to receive state funds to cover half of the required non-federal match, or 12.5 percent. Municipalities that have not adopted the basic set of measures will see a decrease in the state match, from 12.5 percent to 7.5 percent.

Thus, the state contribution toward the local match requirement will vary from 7.5 percent to 17.5 percent of the total project costs, depending upon the level of adoption of recommended mitigation measures.”⁷

The adoption and enforcement of the Vermont Agency of Transportation’s “Codes & Standards for Roads” in 2011 ensures the Town and its residents are eligible for the maximum matching funds available from the State. It is important that Williamstown continue to keep abreast of updated requirements to remain eligible for maximum matching grants and relief funds.

In 2013 revisions added to the bridges and culverts sections were “aimed at avoiding future confusion related to FEMA reimbursements. The standards now clearly state the longstanding requirement that culvert replacements must conform to the State’s Stream Alteration regulatory standards.”⁸

Finally, the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission is currently in the process of developing a Regional Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan which will address vulnerabilities and relevant mitigation projects throughout Central Vermont. Depending on the availability of funds, local appendices covering specific concerns and projects for each municipality will be developed in consultation with local officials. Town Officials shall pursue developing projects to be included as a local appendices in the CVRPC Regional Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan.

For more information:

Find the The Town of Williamstown Hazard Mitigation Plan here:

http://floodready.vermont.gov/update_plans/local_hazard_mitigation

Emergency Relief Assistance Fund (ERAF)

http://floodready.vermont.gov/find_funding/emergency_relief_assistance

National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP)

http://floodready.vermont.gov/find_funding/flood_insurance

Road and Bridge Standards 2013

http://floodready.vermont.gov/improve_infrastructure/roads

Local Emergency Operations Plan (LEOP)

http://floodready.vermont.gov/update_plans/local_emergency_operations

⁷ ERAF, as explained by Milley Archer, VLCT, Flood Damage Mitigation Incentives for Municipalities under the New ERAF Rule

⁸ February 1, 2013 Agency of Natural Resources & Agency of Transportation letter re: Town Road and Bridge Standards to municipal officials





Flooding damage on Beckett St. July, 2013



12.5% Mitigation Actions 1 through 4;
 17.5% Mitigation Actions 1 through 5;
 Emergency Relief And Assistance Fund (ERAF)
 National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP)
 Road And Bridge Standards 2013
 Local Emergency Operations Plan (LEOP)
 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP)
 River Corridor Protection
 .5% Mitigation Actions 1 through 5;
 Emergency Relief And Assistance Fund (ERAF)
 National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP)
 Road And Bridge Standards 2013
 Local Emergency Operations Plan (LEOP)

ERAF Summary Report

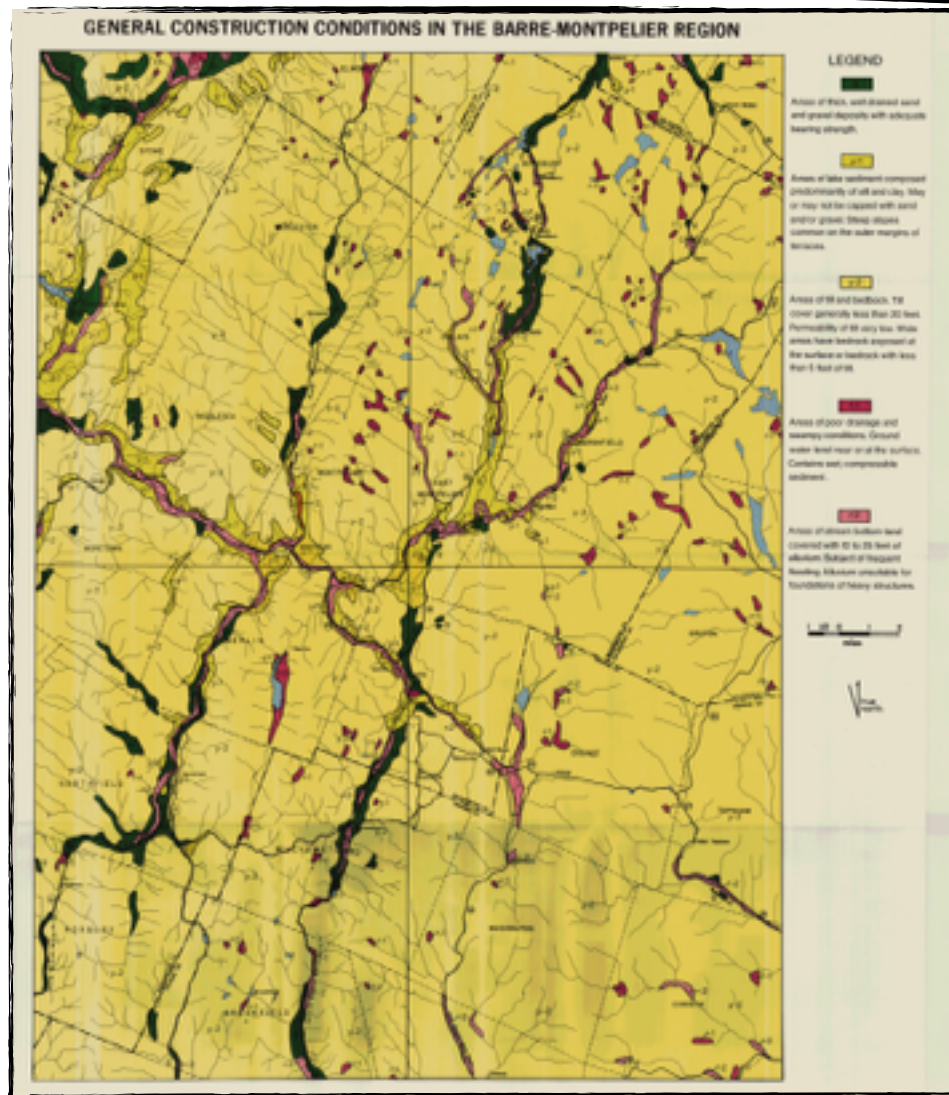
ERAF Rate	(1) NFIP	(2) Rtd Stds	(3) LEOP	(4) LHMP	(5) RC
12.5%	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
RC Interim	NFIP Enrolled	2013 Roads STDS	LEOP (current)	LHMP Approved	RC Bylaw
	07/17/1978	04/01/2013	03/16/2015	06/07/2013	

FEMA Municipal Roads and Summary Report 8/12/2015 5:25 pm Williamstown, Vt

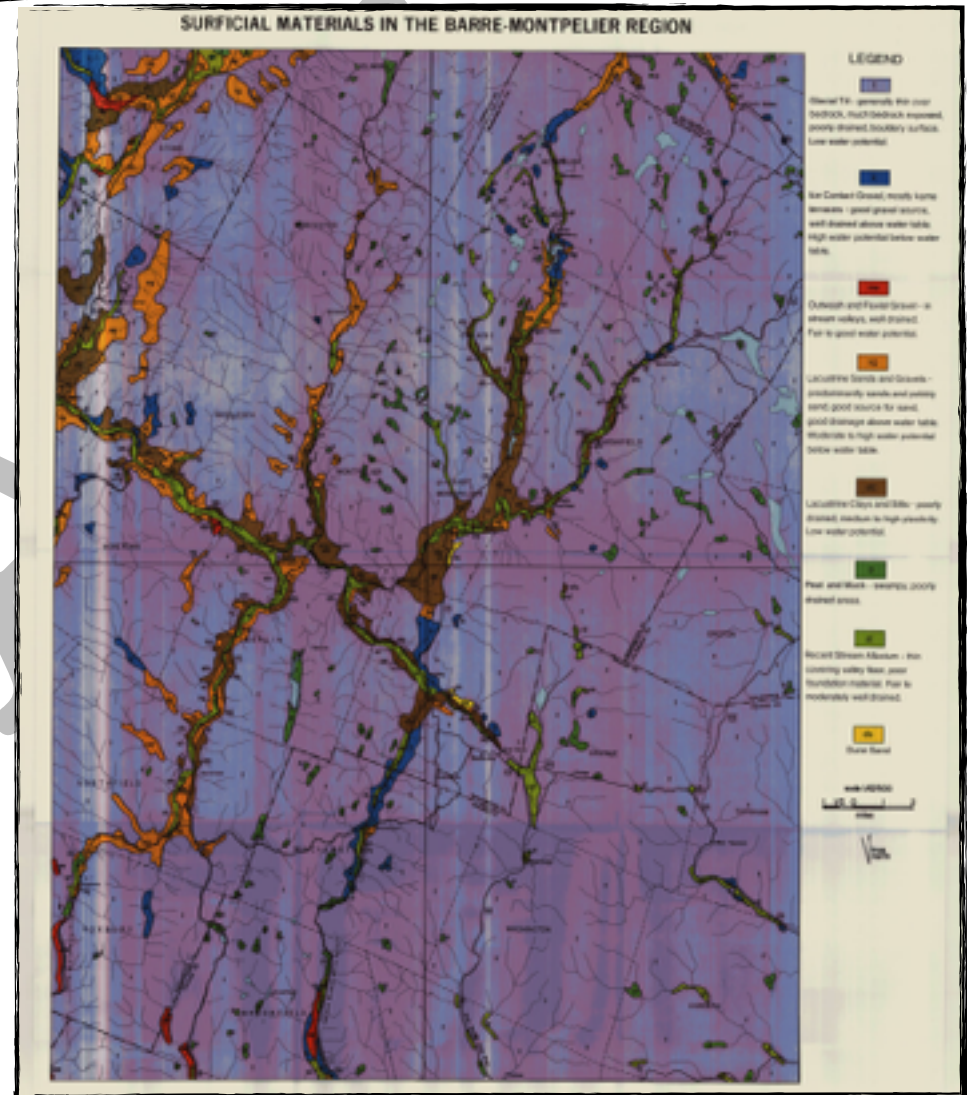
Municipal Bridge & Road Standards	Standard sTemplate Used	Meet or Exceed 2013 Standards?	Certificate of Compliance and Date	Town Highway Network Inventory Date
04/01/2013	2013	Yes	03/16/2015	03/16/2015
State Match for Town Highway Structures (80 or 90%)	State Match for Class 2 Roadways (70 or 80%)	ERAF Rate (7.5%, 12.5%, 17.5%)	Town Highway Miles	VTRANS District and email contact
90%	80%	12.5%	8,146	District 6

Eligible public costs are reimbursed by federal taxpayers at 75%. For disasters after October 23, 2014, the State of Vermont will contribute an additional 7.5% toward the costs. For communities that take specific steps to reduce flood damage the State will contribute 12.5% or 17.5% of the total cost.

General Construction Conditions in the Barre-Montpelier Region



Surficial Materials in the Barre-Montpelier Region





Flood Ready Map

Vermont Agency of Natural Resources

vermont.gov



LEGEND

- Town Boundary
- River Corridors (Jan 2, 2015)

1: 202,226
October 28, 2015



NOTES

Map created using ANR's Flood Ready Map

10,273.0 0 5,136.00 10,273.0 Meters

WGS_1984_Web_Mercator_Auxiliary_Sphere
© Vermont Agency of Natural Resources

1" = 16852 Ft. 1cm = 2022 Meters
THIS MAP IS NOT TO BE USED FOR NAVIGATION

DISCLAIMER: This map is for general reference only. Data layers that appear on this map may or may not be accurate, current, or otherwise reliable. ANR and the State of Vermont make no representations of any kind, including but not limited to, the warranties of merchantability, or fitness for a particular use, nor are any such warranties to be implied with respect to the data on this map.

G. Natural Resources Features & Hazards & Chapter 111-A: Goals, Policies and Tasks

Goal 1:
**Promote sound management,
conservation and use of
Williamstown's natural resources**

**Planning
Commission
Ongoing**

Goal 1 Tasks:

- A. Continue to assist the town in identifying, studying, maintaining, and protecting important natural resources including ecologically sensitive areas.
- B. Promoting public awareness about Williamstown's natural resources and environmental threats
- C. Enlisting public participation identification, protecting, preservation, mapping and enhancement of ecologically sensitive resources
- D. Seeking grants from state and private foundations to educate the community
- E. Educate landowners about fish and wild life habitat management practices

**Planning
Commission
Ongoing**

**Town
Manager
2016**

Goal 2:
**Protect environmental quality
by avoiding undue impact
from human activity and
maintain natural areas that
contribute to Williamstown's
natural resources**

Goal 2 Tasks:

- A. Class 1 and 2 wetlands are considered significant and shall not be drained, filled, or altered to accommodate subdivision
- B. Class 3 wetlands are also considered very important and shall not be drained, filled, or altered to accommodate subdivision without review and issuance of a Conditional Use Designation (CUD) by the state
<http://www.anr.state.vt.us/dec/permits.htm>
- C. Proposals for subdivision of a lot involving or adjacent to an identified wetland will provide a minimum of 50 foot setback for roads, buildings, structures and sewage systems from the wetlands
- D. Undisturbed areas of vegetation should be retained and encouraged along the banks of surface water.
- E. Any activity that would degrade important groundwater supplies is discouraged. Specifically, development activities in designated Wellhead Protection Areas (WHPA <http://www2.epa.gov/water-research/wellhead-protection-area-whpa-model>) shall be carefully reviewed for groundwater impacts
- F. WHPA signs should be located bordering areas considered protected so residents can avoid contaminating important ground water

- G. Goal 2 Tasks: (continued)
- H. New development should be designed so as to minimize impacts on deer yards and critical wildlife habitat
- I. Work with the Department of Forest, Parks and Recreation to assist with the State Management Plan for Ainsworth State Park
- J. Hazardous wastes shall be disposed of properly to prevent any degradation of groundwater
- K. Town should seek funding to administer a survey and study areas of possible contamination through participation in the Central Vermont Brownfields Inventory and Assessment Initiative
- L. Storage and utilization of fertilizers, pesticides, petrochemicals, herbicides, sludge, or other potentially harmful industrial, agricultural, commercial or residential materials, must be accomplished in a manner compatible with consisting regulations
- M. Encourage business practices to not pollute and reduce existing pollution

**Planning
Commission
Ongoing**

**Planning
Commission
Ongoing**

**Health
Officer
Ongoing**

**Town
Manager
2016**

**Health
Officer
Ongoing**

**Town
Manager
2016**



United States Environmental Protection Agency

Goal 3

3. To balance the benefits and uses of sand, gravel, and other mineral and earth resources against the impacts associated with their extraction, processing and transportation

Planning
Commission
Ongoing

Goal 3 Tasks:

- A. Discourage the extraction of sand and gravel in locations that would be unduly detrimental to surrounding land uses or the environmental quality of the area
- B. All areas used to extract mineral and earth resources (sand, gravel, topsoil and granite) will be stabilized during and after the extraction process (including saving topsoil, seeding and planting new trees)

Selectboard
Ongoing

Planning
Commission
Ongoing

Goal 4

Preserve the aesthetic quality and working landscape of the landscape of the Town

Planning
Commission
Ongoing

Goal 4 Tasks:

- A. Support the Vermont Land Trust and the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board
- B. Seek grants for the enhancement of access to scenic areas. Create car turn-offs for viewing vistas, add benches for viewing waterfalls
- C. Discourage ridge-line development or conspicuous development on locally prominent landscape/ scenic features unless effectively screened, or clearly in the best interest of the general public
- D. Encourage "clustered" or "open space" subdivision to promote the preservation of resources by allowing flexibility in the design and siting of buildings

Goal 5

To manage the quality and quantity of storm-water runoff in order to avoid property damage and negative impacts on surface and groundwater

Goal 5 Tasks:

- A. Structural Best Management Practices (BMP's) should be used to control stormwater on new development sites before and after construction (including plans for long-term maintenance and operations. Methods may include diversions, seeding, mulching, check dams, hay bales, inlet protections, sand and compost filters among others)
<http://water.epa.gov/polwaste/npdes/swbmp/>
- B. Acceptable Management Practices (AMP's) should be employed on all agricultural, silvicultural and earth extraction operations
- C. Contractors and landowners are encourage to consult the "Erosion Control Prevention Manual" published by the Vermont Geological Survey prior to undertaking activities which will disturb the soil

Planning
Commission
2016

Selectboard
Ongoing



Goal 6

To avoid where possible, the conflicts, nuisances and hazards associated with land uses that produce dangerous, excessive or otherwise bothersome impacts

**Planning
Commission
Ongoing**

**Selectboard
2018**

Goal 6 Tasks:

- A. Enforce Noise Control Ordinance that establishes a maximum DBA allowance at property line boundaries
- B. Advocate for noise reduction measures in the development review process. Techniques considered could include: restricting hours of operation or construction using vegetated buffer zones to filter sound, taking advantage of topography in designing projects to provide sound barriers (i.e. earth berms and sound walls) and architectural design and materials.
- C. Adopt a Firing Range Ordinance
- D. Advocate for firing ranges or similar uses to be prohibited inside, or with 1/4 mile of village areas. In addition, they will not be permitted within 1/4 mile of an existing residence unless all reasonable measures to prevent danger to hearing are taken. Among the techniques available are: sound barriers, sound walls, and time restriction.

Goal 7

To reduce damage from future flooding events and to prevent changes to the landscape that could increase hazardous flooding conditions. Maintain and update LHMP incorporating the following tasks:

Goal 7 Tasks:

- A. Initiate mapping of Williamstown's Fluvial Erosion risk areas. Areas subject to FEH, from gradual stream bank erosion to catastrophic channel enlargement, bank failure. and change in course due to naturally occurring stream channel adjustments, should be identified and mapped in accordance with accepted State fluvial geomorphic assessment and mapping protocols
- B. Review final revised FEMA flood hazard maps when they become available
- C. Review and update Williamstown's Flood Hazard Ordinance to comply with updated NFIP standards and maps, possibly address fluvial erosion hazards. This should be accomplished through the adoption of a unified overlay district based on the above maps.
- D. Maintain development setbacks distances from smaller streams (those of which an FEH zone has not been mapped) to minimize the potential for flash flood damage. A 50 foot minimum buffer is recommended by VT ANR.
- E. Undersized or blocked bridges and culverts are a main culprit in exacerbating flooding and erosion hazards. Accordingly, Williamstown continues to participate in CVRPC's Bridge and Culvert Program in order to develop a detailed GIS based inventory, with exact locations and specifications for these structures.

**Planning
Commission
Ongoing**

**Selectboard
2018**

Chapter IV. Education & Learning

A. Overview

Education is the process by which people pass knowledge and values to each other. Education gives people new ways of looking at the world and prepares young people for adult roles. Education also prepares adults for new roles. A lack of education opportunities limits an individual's job opportunities, and reduces their ability to provide for basic needs like health-care, housing, and transportation. This is especially true in today's society with its increasing dependency on technology. Quality education is vital to our town's quality of life, now and in the future. Every one of our residents has something to teach and something to learn. This plan seeks to find creative ways to increase opportunities to help residents share their knowledge with their neighbors.

B. Education Attainment

The town education levels are an excellent indicator of our economy and quality of life. While high school graduates are the majority of our town's population, Williamstown's overall education levels lag behind the Region and the State with respect to higher learning.

C. Schools

1. History

The History of Williamstown, Vermont, 1781-1991 (Williamstown Historical Society) reports Williamstown has, over the years, had numerous school districts. A list of those school districts is as follows: Clogston District School (Stone Road), Martin School (originally Graniteville Road moved to McGlynn Hill Road), South Hill School (Graham Road), Lynde School (sharp corner of Hebert Road), Baptist Street School (Baptist Street), Cram School (corner of Northfield Road and Clark Road), Woolcut School (Boyce Street), Quarry School (corner of Tower and McCarty Road), Adams School (Flint Road), Toad Hollow or Gale School (Williamstown-Barre Road) Briggs School (off Chelsea Road), Hatch School (South Hill Road), Alfred Smith School (Weir Road), and the Village School (Construction Hill, Town Hall). Most of the schools closed between 1919 and 1957 due to fires, consolidation, resulting from lack of students and other occurrences.

Most of the elementary school students in the closed schools moved to nearby schools of the Village School, except for those that moved to the Quarry School; this school remained opened until 1971. Over time as other schools closed, all the rest of the students moved to the Village Schools.

Educational Attainment for Adults over 25 Years			
	Williamstown	Orange County	Vermont
Less than 9th grade	3.5%	2.8%	3.0%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	7.3%	5.9%	5.6%
High school graduate or GED	47.9%	35.5%	30.8%
Some college, no degree	19.7%	16.4%	17.3%
Associate's degree	6.9%	9.5%	8.5%
Bachelor's degree	9.0%	16.8%	21.0%
Graduate or professional degree	5.7%	13.1%	13.8%

Source: DP02, 2009-2013 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

In the late 1880's the Village School was moved from Construction Hill to a location behind the Congregational Church. In 1893 a donation of money bought a plot of land at the south edge of the Village and paid for a new school to be built. With a large addition built in 1908, and a gym built in 1937, this school housed the elementary school and the high school until 1962. This building now houses the Post Office and an apartment complex.

Town officials designed the current schools to be located in the Village. The Williamstown Elementary School was built in 1962 on Brush Hill Road. This school has the capacity to serve 300-350 students in grades pre-K through grade 6. Shortly after the new elementary school opened, the State found several major problems with the high school (Old Village School) building. Substantial repairs were made, but other serious problems surfaced. So, a new Williamstown Middle-High School with a capacity of 400-450 students was built just up the hill on Hebert Road in 1973 housing grades 7-12.

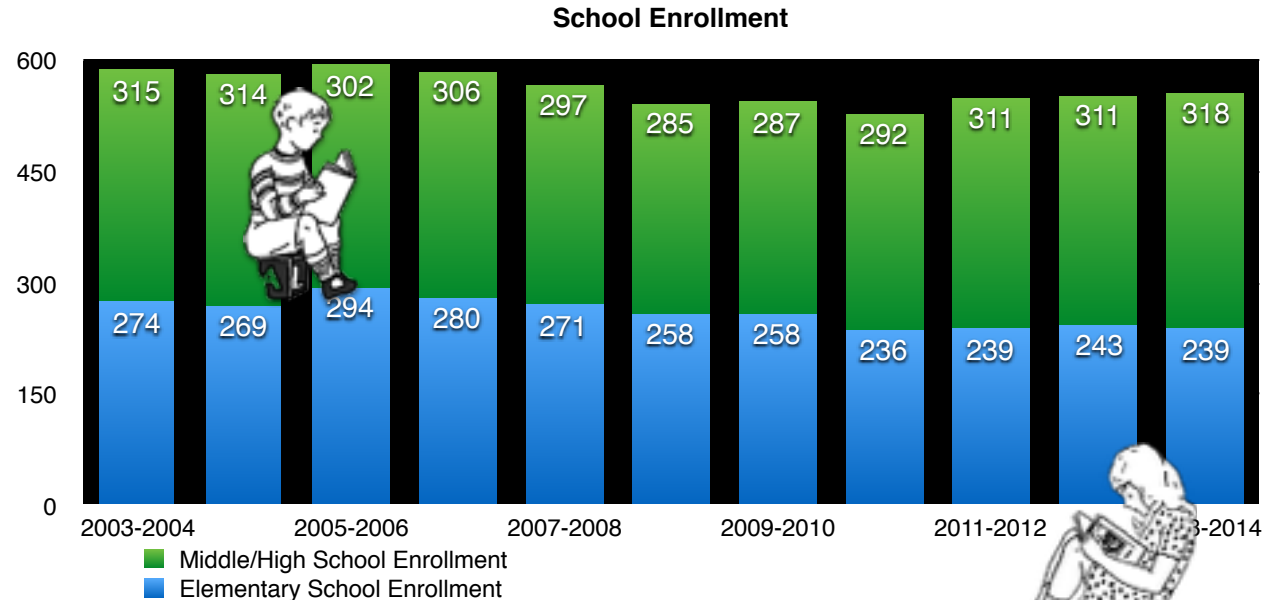
Crowding caused the building of a large addition to the elementary school in 1974. The crowding caused by the addition of kindergarten to the elementary school in 1979 resulted in the 6th grade being moved to the Middle School. (See Appendix II, **Map 3** for the school locations.)

In 2004, the School Board adopted the following mission statement: *"to provide an education that fosters the development of responsible and successful individuals who will practice good citizenship in their local and extended communities"*. In order to meet this challenge, school officials agreed to; build and sustain a safe school system that cultivates academic excellence and life-long learning, recognize the role of parents in the education of their children,

and value a working relationship with the community at large. The schools plan to foster positive connections between adults and the schools by offering public educational opportunities. In addition, they plan to remain accountable to families and the community for both educational results and fiscal responsibility.

In 2014 the board was busy with legislative issues actively meeting with legislators regarding school consolidation and state funding. The board members informed them of the Town's needs, desires and opinions on how local schools in Vermont, Williamstown in particular, should operate. The board wanted the legislators to know how State laws effect the ability of boards to create policies that reflect the Town's commitment to its students academic success.

The Legislature has been considering a proposal for a new school governance model that would phase in the elimination of supervisory unions and the state's roughly 285 local school districts. The School Boards of Williamstown and Northfield have met to begin looking into possibly joining districts.



A exploratory committee is being formed with one school board member from each town, three residents from Williamstown and four from Northfield. The unions would be replaced by larger districts governed by one board that would oversee a large pool of students (900) and a number of facilities. The Burlington School District has been cited as an example by lawmakers. The district has 4,000 students, eight buildings and one board.

2. Enrollment Trends

Student enrollments in both the elementary and middle/high schools have varied since 1995. Orange North Supervisory Union enrollment figures show that Williamstown's student population reflects the overall state trend of a steady decline in its school-age population. According to the School Construction Report, the equalized pupils sorted by growth rates shows that Williamstown's average annual change from fiscal year 2010 to 2014 decreased by 5.43%. Enrollment projections for the State suggest the numbers will fall for the rest of the decade and possibly longer.

3. Funding Challenges

Our current education funding system is a compilation of laws passed over a number of years. Each legislative session generates amendments that change the existing system to some degree. Vermont changes its education finance system with some regularity. We are now on our fifth system in 31 years. (The "Morse-Giuliani" formula replaced the "Miller" formula in 1983).

In 1999, for the purposes of providing a financing system that created equal opportunity in public education, State officials enacted *Act 60*. Under this program towns received an equalized amount of money from the State for every student they enrolled. State officials based the state block grant formula on two variables: equalized pupils (not an actual headcount) and compared it to the statewide average.

In 2003 a new state education funding law, Act 68, amended Act 60. This law changed the way towns compiled their grand list for the statewide property tax. The Act took effect in 2005 and the new changes eliminate the property sharing pool where per pupil spending links to the town's tax rates.

Towns split the grand list between residential properties (houses, mobile homes, or farms) and non-residential property, such as commercial, industrial, camps, vacation homes and open land (not used as a primary residence for more than six months of each year). Under the new law, non-residential property is subject to a higher statewide education property tax rate than residential property.

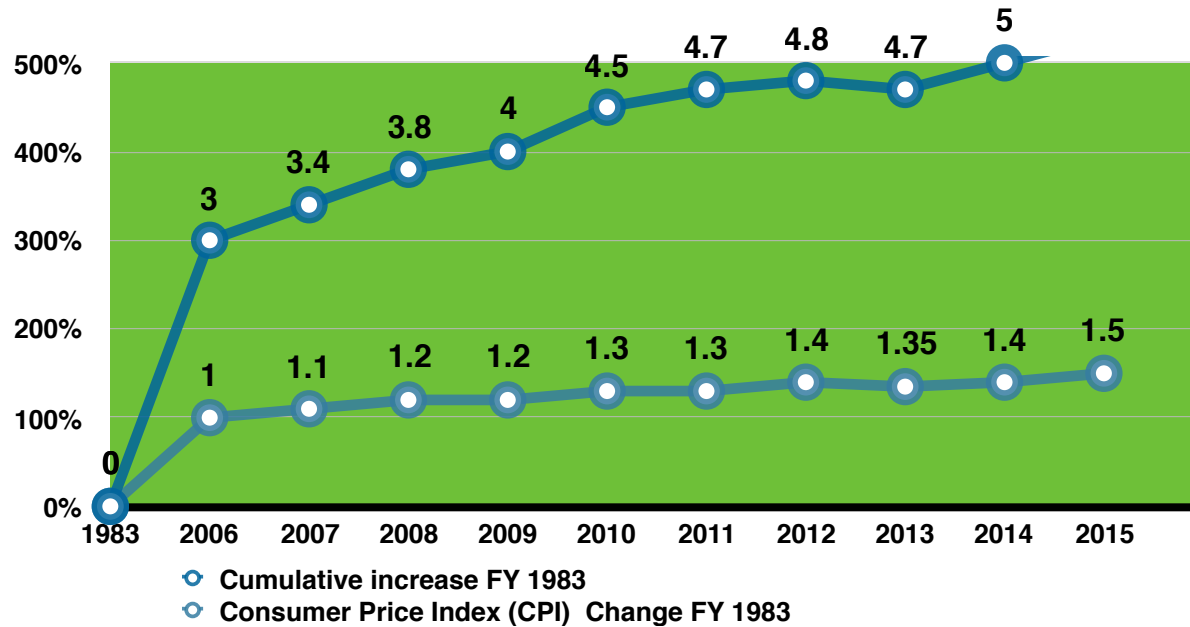
The laws relating to the Current Use Program experienced several changes during the 2015 legislative session. The factsheet below explains the major changes.

Current Use Program Factsheet

The legislature changed the method for determining the value of land that is developed or withdrawn from the Current Use Program. In addition, the rate that is applied to the land's value to determine tax due is now 10% for all land developed or withdrawn. The change in law has the greatest effect when a land owner develops or withdraws only a portion of an enrolled parcel. Under the previous method, the entire enrolled parcel would be assessed and the value of the portion developed or withdrawn would be prorated based on acreage. For instance, if two acres were developed or withdrawn from an enrolled 100 acre parcel, the value of the two acres was assessed at 2% of the value of the entire 100 acre parcel. In cases where the developed or withdrawn land is more valuable per acre than the remaining enrolled land, the land value used to calculate LUCT was below market value.

After Oct. 2, 2015, the portion developed or withdrawn will be valued separately as its own parcel. The 10% tax rate will apply to the separately assessed value of the developed or withdrawn land. In cases where the developed or withdrawn land is more valuable per acre than the remaining enrolled land, this will lead to a greater amount of tax due than it would under the previous calculation.

Vermont St Education Taxes FY 1983-2015



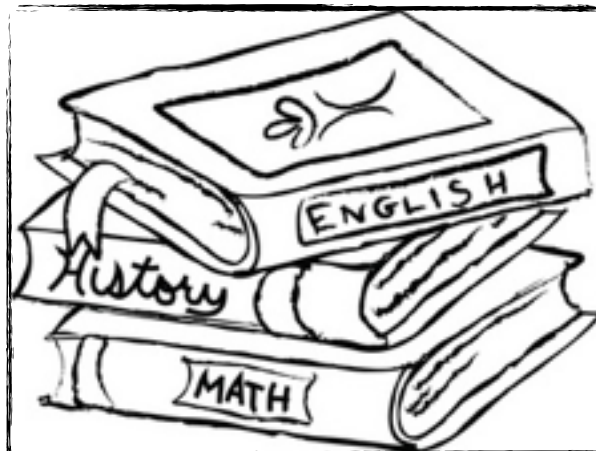
In those towns that have reappraised for 2015, the Current Land Appraisal (CLA) used to calculate the rates will be the ratio of the reappraised 2015 education grand list to the equalized education grand list certified January 1, 2015. The Director of the Division of Property Valuation and Review (PVR) is charged by statute with determining whether a reappraisal has occurred that warrants a new CLA. 32 V.S.A. §5406(c).

Under the changes in the education financing formula, Williamstown school taxes have increased slightly. In 2016 Williamstown's state education tax rate is \$1.5567 and was \$1.5070 in 2015. Generally the only time that the rise in education property taxes levels out or actually drops is upon a dramatic change in the formula used. The only exception is the result of the impacts of the recent Great Recession where, for one year, total Education Fund expenditures actually

declined, followed by a year of basically level-funding before resuming its climb at a rate faster than the increase in the consumer price index.

Since Act 60 was passed, all local education spending (a legal term that includes almost all school budget expenses) is provided from the State Education Fund and technically comes all from state taxes, even though the largest source, the state property tax, is locally billed and collected.

Vermont law (H.361) passed 27-3, on May 7, 2015. An estimated \$14 million increase in school property taxes was approved setting the statewide homestead property tax rate at \$1.59 per \$100.00 for nonresidential property, \$1.00 multiplied by the district education property tax spending adjustment for the municipality for homestead property. The bill also creates a formula for financial incentives for districts to consolidate into Pre-K-12 districts of no fewer than 900 students. Some see this legislation as a threat to small schools and local control. Williamstown school district is currently ranked 204th out of approximately 285 school districts in terms of school spending per equalized student for school year 2014-2015.



http://www.state.vt.us/tax/pdf.word.excel/factsheets/Current-Use-Forms_FS.pdf

http://www.state.vt.us/tax/pdf.word.excel/factsheets/CUProgram2015Changes_June2015.pdf

Today, our school officials are grappling with a number of funding challenges including:

- The number of full-time public classroom teachers, instructional aides, and other teachers has increased while the enrollment has been declining.
- Our school buildings are aging, resulting in building condition deterioration infrastructure and energy inefficiency (the taxpayers will have to either invest in infrastructure or upgrade the buildings)
- Teacher's salaries are increasing and rising health care cost pose significant challenges to the school system
- Residents are expressing concerns about the increasing taxes
- Remaining as Williamstown School District versus the consolidation of School Districts in Vermont

4. Williamstown Elementary School (WES)

WES is working toward their hopes and dreams of creating a fully functioning Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS). The administration and faculty laid the foundation and supports for this program several years ago and in 2015 gained tremendous traction toward realizing implementation of the system.

MTSS challenges all students appropriately; academically, socially and emotionally throughout their education at

Differentiated instruction is an approach to instruction in which the teacher adapts the content, process, and product of lessons in accordance with each student's readiness, learning style, and interests. In differentiated instruction, the learning goals are the same for the entire class, but the required tasks, instructional approach, and materials used vary according to the needs of the individual students. Differentiated instruction is not a single strategy, but rather an approach to teaching that incorporates a variety of strategies.

Distributed leadership means mobilizing leadership expertise at all levels in the school in order to generate more opportunities for change and to build the capacity for improvement. The emphasis is upon interdependent interaction and practice rather than individual and independent actions associated with those with formal leadership roles or responsibilities.

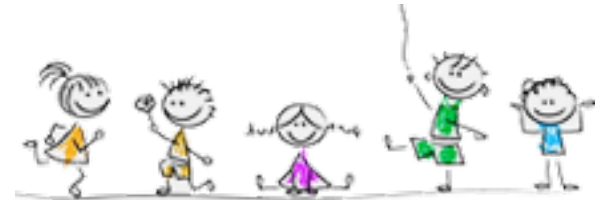
In summary, it is 'leadership by expertise' rather than leadership by role or years of experience. Genuine distributed leadership requires high levels of trust, transparency and mutual respect.

WES leaving students with the fundamental skills necessary to pursue education at Williamstown Middle High School (WMHS) and beyond.

Creating MTSS is one of four goals of WES's newly adopted school improvement plan. Second, is the creation of a **Distributive Leadership Model** and School Based Leadership Team⁹. Third, continue to create a collaborative team environment using data to make informed decisions. Forth, access and use of technology as a tool to enhance student learning and achievement. This plan is the roadmap for WES and aligns with the work at WMHS.

The Williamstown Town School District Improvement Team meets quarterly and monitors continuous progress of the plan ensuring WES is attending to the tasks laid out and revising timeline/tasks as needed. The school improvement team addresses all issues for students PreK-12.

WES transitioned from Vermont Grade Level Expectations (GLE) to Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). The school approached these transitions with the adoption of a Content Area Specialist Model. In 2015 students grade 1-5 received instruction from a content area specialist in Math, Science, English/ Language Arts (ELA) and Social Studies.



⁹ <http://schools.cms.k12.nc.us/oldeprovidenceES/SLT%20Documents/School%20Leadership%20Team%20Handbook%20Basics.pdf>

This allows for targeted intervention and help for students needing extra support. Investment in high quality professional development for teachers in specified content areas gives teachers the expertise required to provide unmatched differentiated instruction in the general classroom. Teachers are diagnostic in their approach providing targeted intervention (extra support) to students requiring it.

MTSS is composed of both academic and social/emotional supports aligned to Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) and the response classroom approach. All faculty members are trained in the response classroom approach.

The revision of WES universal acknowledgement system changed school-wide expectations to statements more intrinsic and reaffirming and created an intensive wrap-around intervention program that is a more proactive, social/emotional intervention program for students. As a result, WES offers 5 weeks of summer enrichment and intervention camps sponsored by the ONWARD program in the areas of Wellness, Arts, Science, ELA and Math, with 2 weeks dedicated to targeted intervention in Math and Reading.

WES partnered with Washington County Mental Health (WCMH) bringing a PBIS Specialist to assist with providing proactive social/emotional interventions for teachers and students resulting in a 15% decrease in office referrals. Employing the PBIS model creates a positive learning environment for all our students and staff allowing for responsible academic risks and high quality instruction.

http://www.williamstownelem.org/pages/Williamstown_Elementary_School

<https://www.facebook.com/williamstownelementaryschool?fref=nf>

5. Williamstown Middle High School (WMHS)

WMHS has a continuous improvement plan aligned with WES's work with MTSS; Distributive Leadership, Differentiated Professional Learning and increased use of technology. The Leadership Team at WMHS has

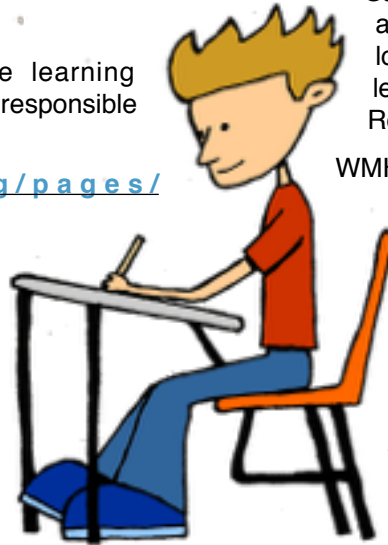
expanded to include a community member, school board member, several students and other stakeholders as identified. This group, along with the Leadership Team, forms a school and community council, meeting three to four times a year, to review progress on implementation of the improvement plan and suggest possible changes in direction. The Leadership Team takes the feedback to continue to develop WMHS differentiated professional development model.

MTSS at WMHS continues the identification of students, through universal screening assessment, who need support to progress and meet the school and state identified measurable goals. WMHS has become the host site for much professional development creating a live laboratory situation benefitting our students with teachers who are learning the latest techniques in their planning, differentiating of instruction and targeted learning outcomes.

Anecdotally, more and more WMHS's students are accepted into post-secondary programs that require a solid foundation in Science. There are clear/ specific expectations for behavior in the classroom, the school and community . When surveyed 100% of students identified the three pillars; Be Respectful, Be Responsible and Be Safe. Teachers meet weekly after school either in teams across Supervisory Unions or middle/high school grades looking at curriculum, assessment and student work leading to development of Performance Based Graduation Requirements and Personalized Learning Plans.

WMHS has been recognized across Vermont for its work with PBIS. WCMH's PBIS Specialist has significantly reduced office referrals resulting in more instruction time and less classroom and school disruption. The WCMH Specialist working in both WES and WMHS creates a uniform approach to the three pillars of PBIS; Respect, Responsibility and Recognition, and the "Blue Devil Way".

http://www.williamstownmhs.org/pages/Williamstown_Middle_High_Sch



6. Physical Location/ Condition

In 2007, the middle and high school both underwent an 8.9 million dollar renovation to update and modernize the building to include an energy efficient wood chipped fired boiler housed in a separate building.

WES has made tremendous progress not only in curriculum development but also in developing and implementing a plan improving the appearance of the building and grounds. Both schools welcome everyone in Williamstown to visit. The schools are always open to the public and the community is welcome to contact the main offices for information increasing school/community partnerships.

7. Home Schooling

Home schooling is an important option for families. During the 2014-2015 school year, Williamstown had between 3 and 10 home schooled students. In accordance with State Board of Education, AOE accountability goals, and Vermont law, The Home Study program works to ensure that all students enrolled in home study programs have access to a quality education. When required, the program provides technical assistance to improve the quality of a home study program¹⁰.

D. Adult Education

Research in adult education increasingly shows that adults are more likely to learn in an informal way, as they do not always have the time to leave work and take formal courses. Adults in Williamstown who want help with learning basic reading, writing, math, and English (as a second language) can receive help through a free program of instruction provided by the Central Vermont Adult Basic Education Program located in Barre. They also have the opportunity to study for their high school equivalency exam or the adult diploma program.

¹⁰ <http://education.vermont.gov/homestudy>

Students and teachers meet in one to one and small group sessions and design an individual learning program to suit the requirements of each adult student. Volunteers from the community help make this service accessible to Williamstown residents.

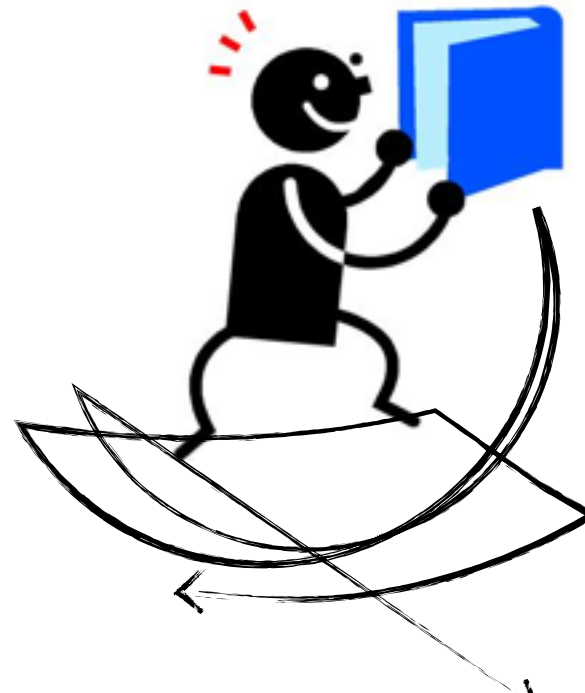
For more information:

The Barre Learning Center is located at 46 Washington Street, diagonally across from the park as you start up the hill on Route 302. Look for the large white building with the green roof and awning.
<http://www.cvabe.org/barre.html>

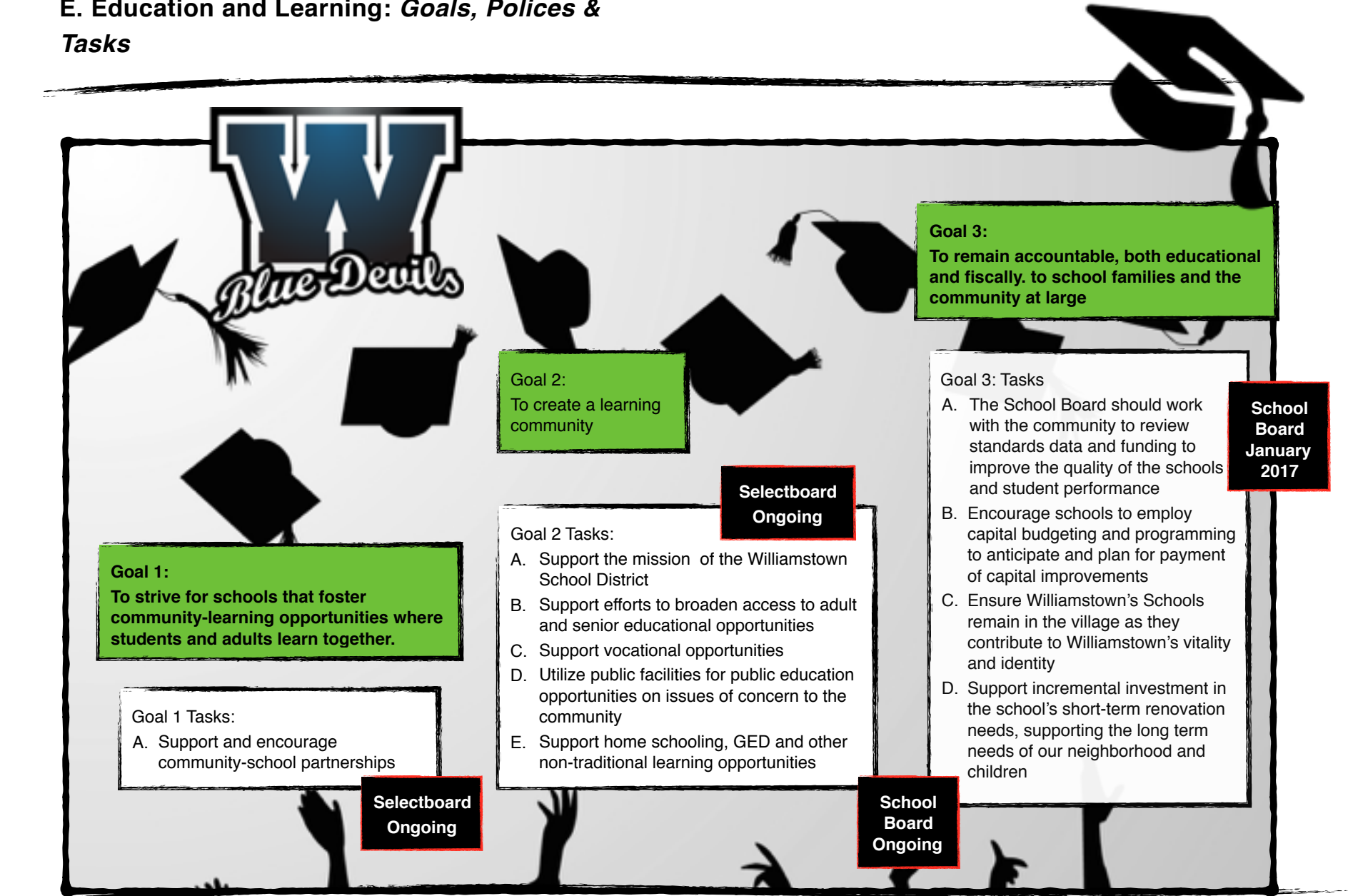
Randolph's Technical Career Center (RTCC's) Continuing Education

Open to all, RTCC's adult education offerings provide a wide range of affordable continuing education opportunities. A full schedule of evening and Saturday classes and workshops are offered throughout the school year. Whether you are looking to become a licensed nursing assistant, learn to weld, improve your computer skills, hone your woodworking skills, or learn to cook, paint, knit, speak a foreign language or cane a chair, their adult education offerings are for you!

http://www.orangesouthwest.org/adult_education



E. Education and Learning: *Goals, Policies & Tasks*



Chapter V. *Housing*

A. Overview

Housing is critical to our existence. The size, location and cost of housing shapes the communities in which we live, impacting local economic development, school enrollment, land use, and transportation patterns; housing is part of the very fabric of our lives. Providing for a range of housing options for a variety of incomes levels and lifestyles and locations that make sense contributes to the vitality and diversity of our community.

This Chapter discusses existing conditions with respect to housing in Williamstown, examines trends, including development patterns and affordability issues, considers Williamstown's expected housing growth and outlines strategies to accommodate future housing demand. Finally, it concludes with a list of resources that can be used by town officials and residents who are interested in this important issue.

B. General Trends and Condition

1. Unit Growth and Household Size

According to the State of Vermont, the definition of a housing unit is: "a house, an apartment, a mobile home or trailer, a group of rooms or a single room occupied as separate living quarters, or if vacant, intended for occupancy as separate living quarters."

As Williamstown's population has grown, housing units in the community have not kept pace. In fact, as the Table suggests, population growth has outpaced housing unit growth in Williamstown.

General Housing Data: Williamstown Vermont			
Source U.S. Census Bureau	Williamstown	Orange	Vermont
Number of Primary Residences Sold, 2014	27	268	7008
...Single Family Homes	23	254	5,946
...Mobile Homes with Land	4	14	185
Average price of Primary Residences Sold, 2014	\$133,091	\$162,077	\$226,663
...Single Family Homes, 2014	\$148,616	\$167,352	\$233,390
...Mobile Homes with Land	\$43,825	\$66,388	\$79,945
Median Gross Rents (all units), 2009-2013	\$848	\$825	\$875
...as a Percentage of Household Income	47.5%	32.8%	31.1%
Fair Market Rent HUD (FMR) 2015	\$894	\$894	-
Median Rents HUD 2015	\$940	\$940	

The average household size in Williamstown has decreased from 3.65 persons per household (pph) in 1970 to 2.45 pph in 2010, according to U.S. Census data. However, it remains slightly above State and Regional averages (2.34 and 2.37 respectively).

Economic and demographic forecast projections prepared by CVRPC predict that the figure for Williamstown will continue to decrease to about 2.36 pph in 2020. The divergence between housing unit growth and population is especially evident over recent years.

Household and Family Sizes		
	2000	2010
Household Size	2.58	2.45
Family Size	3.01	2.87
Source: Census 2000 and 2010 Summary File 1 - Households and Families		

This suggests that the Town must continue to plan for growth and development despite an apparently decreasing population.

In 2008 the Central Vermont Regional Plan adopted a **Housing Distribution Plan** as part of its Regional Plan. This document asks municipalities to plan for future estimated housing need through the year 2020. The numbers for Williamstown appear in **the charts** below.

CVRPC Housing Distribution Plan				
Year	2000-2004	2005-2009	2010-2014	2015-2020
Projected New Units	84	131	140	162
Actual New Units	73	67	--	--
Source: CVRPC 2008 Regional Plan				

2. Unit Type/ Condition

According to the 2010 U.S. Census, the vast majority of housing units in Williamstown are single family, owner occupied homes. From 2009-2013 there were 1,114 owner occupied housing units with 283 rental occupied units. The median year householders moved into their home is 2000 for all occupied units and 1998 for owner occupied units.



General Housing Data: Williamstown Vermont/ Unit Type/Condition				
	Source U.S. Census Bureau	Williamstown	Orange	Vermont
Housing Units Lacking Complete Plumbing Facilities (estimates 2009-2013)		30	584	7,903
Housing Units Lacking Complete Kitchen Facilities (estimates 2009-2013)		49	608	7,903
Median Year Structure Built		1980	1973	1973

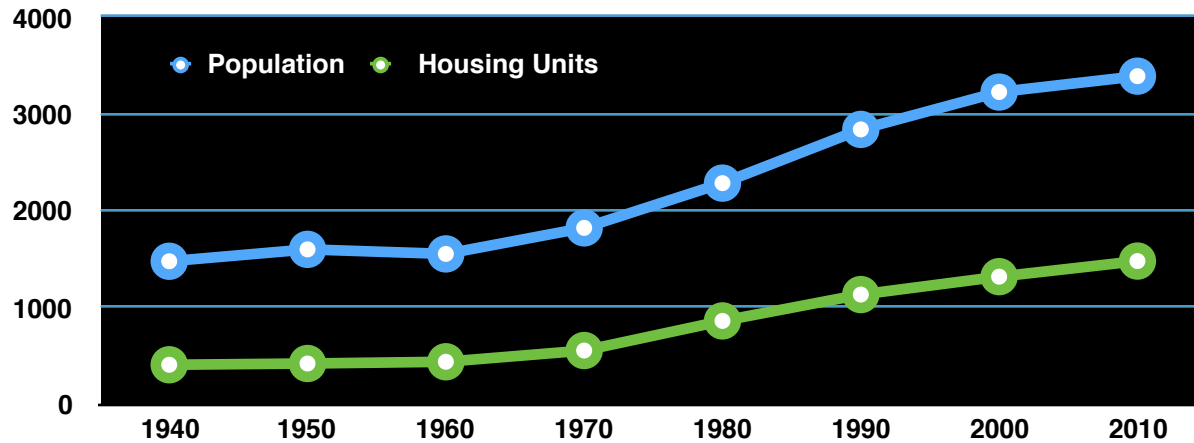
3. Density, Location and Distribution

In the early twentieth century towns and villages were characterized by compact neighborhoods surrounded by rural countryside. In recent decades, however, much of the housing growth in Vermont (and Williamstown) is happening outside of village centers (See Appendix II, **Map 1**) . As we perpetuate this pattern we are in danger of losing not only our unique character, but a variety of other attributes as well.

It has been demonstrated that the benefits of developing denser, compact housing within or close to village and town centers at historic settlement densities are numerous and include:

- decreased land costs due to smaller lot sizes
- decreased development costs due to proximity to existing infrastructure
- increased opportunities to develop a variety of housing options for different lifestyles
- decreased automobile dependency due to proximity to amenities such as schools, shops, services and jobs
- increased vitality and economic activities in Village Centers
- increased viability of mass transportation
- preservation of natural resources such as agricultural land and water resources

Housing and Population Growth, CVRPC



Rural communities can promote compact housing by providing density bonuses and other incentives for “clustered” development”, or by finding suitable locations for village expansion. Accessory homes, co-housing and co-building are all viable solutions for the Town. Williamstown, with public water and wastewater infrastructure and capacity, is in a better position than most small Vermont towns to realize these “smart growth” principles.

Without land use regulations, however, it is difficult to influence developers, and potential developers, to conform to this vision.

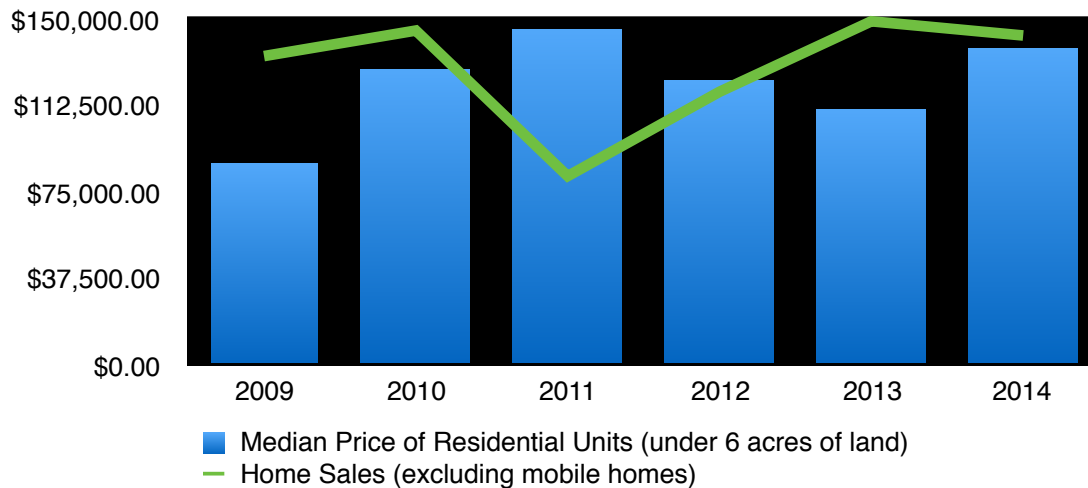
General Housing Data: Williamstown Vermont, U.S. Census Bureau			
Housing Demand	Williamstown	Orange County	Vermont
Total Population 2010	3,389	28,936	625,741
In occupied housing units	3,376	28,221	600,412
Owner occupied	2,828	22,769	444,608
Renter occupied	548	5,452	155,804
Total Group quarters in population	13	715	25,329

The previously mentioned CVRPC Housing Distribution Plan asks towns to provide in their municipal plans, a map showing preferred locations for accommodating anticipated future units, as well as a map displaying the locations of new units during the preceding five year period. Both of these maps may be found in the Appendices to this Plan. Vermont continues to be one of the most rural states, but the way in which land is used has undergone substantial change in recent years.

Cluster Development also known as conservation development is a site planning approach that is an alternative to conventional subdivision development. It is a practice of Low Impact Development that groups residential properties in a proposed subdivision closer together in order to utilize the rest of the land for open space, recreation or agriculture. Cluster development differs from a planned unit development (PUD) due the fact that a PUD contains a mix of residential, commercial, industrial, or other uses, whereas the cluster development primarily focuses on residential areas.

Co-housing communities are intentional, collaborative neighborhoods created with a little ingenuity. They bring together the value of private homes with the benefits of more sustainable living. That means residents actively participate in the design and operation of their neighborhoods, and share common facilities and good connections with neighbors. All in all, they stand as innovative and sustainable answers to today's environmental and social problems.

Home Sales



C. Affordability

The Vermont State standard for housing affordability housing as “affordable” if the household is paying no than 30 percent of its income for rent and utilities or for mortgage, taxes and insurance. This standard may be too high when considering the rising costs of other necessities, such as health care, fuel, and child care, but it remains the basis for defining affordable housing. So, affordability is determined by two factors: the cost of housing and the ability of people to pay that cost.

Vermont is the only state in the nation that saw a drop in housing prices for single family homes in the four quarters leading up to winter 2014, according to the federal Housing Price Index. The value of single-family homes dropped about 1.24 percent between the first quarter of 2014 and the same period a year ago. Prices have shrunk by 1.32 percent since 2009. Buyers continue to be uncertain as a large number of houses remain longer and longer on the market.



In 2000 the median household income in Williamstown was \$45,859, between 2009-2013 the median household income was \$48,952. showing very little increase in wages.

In 2006 the average cost of units sold (22 in total) was \$180,322, and even mobile homes averaged \$118,000. In 2014 the average cost of units sold (27 in total) was \$133,091 and mobile homes with land (4 sold in total) coming in at \$43,825.

The February 2015 market report from the Vermont Association of Realtors, based on data from the Multiple Listing Service (MLS) system, showed a 7.5 percent increase in closed sales, a 3.2 percent increase in median sales price and 9.2 percent decrease in the number of homes for sale in the state. Those numbers show the difference from the same data for February 2014.

The Vermont Real Estate Market continues to show a rebound after one of the most difficult periods in real estate history. Experts predict the trend will continue in 2015. Homes that are “priced right” at the top of the competitive value are selling fast. First-time homebuyers and younger buyers, who deferred buying homes during the recession, are beginning to enter the market this year.

This situation is not much better in the rental market. In 2000 the median gross rent in Williamstown was \$450/month The average rent for a two bedroom apartment was \$852/month in 2009. In 2015 the rent was \$845/ month.

In Vermont, a minimum wage worker earns an hourly wage of \$8.60. In order to afford the Fair Market Rents (FMR) for a two-bedroom apartment, a minimum wage earner must work 86 hours per week, 52 weeks per year.

Or a household must include 2.2 minimum wage earners working 40 hours per week year-round in order to make the two-bedroom FMR affordable In Vermont.

The estimated mean (average) wage for a renter is \$11.67. In order to afford the FMR for a two-bedroom apartment at this wage, a renter must work 63 hours per week, 52 weeks per year. Or, working 40 hours per week year-round, a household must include 1.6 workers earning the mean renter wage in order to make the two-bedroom FMR affordable. The Vermont Affordable Housing report Titled “Out of Reach 2013,” reveals that Vermont renters must earn \$18.53 per hour or \$38,541 a year just to afford a basic, no-frills apartment. Vermont now ranks as the 15th most expensive state in the nation for renters and the ninth most costly among non-metropolitan areas.

For more information:

<http://www.city-data.com/income/income-Williamstown-Vermont.html>

<http://www.city-data.com/real-estate/WILLIAMSTOWN-VT-05679.html>

D. Special Needs Housing

1. Elderly/ Low Income

Central Vermont will experience changes in the growth and decline of certain age groups. Householders between the ages of 25-44 are 26.96% of the Town’s population while householders between ages 45-64 are a close 29.7% of the population. The number of householders 65-84 years old is 16.13%. Our youngest residents 0-4 comprise 4.27% and our oldest 85 and over come in at 1.83%.

Vermont’s rental housing environment is a difficult challenge for the 15,889 Vermonters who live on Supplemental Security Income, or SSI. Monthly SSI checks are currently \$745 in 2015. The average FMR for a one-bedroom apartment in Vermont, \$848 would consume an entire SSI check and then some.

A Vermonter living on SSI can afford about the SSI allocated amount for housing of \$236 per month. For an efficiency apartment 68% of an SSI check is needed for rent and a one bedroom would eat up 95% of that same check.

905 families in Williamstown lived in poverty level status between 2009-2013 and 364 residents had incomes below the poverty level. 11 children 4 and under, 22 children 18 and under and 30 families live below poverty level. Williamstown needs to provide a range of affordable low, middle and high end housing to accommodate all income levels.

Williamstown has served its elderly and low income populations over the years with the development of the following projects:

- Williamstown Square (22 one-bedroom units)
- Meadowbrook Place (15 units)
- Limehurst Mobile Home Park
- The Gardens, a retirement community, offering rental apartments according to income. In 2004, The Gardens added an additional 21 new apartments
- Northwind Trailer Park

The town of Williamstown continues to strive to meet the need for housing that the elderly and low income residents can comfortably afford. We encourage future development of housing that will help balance the taxable property.



2. Disabled Population

Williamstown offers specialized housing opportunities for its non-elderly, disabled residents at Second Spring Residential Community located on Rte 64. A new Second Spring assisted living residence on Construction Hill Rd. opened and Washington County Mental Health runs an assisted living residence on Saldi Heights.

The 2009-2013 Vermont Housing Data, a collaborative project of Vermont's housing community, reported that 19% of Williamstown's population is diagnosed with a disability. 8% individuals between the ages of 5-17 years old, 14% between the ages of 18 and 64, and 53% of individuals age 65 or over met the definition at that time.



3. Homeless



Homelessness in Central Vermont is growing, yet it is a problem which is not easily tracked. Homeless persons are not counted in the Census and many times they do not seek assistance or shelter at local facilities. Some 'couch surf' at homes of friends and family, some seek shelter in tents or in their cars. Others may find shelter in abandoned lots or buildings.

The Good Samaritan Haven in Barre is an overnight emergency homeless shelter serving singles and families, and is the only homeless shelter in the area. Half of all guests are from Washington County, a quarter come from other areas of Vermont and the remainder are from the rest of the country. Whether passing through or looking to settle again soon, all are welcomed and there is no charge for any services. They are open from 6:30 pm until 7:00 am. The average length of stay for a client in Good Samaritan Haven is either seven days up to two months. The emergency food shelf is available to anyone who comes to their door or calls and says they are in need of food are always referred to local food shelves. Given hours of operation; a person who comes multiple times can meet with a Case Coordinator to discuss the issues causing that person's lack of food security and additional referrals may be appropriate.

They provide a central location for community members to obtain, and receive assistance filling out, housing applications through their Rental Opportunity Center. Staff is available for assistance, as well as computer access and hard copies of applications for local housing authorities. The Center is open on Tuesdays from 10 a.m. - noon, and appointments are appreciated. In 2009, they served over 4,500 meals, provided support services, hope and opportunity to over 325 people and assisted more than 75 people in obtaining or remaining in affordable housing.

E. Fair Housing Laws & Municipal Response

State and Federal housing laws help protect against housing discrimination. Under the Federal Fair Housing Act and its 1988 amendments, individuals may file complaints alleging housing discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, gender, handicap, or familial status. Individuals may also allege related acts of discrimination that are governed by other federal laws such as the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Vermont law (9 VCS §4503) prohibits any person from engaging in unfair housing practices such as the refusal to sell or rent, as well as many other actions involved in the advertisement, financing, and brokering of a dwelling.

While the federal Fair Housing Act prohibits housing discrimination based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability, and familial status (i.e., presence of children in the household) it does not specifically include sexual orientation and gender identity as prohibited biases. A lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender (LGBT) person's experience with sexual orientation or gender identity housing discrimination, however, may still be covered by the Fair Housing Act.

In addition, housing providers that receive HUD funding, have loans insured by the Federal Housing Administration (FHA), as well as lenders insured by FHA, may be subject to HUD program regulations intended to ensure equal access of LGBT persons.



A municipality has fair housing responsibilities regardless of whether or not the Federal Government has funded the activity that is the basis for the complaint. A fair housing violation does not require a discriminatory intent; a violation can be found simply because municipal officials carried out regular activities in a routine way and failed to recognize their special fair housing responsibilities.

In addition Chapter 117 §4412 outlines required provisions and prohibited effects by which municipalities must abide. Municipalities carry out four broad categories of activities that affect housing. Each can trigger municipal fair housing responsibilities:

- **Regulatory activities-** When a municipality enacts and administers regulations (e.g. zoning or building codes)
- **Provision of services-** When a municipality provides routine services in residential areas or to residents
- **Provision of subsidies-** When a municipality offers financial incentives (e.g. grants, loans or loan guarantees or special services (e.g. infrastructure projects or housing rehabilitation services) to residential property owners or to residents
- **Proprietary activities-** When a municipality buys or sells real property, particularly if the property was used or will be used as a residence

F. Federal Programs

The Office of Housing provides vital public services through its nationally administered programs. It oversees the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) the largest mortgage insurer in the world, as well as regulates housing industry business.

The mission of the Office of Housing is to:

- Contribute to building and preserving healthy neighborhoods and communities
- Maintain and expand homeownership, rental housing and healthcare opportunities
- Stabilize credit markets in times of economic disruption
- Operate with a high degree of public and fiscal accountability
- Recognize and value its customers, staff, constituents and partners

Within the Office of Housing are four business areas:

1. Single Family Housing

- HUD's Single Family programs include mortgage insurance on loans to purchase new or existing homes, condominiums, manufactured housing, houses needing rehabilitation, and for reverse equity mortgages to elderly homeowners.

2. Multifamily Housing

- HUD's Multifamily programs provide mortgage insurance to HUD-approved lenders to facilitate the construction, substantial rehabilitation, purchase and refinancing of multifamily housing projects.

3. Healthcare Programs

- HUD's Healthcare programs provide mortgage insurance on loans that finance the construction, renovation, acquisition, or refinancing of healthcare facilities such as hospitals and residential care facilities.

4. Regulatory Programs

- HUD's Regulatory programs are designed to assist homeowners, homebuyers, and regulate real estate transactions.



G. Online Housing Resources

State Housing Authority

www.vsha.org/

Vermont. gov Housing, Utilities and Property

<http://www.vermont.gov/portal/residents/index.php?id=59>

Vermont Housing Data- Directory of Affordable Rental Housing (DoRAH)

<http://www.housingdata.org/doarh/tenant-based.php>

Housing Vermont

<http://www.hvt.org/>

Vermont Association of Planning and Development Agencies

<http://www.vapda.org/>

Vermont Department of Community Affairs, which includes the Vermont Needs Assessment

http://accd.vermont.gov/strong_communities/housing/housing_resources

Vermont Agency of Commerce & Development; Department of Housing and Community Development

http://accd.vermont.gov/strong_communities/housing/housing_resources/fair_housing

Vermont Affiliates Habitat for Humanity

<http://vthabitat.org/vt-housing-assistance>

NeighborWorks Alliance of Vermont Full affordable housing services, including disaster assistance

<http://www.vthomeownership.org/>

Vermont Department of Children and Families

Emergency / General Assistance

http://dcf.vermont.gov/esd/emergency_general_assistance

Vermont Affordable Housing Coalition

<http://www.vtaffordablehousing.org/>

DOWNSTREET Housing and Community Development

(formerly Central Vermont Land Trust)

<http://downstreet.org/>



General Housing Data: Williamstown Vermont- Income			
Source: U.S. Census Bureau	Williamstown	Orange	Vermont
Per Capita Income (Census) 2009-2013	\$24,502	\$27,289	\$30,587
Median Household Income (Census) 2009-2013	\$48,952	\$52,480	\$54,267
Median Homeowner Household	\$59,038	\$58,279	\$64,771
Median Renter Income	\$17,416	\$28,285	\$30,943
Annual Average Wage (Vermont DOL) 2013	\$34,587	\$35,216	\$42,041
Income needed to afford an apartment at HUD's Financial Management Regulation (FMR), 2015; 2 bedroom unit	\$35,760	\$35,760	43,011
Housing Wage 0 Bedroom Unit	\$10.23	\$10.23	\$14.71
Housing Wage 1 Bedroom Unit	\$14.37	\$14.37	\$16.07
Housing Wage 2 Bedroom Unit	\$17.79	\$17.79	\$20.68
Housing Wage 3 Bedroom Unit	\$21.40	\$21.40	\$25.95
Housing Wage as % of state minimum wage -0 Bedroom Unit	112%	112%	161%
Housing Wage as % of state minimum wage -1 Bedroom Unit	157%	157%	176%
Housing Wage as % of state minimum wage -2 Bedroom Unit	188%	188%	226%
Housing Wage as % of state minimum wage -3 Bedroom Unit	234%	234%	284%



Source: US Census Bureau	Williamstown	Orange	Vermont
Monthly SSI payments 2015	\$785	\$785	\$785
Amount available for housing	\$236	\$236	\$236
% needed for Efficiency Apartment	68%	68%	97%
% needed for 1-Bedroom Apartment	95%	95%	107%
Residents with a Disability	19%	115%	13%
Residents below Poverty Level	364	3,701	70,083
Households with Public Assistance Income	41	608	7,903

H. Housing: *Goals, Policies & Tasks*

Goal 1:
Encourage the development of housing opportunities to meet the current and future needs of diverse social and economic groups

Planning Commission
Ongoing

Goal 1 Tasks:

- A. Investigate the current supply of housing needed for our future growth and determine options for developing more housing to fill the need
- B. Educate the community about the Community Land Trust, Rural Housing Development Loans, and other opportunities that help low income people purchase houses

Goal 2:
To offer a range of rental and ownership opportunities for all income groups in order to meet the Town's projected housing units needed by 2020.

Planning Commission
Ongoing

Goal 2 Tasks:

- A. Encourage a balance between affordable, middle and high-end housing opportunities.
- B. Encourage mixed use development in the villages
- C. Promote the conservation and preservation of existing housing by seeking state funds to inventory and preserve historical houses.

Historical Society
2017

Goal 3:
Consider the relationship between land use patterns, land use policy and housing development

Goal 3 Tasks:

- A. Maintain traditional compact settlement patterns to efficiently use land resources and infrastructure investments by encouraging high density housing in village areas and "cluster housing developments in all districts, promoting the preservation of resources and flexibility in design keeping with the rural character
- B. Strive to direct anticipated new development through the year 2020 to the area(s) depicted on Map 3, and in accordance with CVPRC's Housing Distribution Plan
- C. Support the development of multi-family and accessory dwelling units, particularly in village areas
- D. Continue to track and map the location of new residential units as they are constructed to identify market trends and compare actual development to desired patterns of growth

Goal 4:
Review and update the Town's Solid Waste Ordinance

Planning Commission
2016

Goal 5:
Adopt a construction registry that would serve as a reporting tool for the Lister's Office

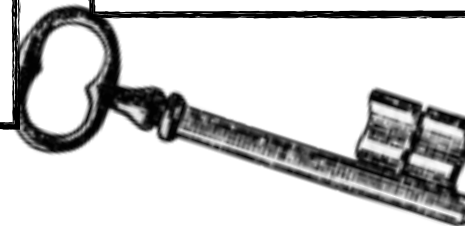
Goal 5 Tasks:

- A. Prior to construction, residents would inform the town clerk of any construction that would have an impact on the tax rate (the town clerk would be recording this information for the Lister's Office
- B. Assist the town in providing information that would impact any services
- C. Assure the grand list is current and up to date

Town Clerk
2016

Listers
Ongoing

Planning Commission
Ongoing



Chapter VI. Community Utilities, Facilities, Services & Organizations

A. Overview

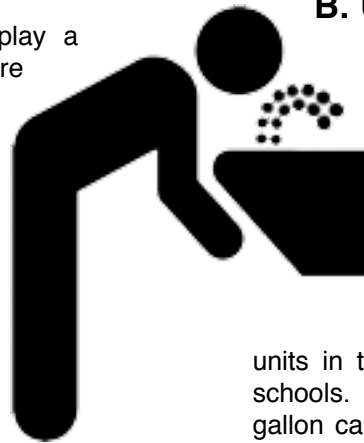
Public and private utilities, facilities, and services play a critical role in providing for the health, safety, and welfare of Williamstown's citizens. All of us depend, in one way or another, upon water distribution systems, solid waste and sewage disposal, electric power, police and fire protection.

The location, condition and availability of services and facilities can have a profound influence on growth and development. Homes, businesses, and industry tend to concentrate where utilities and facilities are readily available, while areas remote from infrastructure and services are more costly and difficult to develop and often contain important natural resources as well. Communities, through the thoughtful placement of infrastructure, may direct growth to the most suitable location, or away from areas where change may have undesirable impacts.

The condition and scale of utilities, facilities and services also needs to be considered. Where facilities are oversized and underutilized they may encourage unplanned growth, or operate inefficiently and at unnecessary financial expense to residents. For systems that are at capacity and/or outdated, further development may cause

A public water system (PWS) is a system for the provision to the public of water for human consumption through pipes or other constructed conveyances, if such system has at least fifteen service connections or regularly serves at least twenty-five individuals.

The public drinking water systems regulated by EPA, and delegated states and tribes, provide drinking water to 90 percent of Americans. These public drinking water systems, which may be publicly- or privately-owned, serve at least 15 service connections or 25 persons.



environmental damage. Failure to upgrade municipal systems may stall new growth or push it away from growth-designated areas. Williamstown can avoid the above scenarios through the appropriate timing and sizing of infrastructure improvements.

B. Utilities

1. Water Supply

Much of the drinking water outside of the village comes from private wells. The amount and quality of ground water is of great importance to the town because it is the sole source for drinking and Williamstown's water system has changed dramatically over the years. (See Map 3 to see the location of our town water system.)

The construction of our municipal water system was completed in 1971-1972 and serves most of the dwelling units in the main part of the Williamstown Village, as well as the schools. In 2005-2006 the town installed a new concrete 675,000-gallon capacity reservoir on Rood Pond Road adjacent to the town well.

Transmission mains connect the village areas to the water supply. During the 1970's and 1980's the town completed several projects to upgrade and extend the water distribution system. In the mid 1980's, the water source for the town became impacted by dry cleaning solvents and the town completed the siting of a new water source.

In 1991 and 1992, a new town well was drilled, replacing one that had become impacted by dry cleaning solvents. The new well is located at an upland well site just south of Mountain View Development off the Rood Pond Road. Residents in the Consent Decree Zone were required to stop using their own wells and attach their drinking water pipes to the town water system. The Mountain View Development was also hooked-up to the new town water system when it was constructed.

In 1992, the Insurance Services Office (ISO) conducted hydrant testing of the Williamstown water system and identified significant deficiencies in supply pressure and flow at the high school. Moderate deficiencies were found on Route 14 near the industrial center. The new reservoir and pump system addressed these problems. The new reservoir and pump are capable of producing 400 gpm (gallons per minute).

The town built a pre-stressed concrete water storage tank that has a 675,000 gallon capacity. The resulting water pressures have cured the deficiencies in the system. The system has been producing a sufficient average, 27 to 28 million gallons per year. The storage capacity offers a buffer for peak demands during certain times of the year, Fire Department usage, or substantial leaks. With a possible maximum production of 576,000 gallons per day the system could easily meet double the current demand.

The Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) has identified several Well-Head Protection Areas (WHPA) within Williamstown. (see Appendix II, **Map 3**) These areas are defined as "the surface and sub-surface area surrounding a spring of well water supplying a public water system through which contaminants are likely to move toward and reach such water supplies." A WHPA may also be referred to as a "recharge area", or in Vermont law as a "public water source protection area." The WHPA is divided into 3 zones that require increasing levels of source protection closest to the well. The DEC requires that municipalities develop a "source protection plan" designed to minimize contamination risks within these areas. The town has a Well Head protection policy that can be reviewed at the Williamstown town hall.

Without zoning bylaws Williamstown has limited mechanisms to use for monitoring and restricting development, land uses, and activities from these sensitive zones. Preventative measures can save people's health, the town's money, and avoid water supply disruptions.



2. Wastewater

a. Public

Williamstown village and some outlying areas are served by municipal sewer systems. Williamstown's own plant, constructed in 1969, currently serves about 360 customers. About 26 residences in Graniteville are served by the Barre Town system. Residents in both service districts are charged user fees for system maintenance and hook-up fees are required for new development. (Appendix II, **Map 3** depicts the location of the town's sewer capabilities.)

The Williamstown sewer collection system has three pump stations located at Industrial Road, Business Park and Mountain View. The sewer system is a gravity collection system.

Treatment of the waste is by an aerated dual lagoon system located at the end of Vesper Street. The system has a design capacity of .150 million gallons per day (MGD), an average daily flow of .089 MGD, and a committed reserve of 6,948 MGD and an uncommitted reserve of 59,469 gallons. Its uncommitted reserve capacity could accommodate a little over 100 additional average single-family residences.

The residents of Williamstown voted by Australian ballot in 2015 to authorize a \$1.7 million fund to refurbish Williamstown's Wastewater Treatment Facility. Over the past 45 years the facility has not gone through any major upgrades. Most of the equipment of WWTF is original and reaching the end of its useful life.

This project addresses the following deficiencies :

- Existing chlorine contact tank does not meet State design guidelines and the cinderblock baffling is falling
- The limited headworks at the facility has caused issues with floatable materials and solids collecting in Lagoon No. 1
- The aeration blowers and controls are original and inefficient as well as difficult to find replacement parts for. It is expected that upgrading the blowers will result in significant energy savings.

The refurbishment project will allow space allocated for the chemical storage required to provide phosphorous removal in the future as part of the Lake Champlain Daily Maximum Load (TDML) for phosphorous that is expected to be finalized. Construction of a new 800 sf Operations Building to replace the existing building will begin in 2016. It will have an expanded footprint for headworks screenings, a mechanical fine screen, bypass channel with bar rack and a Blower/Electrical Room. There will be chemical feed and storage space for disinfection and space for future phosphorous removal chemical storage. An Office/Lab space and restroom complete the building. The existing blowers will be replaced and a new chlorine tank will be constructed.

In the future, the treated sewerage discharge point for the system will be extended to the new bridge on Brockway Hill road to improve the discharge into a waterway with a higher flow rate. There are no known needs to replace sewer mains. Extension of the collection mains beyond the present service area would be the financial responsibility of a developer if capacity is not an issue. The service area, however, will be limited to the village area and have a clear boundary between the rural areas.

The Graniteville area of Cogswell is served by a municipal sewer from Barre Town through an inter-municipal agreement.

b. On-Site

The majority of homes and buildings in Williamstown have on-site, underground seepage disposal, as about three quarters of the Williamstown population lives in rural areas outside of the service territories of Williamstown Wastewater Treatment Facility. The proper treatment of septic waste is essential to a clean and healthy environment. As our population grows, sanitary disposal will become more important. Effective June 14, 2002, all new subdivision of property must obtain a permit from the state certifying the adequacy of septic design. It is also important to note that as of 2002, applications for "performance based" systems (as opposed to conventional, leach area systems) may be used where ground slopes exceed 20%.

Please refer to the *Department of Environmental Conservation's Environmental Protection for Wastewater System and Potable Water Supply Rule* for more information on "performance based" systems.

Most on-site septic systems require specific soils and site characteristics to enable the effective treatment of wastes. Where soils are impermeable, too permeable, shallow, or wet, or where slopes are steep, conventional septic systems are problematic and potentially hazardous. Accordingly, non-sewered areas displaying site limitations are not recommended for conventional on-site systems. Restricting such areas, however, intensifies development pressure on those soils, which can accommodate septic systems. Unfortunately, prime agricultural land often contains such soils. Clustered subdivisions with community septic systems may help overcome site limitations and simultaneously protect resource lands.

<http://drinkingwater.vt.gov/wastewater/pdf/finalwspwsrules.effective2007.09.29.pdf>

3. Electricity

Williamstown and its residents receive electricity services from Green Mountain Power Company as well as Washington Electric Cooperative, Inc. There are currently numerous residents that are using alternative sources of power and are considered "off the grid". *See Chapter 7 for further information regarding alternative energy opportunities and resources*

4. Telecommunications

A modern telecommunications system with high-speed connections is essential if Williamstown wants to enhance its business climate and meet the needs of its residents the existing businesses and create new ones. Due to the low density of population and Williamstown's rugged landscape, we will need a combination of cable and wireless service to ensure universal Internet access. These new technologies will help revitalize the town by enabling people to live in rural areas and still access their workplaces from their homes and do business around the world.

Currently, the town has a number of telecommunication facilities and towers located on Tower Road to accommodate the communication needs of residents and businesses. In 2002, Independent Wireless One Leased Realty Corp., NEXTEL constructed a cell phone tower off Stone Road in Williamstown.

The Federal Telecommunications Act (FTC) of 1996 does not allow governments to prohibit the construction of wireless facilities, or to make regulatory barriers so difficult as to effectively block service. According to law any installation, construction or modification of telecommunication facilities must go through the Act 250 process. Issues such as the aesthetic impact of the installation, fall zones, and the possibility for the creation of "attractive nuisances" should be addressed in this process.

C. Facilities

1. Municipal Buildings and Land

a. Town Hall

Williamstown town hall and offices are located in a municipally owned building on Route 14 in the center of the Williamstown Village. The building was constructed in 1853 and was originally 1 1/2 floors. It was raised another floor in the late 1800s. The Williamstown town hall is a fine example of the New England town halls built during the middle 1800s. In the 1980's it was lowered back to 1 1/2 floor and renovated to its current condition.

The town hall currently houses the Town Clerk, Town Manager, Town Treasurer and Lister's offices. There is also is a larger conference room used for a variety of public meetings, including those of the Select Board (Executive Sessions), Planning Commission, Cemetery Commission, Economic Development Committee, Transportation Committee, and Energy Committee. *(The Select Board currently meets in the High School Library on the first and third Mondays of the month)*

b. Public Safety Building

Constructed in 2012 -2013 and occupied in Feb, 2013 the PSB houses the Fire Department, Ambulance Services with offices for the Sheriff and State Police to use when in Williamstown.

c. Town Garage

The town garage is located on 77 Brockway Hill Road adjacent to Meadow Street. The building is occupied by a 5 person highway department. The building has a 16 x 22 foot office, a restroom, and a break room was added in 2002. Fuel is stored on site in underground gas and diesel tanks.

d. Historical Society Building

Staffed by volunteers, the Historical Society Building, located on Route 14 in the center of the village, opens primarily by appointment. The historical museum has a large collection of artifacts, pictures, and documents on display. It also offers monthly meetings May through October that inform the public on subjects from local folklore, to early photography, to old time fiddling. In 2002, the town voted to replace the roof with a new standing seam metal roof.

e. Old Town Landfill

A 93 acre site is located on the south end of the village with access to Vermont Route 14, the Stevens Branch flows along the easterly side of the property. The town closed a section of the site due to contamination problems. Currently, the property is not being used, but could be considered space for future outdoor opportunities. It is the current site of the the transfer station.

f. Ainsworth Public Library

Mrs. Laura Ainsworth donated the property and building for the Ainsworth Public Library in 1911. Once established, the town named the library after her. Throughout the years, the library has had many benefactors and volunteers, and many people have donated books and money to sustain its operation. The library is a town facility with a board and is supported by the community.

Today, the Ainsworth Public Library offers a variety of services including reference, special reading programs, Story Hour, Adopt-a-Book program, Inter-library Loan program, Internet access, Children's Room, special services to seniors (home delivery, computer tutorials, large print books and books on tape), and an extensive book collection of over eleven thousand volumes.

Community members can find general information about the Town at the library. Library hours: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, 2pm -6pm; Wednesday 9am - 6pm and Saturday 6pm -7pm.

g. Cemeteries

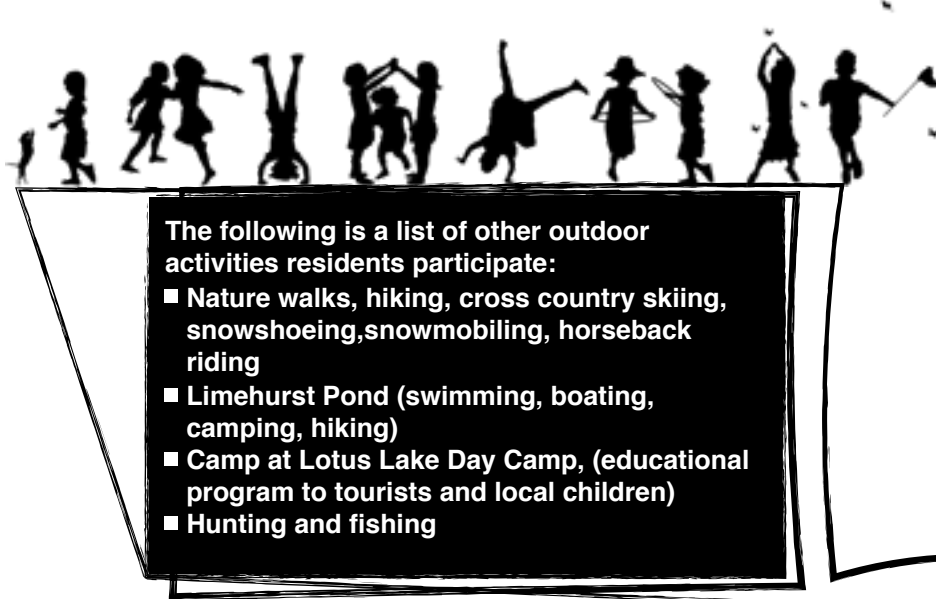
Williamstown has several cemeteries. Williamstown is responsible for three: West Hill, East Hill, and the Village Cemetery. Adams and Flint Cemeteries are privately owned and maintained by their owners. The Adams Cemetery is located on the Robert Boyce farm and consists of one gravestone. Flint Cemetery has 12 gravestones and is located off the Chelsea Road.

h. Recreational Resources

Williamstown's still very rural nature provides its residents with a wide variety of opportunities for outdoor recreation. Snow shoe and cross-country skiing across local fields, snowmobiling on local trails maintained by the Billtown Moonshiners Snowmobile Club, horseback riding on back roads, sightseeing, and 4 wheeling on special trails are activities available in Williamstown. Sports are also important. Teams and clubs for basketball, baseball, and soccer are opportunities in town.

Facilities include Hoyt-Seaver Recreational Field (the Williamstown baseball/softball field), the Williamstown High School and Elementary School facilities and Saldi Field. Saldi Field space offers a basketball court, 3 soccer fields, playground, and restrooms. Events sponsored by the Vermont Association of Snow Travelers (V.A.S.T) and horse clubs bring many visitors to our Town.

Williamstown's best-kept secret is Ainsworth State Park, which is located at the south end of Town. This facility encompasses approximately 885 acres of land; 584 acres of which is in Williamstown. Its steep, densely wooded slopes rise from Williamstown Gulf on the east side of Route 14. Activities compatible with the parks primary goal of protecting biodiversity are encouraged and allowed (i.e., hunting, hiking, and fishing are allowed). Vermont Route 14 constitutes most of the western boundary of the park but offers little access. Additional access is available to hikers from the east via the South Hill Road and Winchester Hill Road. Ainsworth State Park's location and accessibility make it ideal for use as an outdoor educational classroom for resource managers, landowners, and for our children and adult learners to learn about our natural resources. The park is an extremely sensitive site with a rich diversity of plants.



D. Services

1. Municipal Government

A five member Select Board has general supervision and control over town functions, including but not limited to: enacting ordinances and regulations; overseeing town property and personnel; preparing, presenting, and managing the budget; overseeing road maintenance; and maintenance of the property records. The town also operates the water and sewer facilities. The "green books" located in the town office are helpful regarding the laws relating to the Selectboard's authority.

The Selectboard hires a town manager to assist in managing the business of the town. The town manager is responsible for the daily operations of the town including developing and managing the town budget, grant writing, supervision of employees, community relations, care and maintenance of town roads and facilities, and intergovernmental relations. In 2004, residents affirmed their desire to keep the town manager form of government in Williamstown.

The town moderator, town clerk, town treasurer, cemetery commissioners, tax collectors, health officer, listers, library trustees, school directors, justices of the peace, planning commissioners, and a wealth of community volunteers also devote many hours serving our town. These community members act as advisors, helpers, and educators to their local governing body.

Attending Williamstown's Selectboard meetings is one of the easiest and most relevant ways to see our democratic government in action. The meetings are close to where we live and relevant because most of the issues discussed affect us.

Such visits afford residents a chance to assess the competence of individuals we have elected, to understand the governing process, to understand important local issues, and to provide our input directly to our elected officials.

While the Town broadcasts their meetings on local cable TV channels, being inside the meeting room gives one a different and more realistic feeling and it takes some of the mystique out of government. Participation is encouraged and welcomed. Town meetings are usually held the first and third Monday of the month at WMHS in the Library.

Unlike some states and larger cities, Williamstown's local government is still accessible to those who wish to participate. Traditional Town Meeting Day, the first Tuesday in March, is very important to Williamstown residents because it allows them to determine local issues and set local laws for themselves. Williamstown has no meetinghouse, so our town meetings are held in the Williamstown High School to discuss and vote on issues. While there is no local zoning, all state use and federal land use laws apply especially the flood land use laws.

2. Post Office

The post office is located in the south end of Williamstown village and is set back from the road. With the reorganization of USPS, we are lucky to still have a Post Office. Williamstown needs to be proactive with our State and Federal Representatives to insure the Post Office remains in Town.

3. Animal Control Officer

Williamstown currently has an animal control officer.

[Random Rescue](#)

140 Casino Road
Williamstown, VT
(802) 433-5912



4. Emergency Services

a. Police/ Crime

The Orange County Sheriff's Department provides police protection through an annual contract.



In 2014 the Orange County Sheriff's Department provided a wide variety of proactive and reactive services in the town of Williamstown. In addition to the town contract, the Sheriff's office utilized funding from grants and other sources to provide Williamstown with law enforcement presence.

The Sheriff's office responded to 256 calls for service in Williamstown. The nature of these calls varied including burglaries, larcenies, vandalisms, domestic problems, juvenile problems sex crimes and traffic problems. Some of the bigger issues in 2014 were motor vehicle complaints, suspicious persons, thefts and citizen assists/ disputes. The Sheriffs in Williamstown wrote over 115 traffic tickets amounting to over \$20,000.00 in fines. DUI Patrols and safety check points were conducted in Williamstown at various times of the year.

The Vermont State Police also provide law enforcement within Williamstown through their normal delivery of service.



b. Fire

The Williamstown Fire Department was formally organized in February of 1911. The new Public Safety Building houses the Williamstown Volunteer Fire Department. Currently there are 24 volunteers. In January 2014, William Graham became the new fire Chief and with a new chief came changes; the Fire Department's Standard Operating Procedures and Rules and Regulations were updated in the Spring of 2014. Every firefighter must now complete a new driver check list before driving an apparatus to emergency calls.

On the back roads and Interstate 89 two pieces of apparatus are being deployed resulting in safer responses to accidents. The main rescue truck is sent to the accident scene and the other truck sets up traffic control behind the accident scene. The department responded to 40 accidents this year and the changes saw improved safety at accident scenes. After the recent floods a new trash pump was purchased. Inventory of all equipment was taken eliminating what the Fire Department doesn't use as well as identifying new equipment needed.

New chains saws were purchased for Engine 2 and the Tanker. A request for a fire hose reserve fund was made. The District receives assistance and back-up when needed

from members Regional Mutual Aid System. In 2014 Williamstown Fire Department responded to 9 mutual aid calls.

If you have questions on safe burning of debris and permits you must contact:

- Assistant Fire Warden: Mike St. Lawrence at 802-477-2021 (First contact)
- Fire Warden: William Graham 802-793-7414

c. Enhanced 911

The Enhanced 911 Board supervises the operation of Vermont's Enhanced 911 system. The Board trains and certifies the 911 call-takers, maintains a statewide Global Information System (GIS) database and disseminates information about 911. The board depends on regular information updates from municipalities to ensure complete coverage.

http://e911.vermont.gov/911_and_you/everyone_know

http://e911.vermont.gov/sites/e911/files/pdf/E911-Municipal_Responsibilities.pdf

d. Ambulance

Volunteers and full time personal support the Williamstown Ambulance service, spending many hours serving the community. These members sponsor emergency medical courses, community awareness programs, and respond to emergency calls.

The ambulance service recorded 374 services in fiscal year 2014. The following is a summary of those services: 208 patients were transported to hospital by the ambulance services, 31 responses with the Fire Department, 29 refusals of transport, 21 accident transports, 14 lift assists, 11 Life Line activation, 13 special events, 5 standbys per Vermont State Police, 4 deaths, 4 mutual aid responses and 19 mutual aid received .



5. Health and Wellness

Private and public health care providers, located throughout the Washington and Orange County areas, serves Williamstown. Service providers include the Clara Martin Center and Washington County Mental Health for mental health needs, Washington County Youth Services Bureau/Boys and Girls Club, Central Vermont Adult Basic Education, Central Vermont Council on Aging, Central Vermont Home Health and Hospice, and the People's Health and Wellness Clinic. All healthcare services are located outside of Williamstown except for a chiropractor's office and an ambulance service.

The Williamstown Health Officer's Report indicated a range of issues presented for investigation. Residents complaints consisted of such issues as, dog bites, garbage and refuse disposal, environmental sampling for testing, septic sewage disposal and pesticide use. In 2014 Williamstown adopted an Ordinance regulating solid waste which now allows the Town to require the removal of solid wastes from properties to protect the public health.

6. Childcare

The shortage of reliable and affordable childcare has become a barrier for many Williamstown residents trying to enter the workplace. The cost of childcare has increased due to the increased cost of living, liability insurance, and supplies. Childcare is difficult to find, especially for infant and school-aged care.

A Child Care resource and referral agency that can help citizens with their search for childcare is located at the Family Center of Washington County at (802) 828-8771. Additionally, the Williamstown Elementary Preschool Program provides limited childcare services between 7:15 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

7. Solid Waste

Vermont's waste management law, Act 78, requires municipalities to plan for the management and disposal of solid waste, and provides for region-wide coordination. The town is a member of the Central Vermont Solid Waste Management District (CVSWMD). The District reports that Williamstown residents generate many tons of solid waste each year. CVSWMD is responsible for planning solid waste

disposal and ensuring that residents and businesses recycle selected waste materials. They provide leadership, education, and services for residents and businesses in reducing and managing their solid waste in order to protect public health and the environment to the greatest extent.

8. Salvage Yards

Our Town Plan seeks to maintain a clean, wholesome and attractive environment for our citizens and for those that visit and enjoy our town as tourists,. The siting of salvage yards within our community would be inconsistent with the goals of our Town Plan and Solid Waste Ordinance.

E. Organizations

1. Churches

Williamstown's faith-based communities are housed in the most charming buildings in Williamstown. These include the Williamstown United Federated Church, Congregational/Methodist, Main Street; Saint Edwards Catholic Church on Beckett Street; and Williamstown Lutheran Church on Graniteville road. The interdenominational Grace Christian Church meets at the Williamstown Methodist Church. All of these churches retain their architectural character and appear untouched by time.

The town's tower clock is located on the top of the Congregational Church. In 1921, Mr. Bert C Hoyt, a local sawmill owner, donated the E. Howard tower clock to the town of Williamstown. In 1998, the town had the clock's mechanisms and dials restored.



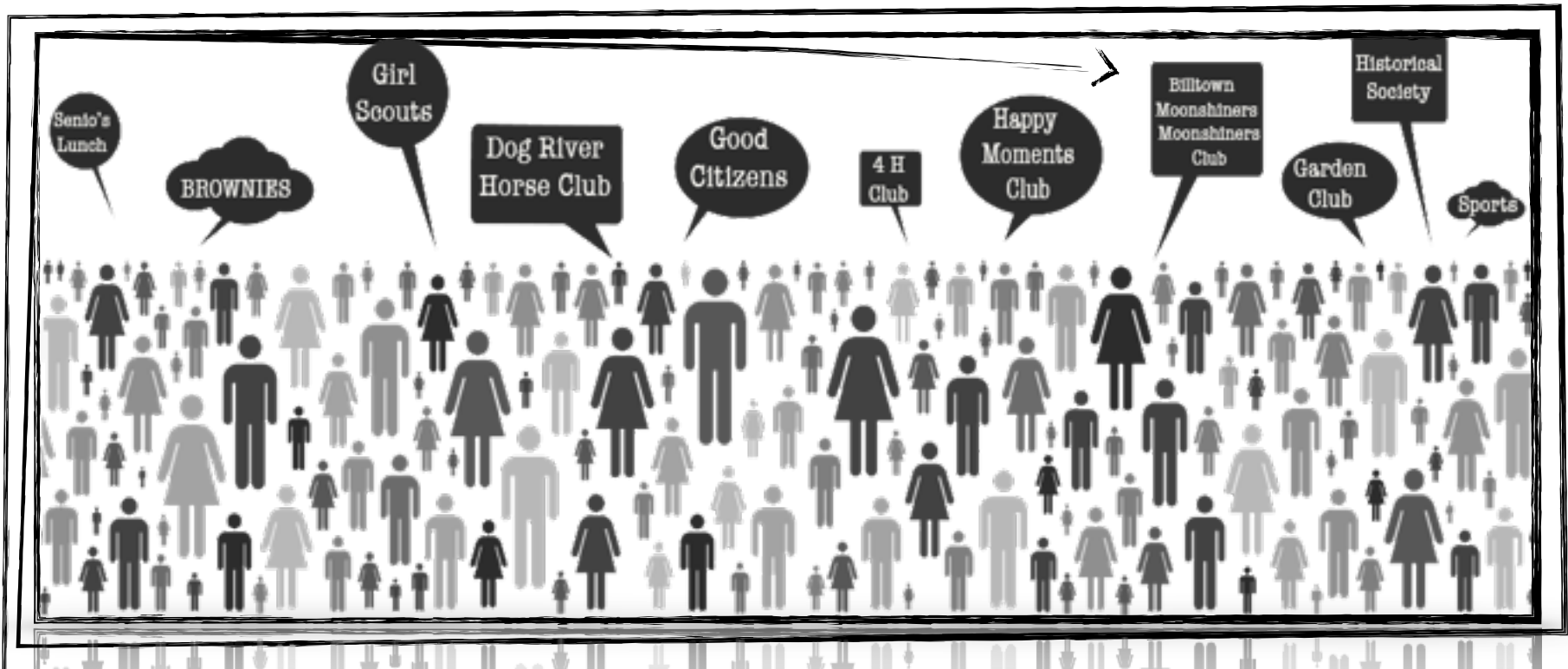
Good citizenship is one of Williamstown's greatest strengths and there are numerous examples, including, church members helping neighbors who need a helping hand, dinners for the elderly, Christmas Tea for the Adopt-a-Family program, the Billtown Moonshiners Snowmobile Club have donated many hours and equipment to the community, and The Garden's Art Exhibition/Holiday Party.

In the late summer of 2013, representatives of the three churches in the village held a meeting and established a steering committee to develop a Food Shelf and possibly other assistance that combined the emergency pantry/emergency assistance programs of these churches to be able to help a larger number of those in need.

The United Federated Church donated a building and all three churches donated financial and/or in-kind help.

The Williamstown Community Food Shelf opened the first Saturday of December in 2013. Both the Town and town residents has been very supportive financially and in donating foods. Many town businesses have donated materials and foods generously. The Food Shelf helps approximately 50 families a month. The Food Shelf is open every Saturday from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at 47 Methodist Lane.

The town also contains a number of membership organizations, including : Brownies, 4H Club, Garden Club, Girl Scouts, Happy Moments Club, Historical Society, Masons, Boonie Club, Moon-Shiners Club, SADD Chapter, Order of the Eastern Star, Dog River Horse Club, and Rebekahs.



Community, Utilities, Facilities, Services & Organization: *Goals, Policies, & Tasks*

Goal 1:

Guide the physical Development of Williamstown in a manner conducive to Community pride, social interaction and identity.

Goal 1 Tasks:

- A. Develop a capitol budget; 5 to 15 year Capitol Investment Plan (CIP) as a means to plan for expenses and/or anticipated requirements
- B. Survey municipally owned buildings to get a better understanding of future demand, identify funds required, and to prioritize future funding.
- C. Survey Foxville residents to determine interest and future need for village development
- D. Digitize town records

The
Selectboard
2016

Planning
Commission
Ongoing

Town Clerk
January
2017

Goal 3:

To ensure Williamstown's wastewater system has the capacity to serve its residents and protect the safety of its residents and environment.

Goal 3 Tasks:

- A. Robar Road and part of Graniteville Road should be studied because of failed, on-site, septic systems; poor soils and high water tables, and for extensions to the service area
Ensure that infrastructure sewer projects comply with ANR's sewer funding rule and all projects should obtain Act 250 permits where applicable
- B. Ensure that public funds are used for sewer expansion in the village area

The
Selectboard
2016

**Goal 2:
Protect the quality
and quantity of the
water in public**

Goal 2 Tasks:

- A. Educate residents about where the village drinking water comes from and how to protect the aquifer recharge area Collect, update and disseminate information on Williamstown's current and future groundwater supplies for drinking water and fire safety on a regular and needed basis
- B. Ensure that new development and land use activities do not create undue adverse impacts on groundwater quality, or exceed the capacity to supply adequate groundwater yields to existing and future residences and businesses
- C. Encourage water projects in the village areas or areas to maximize efficiency and effectiveness
- D. Conduct hydrant testing of the Williamstown water system to update the ISO rating
- E. Request on-site municipal assistance from the Environmental Compliance Assistance Program , as needed, to identify and recommend corrective action regarding compliance with environmental regulations

Planning
Commission
Ongoing

Town
Manager
Ongoing

Goal 4:

To maximize efficiency and minimize environmental damage through sound solid waste management

Goal 4 Tasks:

- A. To maximize efficiency and minimize environmental damage through sound solid waste management
- B. Promote waste reduction, re-use, recycling, proper management and disposal of town solid waste programs and opportunities
- C. Continue offering disposal services for other types of items/materials as needed
- D. Encourage volunteers to participate in Vermont Green-up -Day to keep roadsides clean
- E. Offer learning opportunities on composting and recycling through a partnership with solid waste businesses

Planning
Commission
Ongoing

Goal 5:
Preserve the character, appearance, and natural resources of the town while allowing adequate telecommunication services to be developed

Planning
Commission
Ongoing

Goal 5 Tasks:

- A. Discourage ridge-line development or conspicuous development on locally prominent landscape/scenic features unless maximally screened, or clearly in the best interest of the general public
- B. Encourage adequate setback and health effects by locating telecommunication services away from sensitive areas such as schools, hospitals, teen centers, and childcare facilities
- C. Work with the community to draft a Model Wireless Telecommunications Facilities ordinance to protect our scenic, historic, environmental, natural resources, and other sensitive areas like the schools and childcare facilities

Planning
Commission
2017

Goal 7:
Promote and enhance quality childcare opportunities to families with young children

Goal 7 Tasks:

- A. Support the expansion/ enhancement of the preschool program at Williamstown elementary School, to include a three year old program
- B. Support the expansion/ enhancement of childcare facilities
- C. Encourage businesses to offer assisted childcare centers
- D. Encourage childcare centers to seek national childcare credentialing by completing the Certified Childcare Professional certification and other educational opportunities
- E. Encourage unregistered childcare operations to become registered or licensed facilities
- F. Conduct a community survey of local businesses, childcare providers and young families to ascertain childcare needs and deficiencies
- G. Support after school childcare programs

School
Board
Ongoing

Planning
Commission
Ongoing

School
Board
2018

Goal 8:
To protect and preserve our historical buildings, barns, and cultural resources

Goal 8 Tasks:

- A. Seek historic preservation grants for educational, preservation and rehabilitative purposes
- B. Encourage understanding of our historical and cultural resources

Historical
Society
2017

Goal 6:
Revitalize the sense of community by recognizing the role played by the historic sites, landmarks, and symbols

Goal 6 Tasks:

- A. Encourage the preservation, restoration use of historic sites and community landmarks to foster community identity
- B. Place outstanding historic buildings on the National Register of Historic buildings
- C. Strive to keep all town owned historical buildings preserved to keep their historical significance and beauty
- D. Ensure adequate funding arrangements for long-term maintenance of all historical buildings owned by the Town by putting funds into a capital reserve fund
- E. Seek private and public funds to study and preserve historic buildings
- F. Ensure adequate funding arrangements for long-term care of town maintained cemeteries

Historical
Society
2017

Town
Manager
January
Ongoing

Chapter VII: *Energy*

QUICK FACTS Last Updated: May 21, 2015

With the permanent shut down of the Vermont Yankee Nuclear Plant at the end of 2014, Vermont lost 55% of its electricity generating capacity and the source of more than 70% of its net generation in recent years.

In 2014, 27% of Vermont's net electricity generation was produced by renewable energy, including hydroelectric, biomass, wind, and solar resources.

Vermont has a voluntary goal of obtaining 25% of electricity consumed in the state from renewable energy resources by 2017; the resources must have begun operating after 2004.

Vermont's Clean Energy Development Fund is promoting winter heating with high-efficiency wood combustion technologies and fuel from sustainable forest ecosystems.

All new electricity generating capacity added to Vermont's grid in 2014 was solar-powered.

Source: State Energy Data System

A. Overview

During the past decade, the cost, reliability and access to traditional energy sources had been challenging. It is imperative that Williamstown develop economical and environmentally conscious alternatives to produce energy. In 2013 a 2.1 mega-watt solar power farm was built on Route 64 by I-89. New solar farm sites have been smaller, privately owned systems. These and other forms of alternative energy resources need to be developed.

¹¹ Based on net petroleum imports; final data, Energy Information Administration

B. Energy Sources

Although analyses of energy demand by fuel and by sector are not available for Williamstown, data generated by the state can be interpolated for planning at the local level.

In Williamstown, the primary sources of energy are fossil fuels (oil, gas, coal and liquid petroleum gas), local and imported hydro-electricity, and biomass (fuel wood). Renewable energy sources such as solar and wind currently account for only a negligible proportion of total energy use. Fossil fuels are used primarily for transportation and heating and out of state hydro-power (supplied by facilities in New York State and Quebec) provide for the lion's share of our electricity demand.

Transportation stands as the sector where energy use has grown substantially during the past 30 years. The current 41% rate of energy consumption in the transportation sector will grow to a possible 97% primarily due to increased commercial and industrial uses. The transportation sector now accounts for 41% of all energy, and approximately 77% of all fossil fuels, consumed in Vermont.

1. Fossil Fuels

As shown in the tables at the end of this chapter, fossil fuels account for a vast majority energy consumed in Vermont. In Williamstown fossil fuels are used primarily to power vehicles and heat homes and businesses. In 2014, about 27% of the petroleum consumed by the United States¹¹ was imported from foreign countries, the lowest level since 1985.



The top five source countries of U.S. petroleum imports in 2014 were Canada, Saudi Arabia, Mexico, Venezuela, and Iraq. The country rankings vary based on gross petroleum imports or net petroleum imports (gross imports minus exports). The US Energy Information Administration (EIA) expects that the moderating trend in U.S. oil-import dependence to go on in the next decade. But the mix of factors responsible for it looks likely to evolve. In particular, EIA projects that continued improvements in energy efficiency, driven in part by tighter fuel economy standards, will prove increasingly important in moderating future demand growth.

1960 Vermont used 931 thousand barrels of petroleum in the industrial sector; in 1995, 1,058 thousand barrels were used; in 2005, 1,419 thousand barrels were used and in 2013, 967 thousand barrels of petroleum were consumed. Total petroleum consumption for all sectors was 15,291 thousands of barrels in 2013.¹²

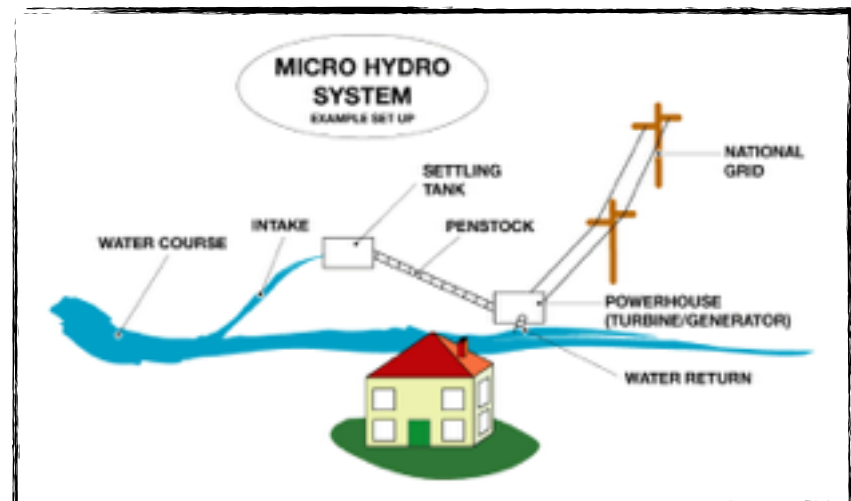
The combustion of fossil fuels is by far the largest contributor of atmospheric "greenhouse gases" (primarily carbon dioxide). There is strong consensus in the scientific community that continued accumulation of "greenhouse gases" within the earth's atmosphere is creating a warming of the atmosphere, or "greenhouse effect". Such warming could cause severe coastal flooding and unpredictable climate shifts, threatening the viability of the earth's most significant urban and agricultural centers. In Vermont, significant warming could cause irreparable harm to the State's largest industry, tourism. Reduced snowfall and a die-off of sugar maples could spell disaster for ski areas, syrup producers, and our fall foliage season. Further, fossil fuel combustion is directly linked to the acidification of rivers, lakes and soil, and human health hazards resulting from declining air quality. Even if its use grew less, coal is still the No.1 source of net generation each year in the United States, followed by natural gas. The numbers for these two sources still dwarf the totals for all renewable sources combined.

For reasons highlighted above, and because fossil fuels are an exhaustible natural resource, Williamstown should strive to reduce fossil fuel consumption.

2. Hydro-power

Currently, Williamstown gets about half of its energy from hydro-power, primarily from Hydro-Québec and New York Power Authority. The Vermont Public Service Board in 2011 approved a contract for Vermont utilities to buy power from Hydro-Québec for 20 years. The new contract will supply about 20% of Vermont's power needs, bringing 225 MW of power into Vermont to replace an expiring contract for 310 MW.

It is estimated that Vermont has at least 174,000 KW of undeveloped hydroelectric potential. This represents about 22% of current use. Most of the sites constituting this additional capacity are classified a "mini-hydro" (under 1000KW) developable at existing, but unused, hydro power resources. Any hydroelectric development in Williamstown will require a balancing of priorities.



¹² Tables C6 and F16 Industrial Energy Consumption Estimates, Selected Years 1960-2013 US Dept. of Energy

While the benefits of generating electricity from local, renewable resources are evident, they are not without associated costs. The power output captured from a given stream must be moderated by environmental considerations. A minimum stream flow, adequate to support aquatic life forms, must be maintained and impoundments must be designed with water quality and land use/recreation dam sites.

3. Biomass

Forest land covers approximately three-quarters of Williamstown's total land area. The generation of heat (and even electricity) from biomass is a strategy that may hold the potential to benefit the town. Under proper management and replacing fossil fuel combustion, the use of biomass fuels could reduce greenhouse emissions. Importantly, this could also stimulate the local economy, as estimates show that approximately 80% of each dollar spent on wood remains in the state while only 20% of each dollar spent on nonrenewable energy sources remains in the state.

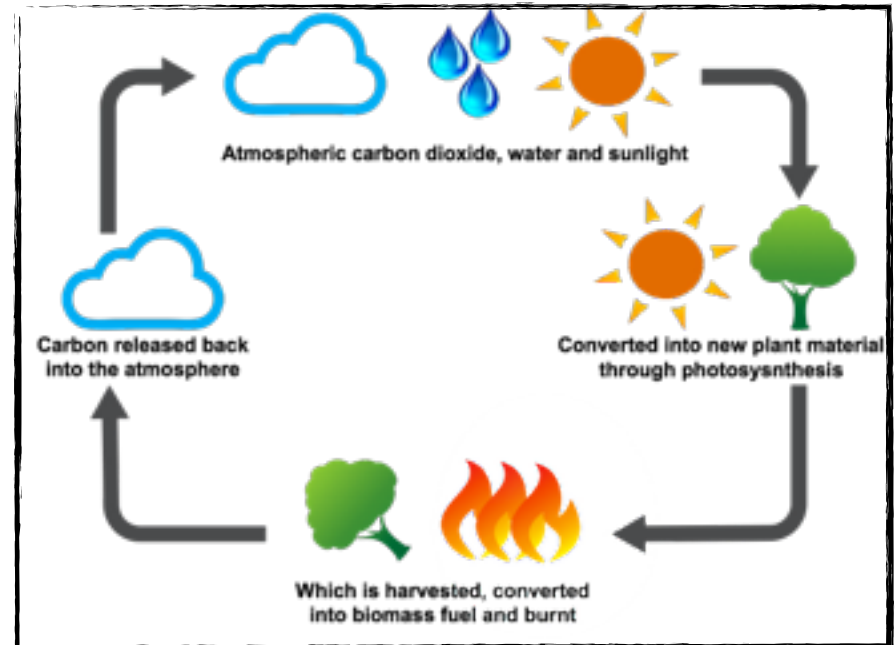
Currently, about 15 % of Williamstown residents use wood and wood pellets as a heat source. Increased use of wood for heating would stimulate local economies and, if harvest and burning is executed in an environmentally sound manner, would decrease the environmental impacts of existing patterns of energy consumption. New technology is expanding the potential for implementing high-efficiency wood burning in buildings as a primary heat source. While wood burning does contribute a large proportion of atmospheric particulate pollution directly associated with respiratory damage, new wood burning technology and stricter EPA emissions standards are resulting in increased efficiency and reduced particulate emissions.

In Vermont, schools have taken the lead in the use of biomass fuels. Increasingly Vermont's students attend buildings heated by wood chips. The Williamstown Middle/High School was retrofitted with a biomass heating system in 2007 and the Public Safety Building is heated with wood pellets.

¹³ Renewable Energy VT, Building Our Renewable Energy Future

4. Vegetable Biofuels

Biofuels are renewable, agriculturally derived liquid fuels that can be used to run vehicles and heat buildings. They include biodiesel, ethanol, and even straight vegetable oils. Some estimates show that by 2025, Vermont could be producing sustainable biofuels to meet up to 30% of current demand of gasoline.¹³ With no corn-based ethanol production in the state, Vermont's first efforts to reduce fossil fuel consumption were to establish biodiesel as a "mainstream" additive or replacement to diesel fuels and heating oil. Now, oilseed crops are being cultivated on over a dozen Vermont farms for their fuel, feed and food value, with much of it being converted to biodiesel on and for the farms that produce the oilseeds. There are still no large commercial biodiesel producers in the state. Biodiesel, can be used in many existing vehicles and furnaces with minimal equipment modification. One concern is the loss of farmland, however if farms can produce their own fuel they may remain sustainable for years to come. There is a lot of research and development of biofuels in the State with the push for renewable energy sources.



5. Wind-power

Essentially a form of solar power, created by pressure and temperature differences across our planet, wind-power is one of the oldest and most environmentally benign sources of energy. In recent years it has experienced resurgence in its application which is certain to continue. Now, a new report from the U.S. Energy Information Administration finds that the electricity generated from wind and solar grew a lot faster than electricity generated by fossil fuels last year. In fact, solar more than doubled, and wind outgrew all other sources.

In fact, it is the fastest growing energy source in the world. Wind turbines are among the most economical of contemporary renewable energy technologies, and have become cost competitive with most conventional electricity sources (especially when indirect, avoided costs are factored in).

Although Vermont has potential for wind power, it is estimated that only 10 to 15% of Vermont's electrical power could be generated by wind because of its intermittent nature. Furthermore, Williamstown probably does not have viable sites for industrial scale wind generation (generally at elevations between 2,500 and 3,500 feet). It should be noted that advances in small scale wind turbine technology figure to make them an increasingly viable option for private individuals or groups of individuals.

State law restricts the regulation through zoning of turbines with blades less than 20 feet in diameter. Furthermore, any small scale turbine that returns energy to the power grid is exempt from local bylaws and is instead reviewed by the Public Service Board under Act 248.

6. Solar-power

Solar energy has tremendous potential for providing clean, reliable and safe energy, even in Williamstown's climate. The application of both active (systems which collect, store and distribute solar energy within a building) and passive (systems which utilize a building's structure to trap sunlight and store it as heat) solar technologies have demonstrated their cost effectiveness in Vermont. Solar-tempered buildings are buildings that have their long axis oriented within 30

degrees of true south and have an unobstructed net south facing window area equal to at least 7% of the total floor area. Solar-tempering coupled with proper insulating can offset heat costs in a building by 40%.

Contemporary solar technologies have proven their value in Vermont, particularly in rural areas. As the technologies improve and costs decrease, solar thermal collectors and photovoltaic (technologies which can convert sunlight to electricity) will become more competitive in the marketplace even in less remote areas. As the power source of solar technologies is inexhaustible, and solar energy neither contributes pollutants to the atmosphere nor to our reliance on foreign energy suppliers, strategies should be developed to encourage its use in Williamstown.

Siting of solar projects should be sensitive to our Town's rural, agricultural culture and should be built to have little impact on the Town's scenic views and property values. Vermont S.48; setback and screening requirements for solar generation plants (Mullin; 2), a bill introduced in March 2015 would authorize municipalities to adopt bylaws establishing setback and screening requirements for solar that apply notwithstanding any contrary provision if passed. The bylaws may not have the effect of prohibiting the installation of a solar project or interfering with its intended use. Screening may include landscaping, vegetation, fencing, and topographic features.

C. Conservation

1. Demand Side Management

In 1990 the Public Service Board required the state's regulated utilities to carry out Least Cost Integrated Planning and implement Demand Side Management programs. In Central Vermont those utilities are investor owned municipal and cooperative electric utilities. Least Cost Integrated Planning requires that each utility "...meet the needs of its customers at the lowest total long term cost and do so by giving equal consideration to all generation, transmission and energy efficiency options..."

Demand Side Management programs promote the conservation of energy as an energy source available for future demand. Through their Demand Side Management programs, the region's utilities provide various incentives including financing and partial payment of certain efficiency improvements, energy audits and design services. As the creation of excess generating capacity can be used to meet future electrical needs for Vermont, conservation must continue to be viewed as a source of electricity. Conservation is our least expensive and most environmentally benign source of electricity. Demand Side Management is part of Efficiency Vermont.

2. Transportation

According to the 2011 Vermont Comprehensive Energy Plan, the transportation sector uses 41% of the total energy demand for fossil fuels in Vermont. The transportation sector posted the largest increase in state energy demand, increasing 27% between 1990 and 2011. Growing at 1.3% per annum, the transportation sector is Vermont's fastest growing end-use energy sector.

As discussed in previous pages, this situation imposes a tremendous economic and ecological detriment. Environmental degradation resulting from heavy petroleum use is well documented, as is the fact that the lion's share of money spent on fuel and automobiles leaves the state, thus undermining the local economy. Vermont, however, stands at a moment of substantial opportunity for continued jobs creation in the energy sector.

The state is in a position to maintain leadership in the environmental arena through the mix of energy sources used by its residents and is showing others the path forward to reduced greenhouse gas emissions.¹⁴

The rural character and decentralized settlement patterns of Central Vermont, the very qualities which render our area an extraordinary living environment, create difficult circumstances in which to minimize the consumption of traditional fuels in the transportation sector. Nevertheless, there are strategies which can be employed at the

local, regional and state levels which will bear influence within this context. Improved access to, and increased use of, alternative and public transportation options such as rail, bus, van-pooling, ride-sharing and bicycling, will not only decrease energy consumption, but will also reduce the infrastructure expenditures that are associated with the "car culture."

Another strategy by which the demand for transportation can be reduced is through encouraging settlement patterns which require less physical travel. The concentration of employment opportunities, housing and social services, the expansion of telecommunications potential, and the increased use of local resources may help achieve this objective.

3. Buildings and Structures

Residential energy demand has increased a total of 14% since 1990, a growth rate of only 0.7% per year despite the net increase in households. Notable is the declining trend in residential energy demand per household; demand has declined 0.28% annually since 1990.

According to the 2011 Vermont Comprehensive Energy Plan, approximately 33% of the total amount of energy consumed in Vermont is used for residential purposes. The Plan shows that growth in energy demand in the residential sector will be driven by increases in population and housing, and a corresponding increase in demand for space and water heating. This demand, when considered with the energy demand associated with the space and water heating requirements of commercial and industrial buildings, represents tremendous potential energy savings.

Investments in energy efficiency improvements in new and existing buildings and appropriate site design in new development will result in the realization of this savings, and will demonstrate a significant impact on total energy demand. Ultimately, such investments will reduce the percent of income residents spend on energy, per capita energy consumption and environmental degradation.



¹⁴ Vermont's Comprehensive Energy Plan; *Facts, Analysis and Recommendations Volume 2011*

D. Energy Programs and Resources

A variety of organizations and programs exist to provide assistance to citizens and local governments in the realm of energy conservation and development. A partially list of Vermont based resources follows:

Efficiency Vermont : Financial and technical assistance for energy savings. EnergySmart home energy analysis.

www.efficiencyvermont.org

<https://www.efficiencyvermont.com/blog/blog/2015/06/01/should-you-go-ductless-this-summer>

Vermont Energy and Climate Action Network

To get contact info for any energy committee, either click a marker on the map, or scroll through the list of committees. To learn more about starting an energy committee click here:

<http://www.vecan.net/index.php/energy-committees/>

Williamstown Energy Committee

Contact: Wally Roberts

Email: wroberts@sover.net

Phone #: 802-433-1329

The Alliance for Climate Action/14% Challenge

Community energy organizing and programs.

www.10percentchallenge.org

Vermont Energy and Climate Action Network

To get contact info for any energy committee, either click a marker on the map, or scroll through the list of committees. To learn more about starting an energy committee click here:

<http://www.vecan.net/index.php/energy-committees/>

The Alliance for Climate Action/14% Challenge

Community energy organizing and programs.

www.10percentchallenge.org

Apollo Alliance Vermont

Coalition of labor, business and community groups dedication to energy independence. www.apolloalliance.org/state



Biomass Energy Resource Center

Consults on biomass and cogeneration projects. (802) 223-7779

Renewable Energy Vermont

Trade association for renewable energy dealers.

www.REVermont.org

School Energy Management Program

Provides free energy assessments for schools.

www.vtvs.org

Sustainable Energy Resource Group

Consults with communities on energy planning/programs.

<http://www.serg-info.org/>

Vermont Bio-Diesel Project -

Collaboration designed to help accelerate emergence of industry in VT

www.vtbiodeiselproject.org

Vermont ranked fifth in the nation for energy efficiency. A large part of Vermont's success comes from the work of Efficiency Vermont, Vermont's nonprofit 'energy efficiency utility'.

Efficiency Vermont helps all Vermonters to reduce energy costs, strengthen the local economy, and protect the environment by making homes and businesses energy efficient.

Efficiency Vermont provides technical assistance, rebates, and other financial incentives to help Vermont households and businesses reduce their energy costs with energy-efficient equipment, lighting, and approaches to construction and major renovation. Additionally, we partner extensively with contractors, suppliers, and retailers of efficient products and services

Vermont Green Building Network

Promotes green building in Vermont. www.vgbn.org

Vermont Energy Education Program. Provides in school energy curriculum.

www.veep.org

~~Vermont Energy Investment Corp~~

Vermont Energy Investment Corp

Promotes energy efficiency and renewable technologies

www.veic.org

Vermont Energy Star Homes

Technical assistance to build energy efficient homes.

[http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?](http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?fuseaction=new_homes_partners.showStateResults&s_code=VT)

[fuseaction=new_homes_partners.showStateResults&s_code=VT](http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?fuseaction=new_homes_partners.showStateResults&s_code=VT)

Go Vermont: Go Vermont is a resource for Vermonters who want to reduce the cost and environmental impact of driving. We offer free carpool matching and vanpool services, and statewide bus routes, as well as free Go! Vermont resources to help you promote more efficient travel options at work or at home. Call our Q/A hotline and a real person can answer your transportation questions. **800-685-7433**

<http://www.connectingcommuters.org/>

Vermont Energy and Climate Action Network

Collaborative of organizations involved in energy and climate issues.

<http://www.vecan.net/>

Vermont Fuel Dealers Association

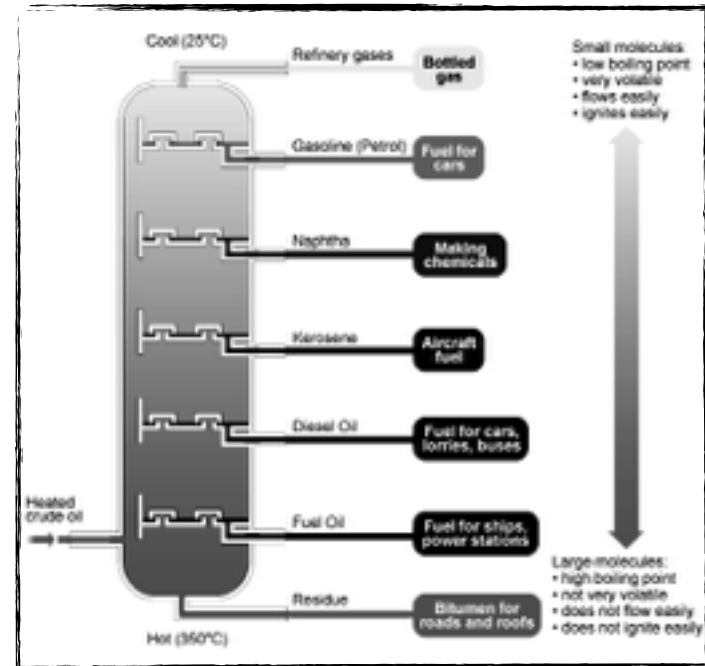
Trade association of fuel marketers.

<http://www.vermontfuel.com/>

Vermont Biofuel Partnership

Resource for producers, wholesalers, retailers and users of Bio-Heat and bio-diesel fuel

www.vtbio.org



What Is Energy Used For?

Use	Transportation	Residential	Commercial	Industrial
Percentage	41%	33%	17%	9%

Source: Vermont Comprehensive Energy Plan 2011

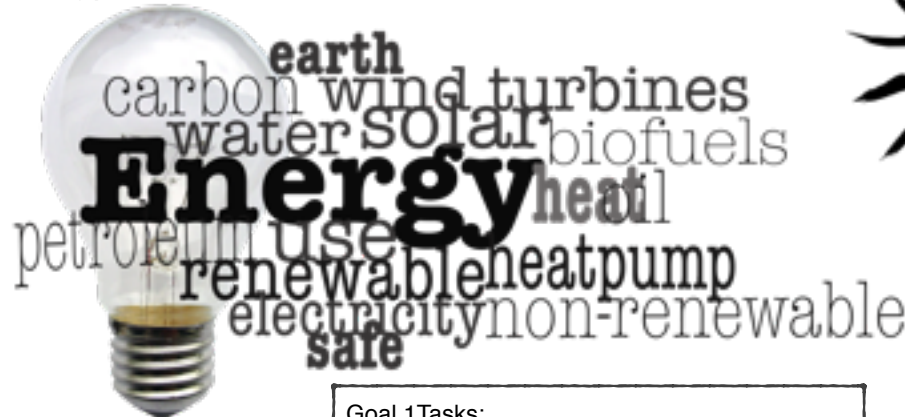
Statewide Energy Demand

	Electricity	Natural Gas	Fuel Oil	Petroleum	Renewables
Residential	46%	7%	25%	13%	8%
Transportation	--	--	--	77%	--
Commercial and Industrial	64%	10%	--	23%	4%

Source: Vermont Comprehensive Energy Plan 2011



E. Energy: Goals, Policies & Tasks



Goal 1:
Encourage energy conservation and the development of renewable energy resources



**Selectboard
2016**

**Energy
Committee
2018**

**Town
Manager
2016**

**Selectboard
2016**

Goal 1 Tasks:

- A. Williamstown should consider forming a town Energy Committee and appointing a Town Energy Coordinator
- B. The Committee/ Coordinator will review The Town Energy and Climate Guide, (Vermont Energy and climate Action Network, 2006) for ideas on energy conservation and development
<http://www.vecan.net/resources/publications/>
- C. Support demand side management conservation programs designed to reduce demand for electricity through enhanced energy efficiency and conservation
- D. Conduct energy audits of Town buildings
- E. Reduce Town expenditures by considering the cost of energy over the life of equipment purchased by the town
- F. Support home weatherization programs
<http://dcf.vermont.gov/oeo/weatherization>
- G. Encourage the establishment of local, publicly owned and operated bulk storage fuel facilities, as authorized under 24 VSA, Chapter 107, Section 3701, as a means of containing fuel costs for Williamstown residents
- H. Support the use of biofuels and electric power in government and public transit vehicles
- I. Promote the design and construction of energy efficient buildings
- J. Encourage development of small scale wind, solar and hydro power by individuals or groups of individuals, to offset fossil fuel consumption and promote self-sufficiency
- K. Encourage land use planning that concentrates civil and social services, housing, employment opportunities within or adjacent to Williamstown's villages; support expansion of telecommuting, teleconferencing and public transit; provide for pedestrian transportation options and promote self-sufficiency

**Selectboard
2020**

**Town
Manager
2020**

**Planning
Commission
2017**

**Planning
Commission
Ongoing**

Chapter VIII. *Economic Development*

A. Overview

A healthy economy is essential to maintaining Williamstown's quality of life. A diversified and dynamic economy provides employment, stimulates social and cultural interaction, and generates income to provide for a wide variety of community services, including education, health care and physical infrastructure. A diversified economy offers greater opportunities for people to engage in satisfying and meaningful occupations and pursuits.

The purpose of this chapter is to guide and plan for economic development that will create employment in Williamstown which keeps pace with the region's labor force, provides an adequate flow of taxable economic activity to fund state programs, and increases the wealth and economic well being of its residents.

B. History

According to the Williamstown Historical Society, prior to 1840, most early residents of Williamstown worked on family farms. In 1888, the first train arrived in the Williamstown Village. An economic “boom”, lasting for nearly 4 decades, followed. Quarries and farmers could finally ship their products to other parts of the country, and more and more goods and services streamed into Williamstown.



Employment in Williamstown Timeline
Source Vt Department of Labor, CVRPC

During this time-period the following quarries were established:

- Pirie Quarry (1882)
- Jones Brothers Quarry
- Dr. Bailey Quarry

(All currently owned and operated by Rock of Ages {1882}.)

Newer businesses included: Burrell Roofing and Lacillade Lumber established in the 1940's. Other businesses included: Bruce's Garage (1892), Watson Hotel, Williamstown Inn, Hibbard House, Lotus Lake Camp (1952), Lynde Store (1952), and Smallwood Nurseries (1932). The late 1960's were a major period of road building in Vermont, making travel even easier. After that time, the entrepreneurial spirit came alive. The number of family farms began to decrease and tourism started to increase. In Williamstown, the following businesses were established after the 1960's: UniFirst (1972), Randolph National Bank (1979), now Lake Sunapee Bank, VEPCO (Vermont Electric Power Company – formerly VELCO) (1980), Hebert Excavation, Progressive Plastics, R.G. Paving, Pump N' Pantry, A&S Collections, Depot & Main convenience store, Farm & Country Hardware, Behind the Scenes Cafe, (1980's), Stillwater Graphics and most recently Dollar General and Poulin Lumber (2010). There are two new thrift shops in Town, Green Mountain Bargain Shop, located under Behind The Scenes and Thrift and Gift on Route 14.

C. Current Conditions

Overall, in the past 12-months, the private sector in Vermont has added an estimated 4,000 jobs. This growth in Vermont's economy has not been found in just one industry but across many business sectors. The industry diversity of the Vermont economy continues to be a source of stability as broad based growth is easier to sustain than following the ups and downs of any one particular industry. This diversity translates into employment opportunities for Vermonters of all skill sets, educational experiences and professional backgrounds.

Vermont's economy has shown many signs of recovery since the Great Recession. State revenues have rebounded, growing by \$175 million between 2011 and 2014 after falling by more than \$97 million between 2008 and 2009. This has coincided with increased job growth, a steady decline in the unemployment rate, and a drop in the number of foreclosures. While Vermont's economy continues to grow, the growth rate has not been as robust as economists had predicted. In early 2014, the consensus economic forecast was that State revenue would grow by 5 percent over the prior fiscal year. Revenue is now expected to grow by only 3 percent for this fiscal year and general fund revenue growth is expected to remain around 3.5 percent for the next five years.¹⁵

The economic corridor connects the Central Vermont region with Northwest Vermont. There will be a continuation of commuters from outside the Central Vermont region coming in to fill some of the jobs here. Outside of the urban area of Chittenden County, the job importing areas of the Central Vermont Region import the largest amount of employees in the Northwest Region. Since the urban areas of Chittenden County and the major job importing areas of Central Vermont are connected by I-89, it fosters the commuting patterns that have grown over the past decade. It is becoming less unusual for people to live outside the Central Vermont Region and commute in to work and/or to live inside the Central Vermont Region and commute to work outside the region.

Montpelier City and Berlin contain the majority of the imported jobs, with Barre City, Waitsfield, Warren and Waterbury forming the remaining areas of job importation. The remaining seventeen towns (including Williamstown) are 'job-exporting' towns. The job-importing towns contain the bulk of the employment, while the job-exporting towns contain the bulk of the people who fill these positions.

Approximately 90 percent of the Town's workforce is employed outside of town, primarily in the regional jobs centers of Barre, Montpelier and Waterbury.

¹⁵ Gov. Schumlin "Outlines Budget and Part ii of Agenda for Progress January 15, 2015

The chart below displays a breakdown of employment data for Williamstown from the 2010 Census and current figures from Vermont's Department of Labor.

Place of Employment of Williamstown Residents	
Barre city (Washington, VT)	21.70%
Montpelier city (Washington, VT)	16.50%
Williamstown town (Orange, VT)	9.50%
Barre town (Washington, VT)	6.90%
Berlin town (Washington, VT)	5.70%
Waterbury town (Washington, VT)	4.10%
Northfield town (Washington, VT)	3.80%
Hartford town (Windsor, VT)	3.00%
Rutland city (Rutland, VT)	1.70%
Randolph town (Orange, VT)	1.30%
All Other Locations	25.80%
Source: OnThe Map, US Census	

Williamstown has the largest proportion of self employment income at 11.1% of the total and is ranked #1. Second, it has the largest proportion of investment and retirement income at 17.9% of the total and is ranked #1.

The vast majority, 20% of Williamstown's workers were employed in the Education, Health and Social Services, another 13.5% in Retail Trade, 12% in Public Administration Sectors, and finally construction at 8.20%. While Williamstown has displayed economic and job growth over the past several decades, there were some indications of economic hardship during the great recession.

According to the Vermont Department of Employment and Training (DET), however, the 2009-2013 unemployment figure for Williamstown was 5.4% (State average - 8 %). This represents a dramatic decrease from just a few years ago when it stood at a relatively unhealthy 10.2%.

D. Trends

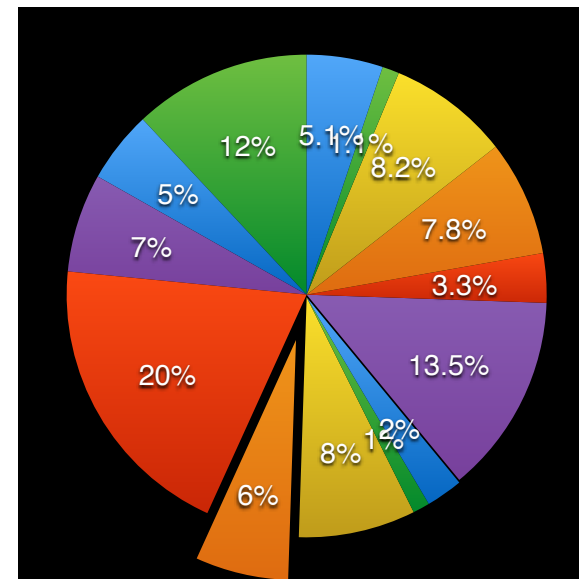
Projections developed by the Office of Policy and Information of the Vermont DET help to identify the shifts that are occurring in the state and regional economies. National and international forces have a tendency to have greater influence on manufacturing, while state and regional market forces combine to influence the non manufacturing side.

According to these projections, future job growth will be concentrated in the service-provider sector of the economy, with education, health services, professional and business services growing the fastest. Healthcare practitioners are at the top of the list (i.e., registered nurses, medical assistant, and physical therapists). Construction will also continue to grow. Other projected increases are in the areas of professional and related occupations, which include architecture and engineering occupations, education, training and library services. Computer or information technology occupations should also see gains. Finally, tourism, particularly recreation based tourism, is projected to be a growth industry well into the 2040s.

Manufacturing continues to decline due to technological advances resulting in the need for fewer and fewer people to get the job done. Outsourcing continues to be an issue even as the call for made in USA and made in Vermont grows. Industries with the largest decline in employment will be the United States Postal Service (USPS),

apparel manufacturing, textile mills, and computer and electronic manufacturing.

Common Industries Williamstown Residents are Employed Vt. Dept. of Labor



- Unemployed Residents
- B.Agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting & mining
- C.Construction
- D.Manufacturing
- E.Wholesale trade
- F.Retail trade
- G.Transportation, warehousing, utilities
- H.Information
- I.Finance, insurance real estate, rental & leasing,
- J.Professional, scientific, management, administrative
- K.Educational services, health care and social services
- L.Arts, entertainment, recreation, hospitality industry & entertainment
- M.Other services
- N.Public administration

The agricultural sector also is expected to continue its historical trend of decreasing employment, in part because the average wage earned by farmers remains lower than that of other sectors and because of fluctuating incomes.

Williamstown still has about 10 working dairy farms, one potato farm, a tree farmer, and various other agricultural farms/businesses. These agricultural jobs are a very important part of our economy in their own right, as well for the intangible aesthetic benefits they provide.

Furthermore, agriculture also contributes to tourism. Putting out the welcome mat for visitors and residents by encouraging farmers markets, visits to the farm, cut-your-own Christmas tree, and fruit orchards in those out-of-the-way places can contribute immensely to the sustainability of our agricultural industry and our local economy. People like Vermont food products because they feel they are safe and fresh. Buying locally grown and manufactured products adds to the local economy. Hope lies with small farmers currently capitalizing on their natural advantages by diversifying and rotating crops, integrating livestock, and residents buying locally.

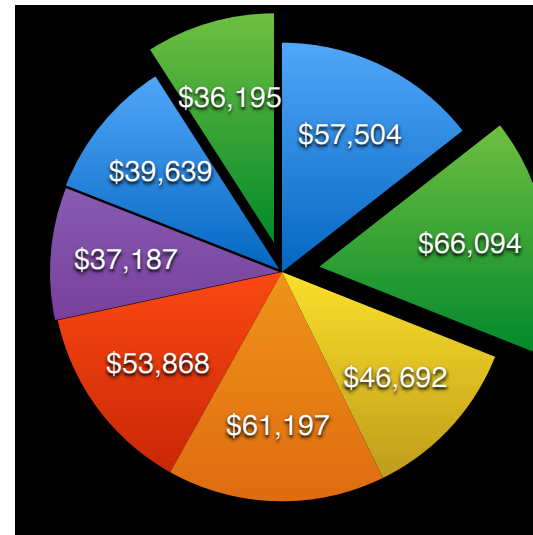
E. Williamstown Economic Plans

In 2003 the Economic Development Committee surveyed the community to gather ideas how the Town should proceed with Economic Development. Residents were reporting that their family members were leaving Williamstown in search of work elsewhere. Some residents reported that if they could find good jobs with good wages locally, they would have remained in Williamstown.

Most recognized attracting good jobs to Williamstown would not happen overnight. Most residents agreed that just attracting “any new business” was not the the answer for the long-term future of our Town.

Residents reported they did not want to exploit the environment in order to support economic sustainability saying: “Ruining the environment just makes for bad economics and bad ethics. Protecting our natural resources is critical for the economic well being of our future. The Town can have clean, safe and sustainable jobs if we all work together to shape the future of our Town.

Williamstown, VT Median Annual Earnings by Job Category VT Department of Labor



- 1. Mgt., Business & Financial
- 2. Computer, engineering and Science
- 3. Educational, Legal, Community Sice, Arts & Media
- 4. Healthcare Practitioners & Techs
- 5. Protective Service
- 6. Sales and Office
- 7. Natural Resources, Construction, Maintenance
- 8. Production, Transportation & Material Moving

According to the 2013 city data Census and Vermont Housing Data, Williamstown had an average poverty rate of 8% (representing 364 individuals and 30 families) in comparison to the statewide rate of 9.4%.

The survey revealed the following following ideas and desires of town residents for improving Williamstown's economic attraction, particularly in the village downtown area:

- A farmer's market
- A laundry mat
- A family restaurant
- Health Care Practitioners
- A Town common; other common areas i.e., a senior center building, hiking paths
- Jobs that are clean and sustainable
- Community activities and spirit
- Sidewalks and crosswalks in both villages
- Clean-up activities/ pride
- Trees and landscaping
- Fun activities for teenagers



The Planning Commission will be surveying residents to see if opinions and views have changed and new ideas generated since the last survey was taken.

F. Development Issues

1. Diversity & Self Sufficiency

Research has shown that community and economic development are best supported when local solutions and resources are brought to bear on local problems. Small, new businesses are the backbone of economic development and job creation. In Central Vermont, enterprises with less than 20 employees comprise 90% of total private businesses while providing for 38% of total private employment. (National figures are 87% and 26%, respectively).

Even though initial employment gains may be small, start-up businesses have immediate impacts on the local economy. Small companies tend to hire locally, buy locally and put more money into the local economy than they take out.

Over the past decade, Central Vermont has become a leader in small business formation, with Williamstown adding its share of new, small, innovative businesses to the list. In Williamstown, the vast majority of the more than 60 employers fit the definition of small business.

2. Education/ Workforce Demographics

The quality of the work force and quality of life are directly related to community emphasis on education. Elementary and high school education are the basis of the human infrastructure. They provide the skills necessary for individuals to interact with one another in civil and meaningful ways. They are also the source of basic vocational skills in communications, mathematics, and problem solving.

As our society becomes more technologically advanced, these elemental skills take on even greater importance. Complex manufacturing techniques require workers who can process information and manipulate advanced machinery. Information management requires the ability to identify, isolate and utilize a wide variety of data.

Institutions of higher education play an important role both as major employers and as support institutions for technology based industry. Central Vermont Region hosts six colleges and post-secondary schools. Spin off institutes and for-profit ventures undertaken by the higher education community have added substantially to the economic and cultural wellbeing of the region.



Advanced educational institutions also play a major role through the provision of programs that advance technical and problem solving skills. According to the 2009-2013 census approximately 89.2% of the work force has a high school diploma or better. While an elementary and high school education can provide the building blocks for an educated work force, individual advancement and technological improvement will depend on the development of life-long learning habits and opportunities for all workers. The public education system must expand to meet the vocational needs of adults. Public and private institutions and employers must take a proactive role in identifying the skills necessary for economic vitality in the future, and take the steps necessary to prepare and retain the work force.

Finally, continued economic vitality depends on the existence of a skilled, knowledgeable and innovative “next generation” workforce. With an older than average and rapidly aging population, along with the lowest percentage of people in the 25 to 29 age group in the nation, Vermont faces some



Educational Attainment for Adults over 25 Years			
	Williamstown	Orange County	Vermont
Less than 9th grade	3.5%	2.8%	3.0%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	7.3%	5.9%	5.6%
High school graduate or GED	47.9%	35.5%	30.8%
Some college, no degree	19.7%	16.4%	17.3%
Associate's degree	6.9%	9.5%	8.5%
Bachelor's degree	9.0%	16.8%	21.0%
Graduate or professional degree	5.7%	13.1%	13.8%
Source: DP02, 2009-2013 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates			

serious challenges in this regard.

Chief among them is the disincentives our relatively low wages and high cost of living provide to young people to stay in the State. Williamstown must recognize these trends and strive to support and cultivate opportunities for young people to stay in, return to, or discover our town as an exciting and affordable place to work and live.

3. Access: Transportation & Communication

The ability to transport goods and information, and be accessible to clients and customers is essential to business. With its own interstate exit and a major state highway, Williamstown is well situated to take advantage of its physical accessibility. It is also within 20 minutes of a state airport with business/cargo capabilities.

Of course physical access is not enough for businesses to prosper in this day and age. They need a network of telecommunications infrastructure that enables information-based industries to link into a worldwide telecommunications network. There remain challenges to both take advantage of this advanced technology, and to keep pace with the developments of this quickly changing industry. The town wide availability of the state-of-the-art telecommunications/ information technology infrastructure (including high speed internet access and wireless communications) would increase work options for residents and could potentially reduce commuting and its impacts on the transportation infrastructure and the environment.

4. Quality of Life/ Village Vitality

The Vermont Business Roundtable surveyed the state's businesses in 2003 and discovered that the top 2 reasons businesses located to Vermont were because of: 1) a high quality of life and, 2) the owners had ties to the state. Quality of life could be described as having a safe environment (clean air, water and land, transportation, and access to health care and emergency services), job opportunities, natural beauty, educational quality, and low crime rate.

The latest survey, which was conducted during the first two weeks of October 2015, achieved a response rate of 69 percent overall, and included a 50 percent or greater response rate from all sectors. The Information sector expressed the most optimistic outlooks on the general business climate; and, compared with their national counterparts, Vermont companies demonstrated similar caution with near-term prospects and plans for capital outlays. Also included in the survey was the opportunity for Roundtable members to express their opinions on other topics affecting their businesses. The greatest frequency of their responses expressed concern with the state's general business climate, high taxes/high cost of doing business, lack of skilled workers, healthcare and cost of living¹⁶.

Essential to a high quality of life is a dynamic and varied social/cultural experience. The village as the center of social activity provides the critical mass necessary for a flourishing interchange of ideas, art and culture. The traditional New England village is a virtual textbook of human history. The variety of architectural styles reveal the economic and social fortunes of its inhabitants, past and present. It is considered by many to be the pinnacle in land use design. In scale and function, it satisfies our needs for privacy, community and livelihood.

Maintaining historic development patterns of village centers surrounded by resource based agricultural, mineral, forest and recreational activities balances economic and environmental interests.

Concentrating growth and development within the confines of a village allows the community to implement infrastructure improvements in an efficient and effective manner that will improve the quality of life while limiting the degradation of the environment.

Williamstown is fortunate to have a village with the infrastructural capacity for further growth and development (or re-development). We have already seen that many Williamstown residents have lofty goals for the village and would like to see it revitalized and improved.

Towards this end, the town applied and was accepted into the Vermont Department of Housing and Community Affairs "Village Center Designation Program".

This program will help residents and businesses qualify for various tax incentives and loans and make Williamstown more competitive in a variety of grant programs. Technology upgrades and infrastructure are eligible areas eligible for tax incentives and municipal grants. The Town needs to look at expanding the availability of WiFi and the possibility of offering free WiFi in suitable areas in the Town.

5. Industrial & Commercial Development

Industrial and commercial development is important because it provides jobs to nearby residents. Williamstown does not have many choices for locating industrial and commercial development due to its rolling hills and valleys. Promotion of environmentally clean, diverse, and sustainable small industrial commercial developments are in the best interest of the residents.

Commercial and industrial development that is auto-dependent, separated from other uses, and scattered in rural areas is not "smart growth". It is essential that the industrial park area be available for those industries that cannot be located elsewhere in Williamstown, or in the surrounding communities.

¹⁶ VBR-EPR 3rd Qtr 2015 Business Conditions Survey Results [10.28.15]
October 28th, 2015 by Sherra Bourget - See more at: <http://blog.vtroundtable.org/#sthash.5AUJaWsS.dpuf>

Our current industrial park site serves several businesses and manufacturers. Although the site is small, with creative development the Town has room for current businesses to grow and new businesses to locate. In 1987 the park met all Act 250 permit requirements and continues to be a very sound industrial park Williamstown can be proud of.

There is land and building space in the Villages and Town. The Villages are the ideal location for growth especially within the designated Historic Village Center in Williamstown Village with its financial incentives.

The town recognized that exit 5 of the interstate is a possible asset for future business. This interchange area would be highly appropriate for light commercial and/or light/clean industrial development. The town officials will work closely with the Central Vermont Regional Development Corporation and Central Vermont Chamber of Commerce to attract these types of firms.

In keeping with the rural characteristics of this community, future development of commercial properties and structures should consider exterior architecture to include natural materials. (i.e. stone, brick, lumber) In comparison, commercial development and architecture should exclude metal/vinyl/concrete and glass facing. The Village Center Designation Programs will enable businesses to retain and maintain their historic character.

Tax Credit Incentives can be “cashed in” at participating banks for about \$.90 on the dollar freeing up needed capital for completion of approved projects.

Exterior planning of new and repurposing of existing buildings should include landscaping techniques such as visual barriers, shrubs, trees, seating areas offset with gardens and flower beds to create an atmosphere of tranquility and beautification.



COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION*

Vermont's landscape of compact centers surrounded by rural land is integral to our economy, community spirit and brand cache. Accordingly, Vermont has established a framework of “designations” to provide incentives to encourage communities to maintain this land use pattern. These programs are also designed to help align our environmental, housing, and transportation policies, programs, regulations, and public investments to maintain and enhance the landscape cherished by Vermonters and visitors alike.

Downtowns

Downtown Designation provides communities with the help and resources they need to make downtown revitalization a community effort.

Growth Centers

The Growth Center program designates areas that are planned for new development in keeping with historic development patterns.

New Town Centers

Some Vermont communities developed without a strong central core and this program supports the creation of an area that functions as a new downtown.

Neighborhood Development Areas

The program offers incentives to create compact, walkable neighborhoods that attract more people and business to our existing community centers.

Villages Centers

Village Center Designation supports small town revitalization with a variety of benefits to the 100+ participating communities.

Planning Manual Update

DHCD is updating the State Planning Manual - the primary guidance document for over 5,000 volunteers who serve on local Planning Commissions and Development Review Boards. The last comprehensive update of the manual was in 1988 and this update presents an exciting opportunity to rethink and improve the local planning process in Vermont.

* Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development
Department of Housing and Community Development

G. Summary

Williamstown has the underpinnings of a growing economy. The diversity of its larger employers, the number of small employers, the variety and level of skills found in its labor force, and its quality of life are its prime assets. In conjunction with, businesses and other regional development groups, Williamstown will participate in economic development efforts so as to capitalize on these assets and overcome economic obstacles. Some of those aspects are improving community pride and spirit, education levels, visual appeal of both Villages, housing, and our infrastructure in order to attract good paying jobs and residents. The Town can tap into available State Programs to help Williamstown grow economically in a way that is beneficial to the Town and its residents. Attracting the right businesses will allow us to keep our community alive, healthy, and not lose the aspects of our rural culture that we cherish.



NOTES:

A series of horizontal lines for taking notes, with a decorative border and a small graphic of a tree branch on the left side.

H. Economic Development Goals, Policies & Tasks

Goal 1:

Nurture our existing businesses



Goal 1 Tasks:

- A. Press for affordable fiber optic service and other improvements in communication infrastructure throughout the community
- B. Seek assistance from Central Vermont Planning Commission to study and clean-up abandoned, idled and underused industrial and commercially contaminated sites (aka "Brownfields")
- C. Recognize business owners in public forums (e.g. newspapers, annual festivals etc.)
- D. Educate businesses and residents about the "Village Center Designation" Program
- E. Pursue "National Register" designation for certain village properties to qualify for grants, low interest loans, tax credits and other incentives

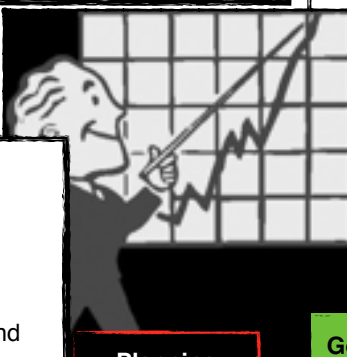
Planning Commission Ongoing

Goal 3:

1. Develop broad support for agriculture as an economic activity

Goal 3 Tasks:

- A. Encourage locally grown food, a farmer's market, gardening operations and roadside farm stands/ markets/ garden centers
- B. Consider "right to farm" ordinance
- C. Encourage participation in use value and land trust programs to alleviate tax burdens and acquire operations capital
- D. Work with Vermont Technical College's *Vermont Farm Viability Enhancement Program*, providing farmers with consultation in business planning



Planning Commission Ongoing

Goal 2:

Recruit new business and services increasing the town's tax base while keeping the rural culture of the community

Goal 2 Tasks:

- A. Develop an Williamstown Economic Committee
- B. Increase our economic competitiveness
- C. Work with Central Vermont Chamber of Commerce to increase marketing and promotional efforts
- D. Find a location and funding to build small information booth
- E. Encourage local businesses to list local events on the Vermont Travel Plan website
<https://www.vermontvacation.com/plan-your-visit>
- F. Recruit health care services to Williamstown
- G. Seek creative ways to get and keep the town clean, improve Williamstown's aesthetics. Recruit volunteers for plantings
- H. Continue to support opportunities for hosting and maintaining a farmer's market in the Williamstown Village area
- I. Seek media opportunities to attract attention to our town
- J. Explore ways to recruit new, clean businesses to Williamstown (especially small restaurants, small niche

Selectboard 2017

Planning Commission 2017

Williamstown Beautification Committee Ongoing

Planning Commission Ongoing

Goal 4:

Promote life-long learning opportunities

Goal 4 Tasks:

- A. Encourage businesses to upgrade and improve the knowledge and skills of their employees by working with the local *Workforce Development Board*



Planning Commission 2017

Goal 5:

Town officials will work closely with the Central Vermont Regional Development Corporation and Central Vermont Chamber of Commerce to attract light/ clean commercial and industrial development at Exit 5 interchange

Selectboard & Town Manager Ongoing

Chapter IX. *Transportation*

A. Overview

Public roads and private automobiles are the predominant means of transportation in Williamstown. The condition and performance of the town and state's transportation system affects our quality of life, the natural environment, and our economic well-being.

One of the primary issues facing Williamstown's future is whether residential development will continue to require virtually complete dependence on the automobile or whether it will include some mixed-use aspects that encourage alternate modes of transport. Another issue the town faces is development in rural areas where roads are steep, twisty, and narrow and the Town's staff has difficulties providing services to these areas. This chapter provides an overview of how the existing transportation network functions and how it might be improved.

B. History

Local residents built and maintained early roads. The first crude roads in Williamstown were most likely dusty in the summer and muddy in the spring. Residents used stocky horses, or oxen, to pull heavy sleds and wheeled carts for transport of goods and people. According to the Book of Opinions, published by the State of Vermont's Secretary of State's Office, when the Legislature passed the 1781 Highway Act it gave power to the Select Board to set a road tax on each male between 16 and 60 years old. The road tax was payable in labor unless people refused to work, in which case they had to pay their taxes by selling their land to their local town tax collector. Because of the poor conditions of the early roads, there were often harsh words between the Select Board and community members.

In 1889, Williamstown got its first railroad connecting the Town to Barre and Montpelier Junction and the main line north and south. The old depot and grain buildings are still located on Depot Street in the Williamstown Village, though the railroad has since been abandoned.

In the early 1900's, the first self-propelled electro-gasoline combination car was introduced. When automobile production and ownership soared, major road building started with a new concrete highway constructed through the Village in 1931 and continued with the surfacing of the road to Northfield (VT 64) in the early 1950's. Road building went on throughout the 1960's and 1970's with the completion of the Interstate which linked our community to most of the major cities of the Northeast.

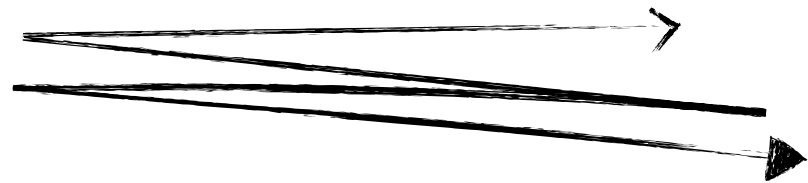
C. Current Conditions

1. *Interstate System*

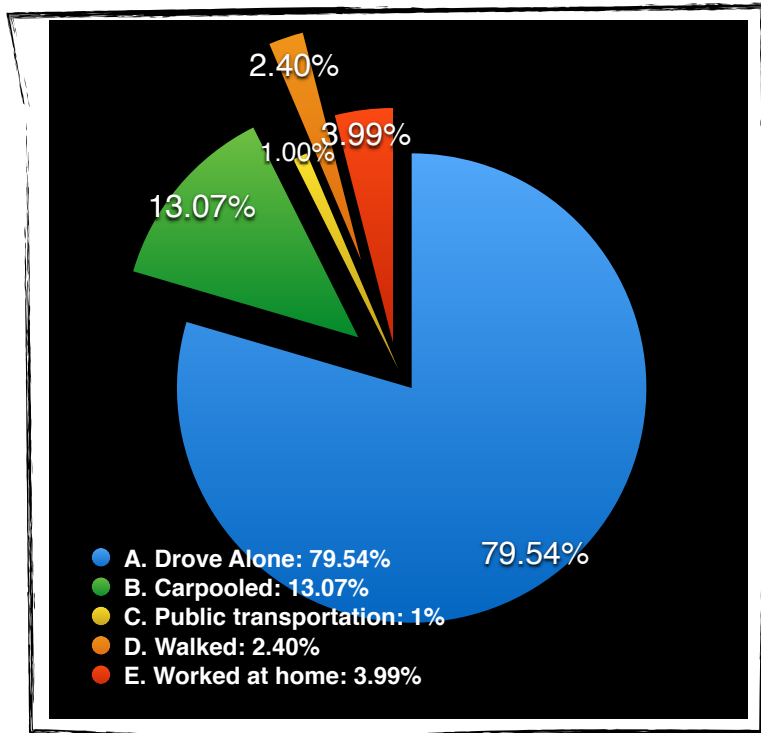
The State, under Federal oversight, maintains Vermont's interstate system. Interstate 89 provides Williamstown residents with fast access to their jobs and tourists an easy access to our Village area for goods and beautiful mountain views. Marring of the natural and scenic features along the Interstate 89 has been discouraged. The State has also protected the Interstate from strip development. There are two access roads (Route 63 and 64) off Interstate 89. Both provide easy access into Williamstown.

2. *State Highways/ Interstate Access Roads*

Vermont Routes 14 and 64 are classified as state highways. Williamstown's access road, Route 64, takes travelers down a steep (11% grade), winding hill into Williamstown Village. The views along Route 64 are picturesque and the people who travel them appreciate their aesthetic contribution. New houses spaced along the road are beginning to place pressures on those working farms and spacious fields that attracted people to the area in the first place. Traffic congestion along Route 64 is minimal.



Transportation to Work



During the 2003-2004 Community Focus Groups, residents unanimously agreed that having a second way into town via Route 63, was beneficial to the community. Falls Bridge Road, recently upgraded and paved is a second access road to I89 via West Road and Miller Road Extension. State Highway, Route 14 serves as a gateway into Williamstown Village and guides the traveler from Brookfield through Williamstown Gulf and north into Barre City.

While Route 14 brings economic vitality to our town by providing access to Williamstown Village, traffic is increasing rapidly, especially those times when people travel to and from work. At those times, traffic can be somewhat heavy, less pedestrian friendly and occasionally unsafe. Main Street along with Hebert Road would both

benefit from the State's Complete Streets Program and can be implemented under Act 34. Complete Streets is a philosophy and approach to planning, design, construction and maintenance of our roadway network to consider all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists and transit riders.¹⁷

3. Town Highways

In the Highway Act, Vermont first recognized classes of highways for the purpose of granting state aid. The Selectboard has the responsibility for general supervision and control of town highways.

The following are the four basic highway groups in the town of Williamstown based on the Agency of Transportation Town Highway Mileage:

- Class 1 town highways are those town highways that form the extensions of a state highway route and carry a state route number. There are no class 1 town highways in Williamstown
- Class 2 town highways are the most important town roads and connect from town to town and have high traffic volumes. Williamstown has 18.24 miles of class 2 town highways. Falls Bridge Road was recently upgraded to a class 2 road, making it eligible for state matching funds and 90% funding for the replacement of the bridge. The Town recently finished paving Falls Bridge Road
- Class 3 town highways are all traveled town highways other than class 1 and 2 that receive state funding. The minimum standard for class 3 town highways is that it be negotiable under normal conditions all seasons of the year by a standard manufactured pleasure car. Williamstown has 50.9 miles of class 3 town highways
- Class 4 highways only need to be maintained "to the extent required by the necessity of the town, the public good and the convenience of the inhabitants."

¹⁷ A Complete Street Guide for Communities of Vermont, Vt Department of Health

There are no standards for maintenance of class 4 town highways in the state. Williamstown has 11.45 miles of class four town highways. Young Road is going from a class 4 to a class 3 road and Lila's Way is being added as a class 3 road in 2016.

Vermont Agency of Transportation; Policy, Planning and Technical Division, Traffic Research Division			
Rte 14	2008	2010	2012
Rte 14 Brookfield to Winchester/ Boyce Rd	810 A	820 A	830 E
Winchester/ Boyce Rd to Chelsea Rd	1100 E	1300 E	1300 E
Chelsea Rd to Spider web Farm Rd	2300 E	2800 E	2900 E
Spider web Farm Rd to Vt Rte 64	4500 E	4300 E	3900 E
Rte 14 VT 64 to Construction Hill Rd	4200 E	3900 E	3700 E
Construction Hill Rd to Barre St	3900 E	3900 E	3700 E

4. Commuting Patterns

As we have already seen, Williamstown is a job exporter, with about 90% of our labor force leaving town to work. Commuting and commuting patterns can have a major impact on traffic issues in a community. Relevant commuting data from the DPO3, 2009-2013 American Survey five year estimates follows:

Commute Times	
Travel Time to Work	Percentage of Workers
Less than 20 minutes	44%
20 to 29 minutes	30%
30 to 44 minutes	19%
45 minutes or more	7%
B08012: 2009-2013 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates	

■ Commuting Method:

78% drove alone
13% carpooled
.10% Public Transportation
2% walked
4% worked at home



Start Time of Commute	
Time	Percentage of Workers
5:00 a.m. to 6:59 a.m.	41.50%
7:00 a.m. to 7:59 a.m.	36.60%
8:00 or later	6.40%
S0802: 2009-2013 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates	

D. Maintenance Issues

1. Road Maintenance

Maintaining and enhancing the local road network in a safe and effective manner is an important community responsibility. The town highway department is responsible for maintaining both town and village roads. In an attempt to balance the needs of the town road improvements and limited financial resources, the road department budget represents a big challenge. Much pays for necessary sand, salt, roadside drainage/ditch maintenance, new equipment, and manpower. As we move forward, attention needs to be paid to upgrading roads and bridges. Currently, the roadside drainage/ditch maintenance remains a top priority. Paving and maintaining of existing paved roads is an ongoing fact of life and will take continued funding in the town highway budget each year.

2. Ancient Roads

As of spring of 2010, there were 2 roads identified by the Ancient Roads Committee to be considered to be reconstituted by the town. It has been decided that the town of Williamstown will not act upon reconstituting any of the roads. It was determined that the cost and ill will with residences and the town would have been too great and no action will be taken on any of these roads.

E. Safety Issues

1. Accident Locations & Initiatives

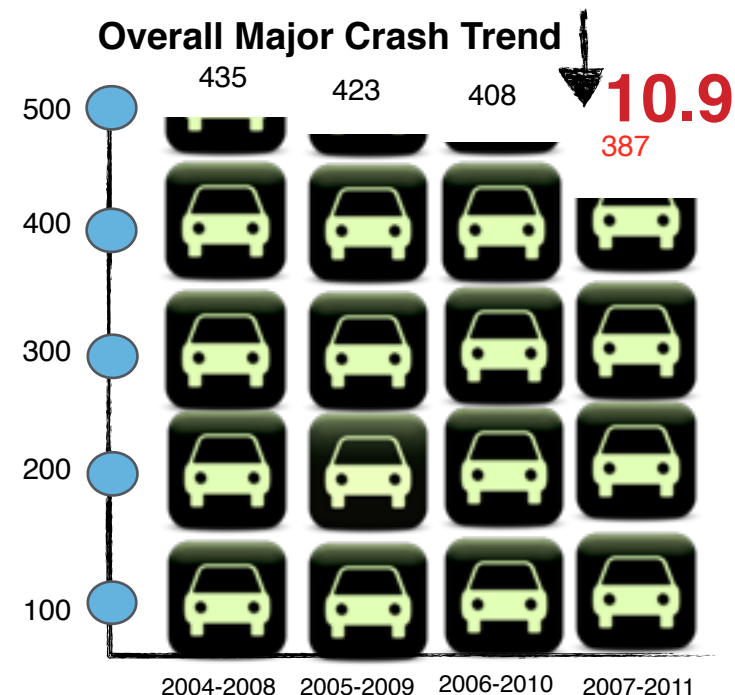
In 2012, leaders in the pursuit of safer Vermont highways and local roads launched an initiative to formalize a statewide integrated safety program. This initiative led to the formation of the Vermont Highway Safety Alliance (VHSA), whose members include a broad cross section of public and private organizations that represent all users of the State's highway system and encompass the 4 E's of highway safety- Education, Enforcement, Engineering, and Emergency

Services. The VHSA is comprised of a Board of Directors and five Focus Groups, which include Enforcement, Data, Education, Infrastructure, Outreach and Marketing.

The VHSA partners are committed to working as a team to accomplish common goals that promote the safety of motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists, and all users traveling on Vermont highways.¹⁸

The State of Vermont Orange County Sheriff's Department prepared the following accident report for all the years since computerized statewide data began in 1994 to 2002: 8 on Baptist Road, 15 on Hebert Road, 13 on Stone Road, 8 on Tower Road, 9 on McCarthy Road, 13 on Falls Bridge Road, and 78 on Route 14.

A review of historical trends shows a 10.9% reduction in major crashes statewide when considering a 5-year rolling average since 2004. As shown below, the 2004 to 2008 time period shows an average of 435 major crashes compared to the 2007 to 2011 average of 387 major crashes. The VHSA strives to retain this level of success moving forward and has established a goal of reducing major crashes from 2012 to 2016 by an additional 10%. (Vermont State Highway Plan 2012-2016 page 3)

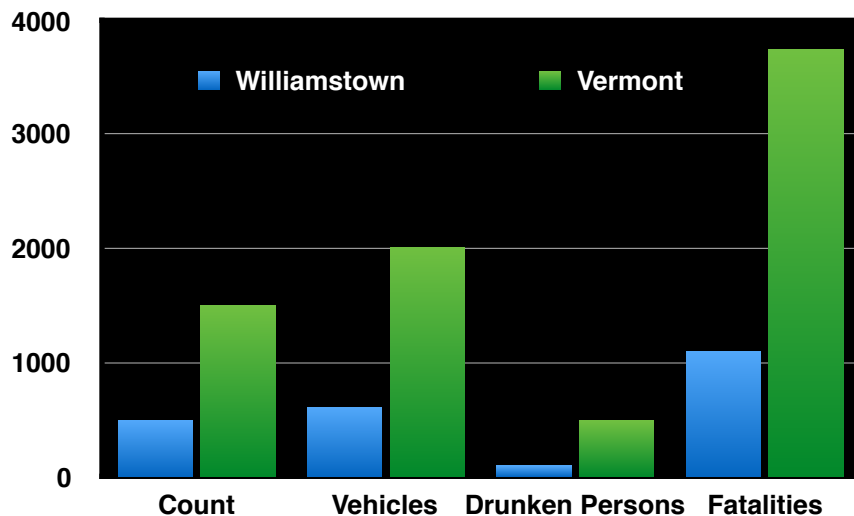


¹⁸ Vermont Strategic Highway Plan 2012-2016

Unreported accidents are much higher according to local inhabitants who live on these roads. In 2014 there were 5 accidents in Williamstown:

- 1. 100 Bush Hill Rd.
- 2. Chelsea Rd & Carpenter Rd..
- 3. Business Center Rd. & Pump and Pantry
- 4. Circle St.
- 5. Rte 64 and I 89 Exit Ramp

Fatal Road traffic accidents for 1975-2013 (per 100,000 population) Read more: <http://www.city-data.com/city/Williamstown-Vermont.html#ixzz3uJYa4FXw>



From 2008-2012 traffic on the Route 14 Corridor that is in Williamstown has remained the same or decreased except for the stretch between Chelsea Rd. and Spider Web Farm Rd, which went from an estimated 2300 cars per day in 2008 to 2900 cars in 2012.

¹⁹ Selectboard Report, Town and School Board 2014

Road surfaces have improved over the past five years. The town continues to have road surfaces in poor repair. Residents have reported gravel spilling into their driveways. Pavement dropping off a few inches at the roads edge can deliver tragic consequences. Unforgiving hazards include sharp curves, insufficient shoulders, and poor surfaces. Special attention is required to some roads for safety concerns. In particular, the sharp corner of Hebert Road (across from the past Lynde School) and the sharp corner of Cogswell Street.

The town has done some work over the past 5 years to improve road signs; however, many signs are still poor. Improvements should continue on an ongoing basis. Signage should be inventoried and new ones placed according to the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices.

2. Town Bridges and Culverts

Bridges and culverts on class 4 roads cannot be ignored. If the town puts a culvert in, then the town is liable to keep them in repair. If the town issues a permit to a resident that allows him/her to put a culvert in for their own use then the resident is liable for maintenance and repairs. The town culvert program replaces or upgrades 8 to 10 culverts per year. The long awaited Williamstown VT 64 State Highway Bridge over brook number 2, bridge 10, was on the high priority list of projects and scheduled for construction in 2006. It was completed in 2009. In 2014 brook number 2 was dredged and widened. A rock wall was installed to prevent flooding. The baseball field was graded, seeded and a culvert installed to keep the field from flooding. This year is the first time Hoyt-Seaver field has been used in several years. The Town has “been doing very well in keeping our equipment upgraded along with our roadway paving and rehab schedule. Any cuts would have impacted these items and just cost the tax payers more down the road. The board has set a standard that any new roadway rehab work starts with ditching and under-drain where needed along with culverts properly sized to meet the 100 year flood standards”.¹⁹

F. Traffic Solutions/ Alternatives

1. Traffic Calming/ Access Management

The town must manage a safe and efficient flow of traffic along our roads. Access management is a set of techniques that the town officials can use to control access to highways, major arterials, and other roadways. (See Appendix II, **MAP 1** for more information).

The following are examples of access management techniques that the town can use, especially in the village access areas:

- some calming devices such as “green” strips, curbs, on street parking, raised sidewalks, speed humps, rumble strips, street-tree plantings, street furniture, landscaping, signage, and textured or colored pavement can be more effective than traditional speed reduction measures such as police enforcement because they are based on self-enforcement
- alternate routes and grid networks reduce traffic when incorporated into village areas and highly used roads
- space and location of driveway location, for example, driveways should be located away from intersections and provide adequate sight distance to see oncoming traffic and curb cuts should be limited and consolidated
- limits to right-of-way access onto highways, for example, connect parking lots and consolidate driveways so vehicles can circulate between businesses without having to re-enter the major roadway

2. Bicycle and Pedestrian Access

Among the recommendations of the 2003-2004 Community Survey and Focus Groups was the need to develop more walking trails and improve the safety of walkers, bikers, and horseback riders from people driving cars. These are still important activities in town and are becoming more frequent on our back roads.



Bicycles provide a clean, economical and energy efficient mode of transportation. They are a primary means of transportation for young people and more recently have become an increasingly popular form of recreation and transportation for adults. There is currently no bicycle route within the Town.

Traffic, speeding and irresponsible driving are becoming more frequent creating dangerous situations for cyclists. Most of the highways used by bicyclists do not have sufficient shoulder width to accommodate them safely.

Pedestrian byways are an important and integral part of the transportation system. Residents have reported they want a safe and walkable village. Residents walk across the main road of busy Williamstown Village every day, all day long. Especially during certain times of the day, motorists lack respect for people trying to cross the street in the village areas.

Sidewalks provide safe routes for pedestrians in neighborhoods, commercial and industrial areas, areas frequented by children, and community centers. In areas of moderate to higher density development, having sidewalks is a necessity.

Sidewalks have been a debated issue in town. After much debate, fund raising and grants, and receipt of grants, Williamstown constructed sidewalks along Route 14 from The Gardens and Pump and Pantry up to Meadow Street. Street lamps were installed along the sidewalks enhancing the Village's historic ambiance.

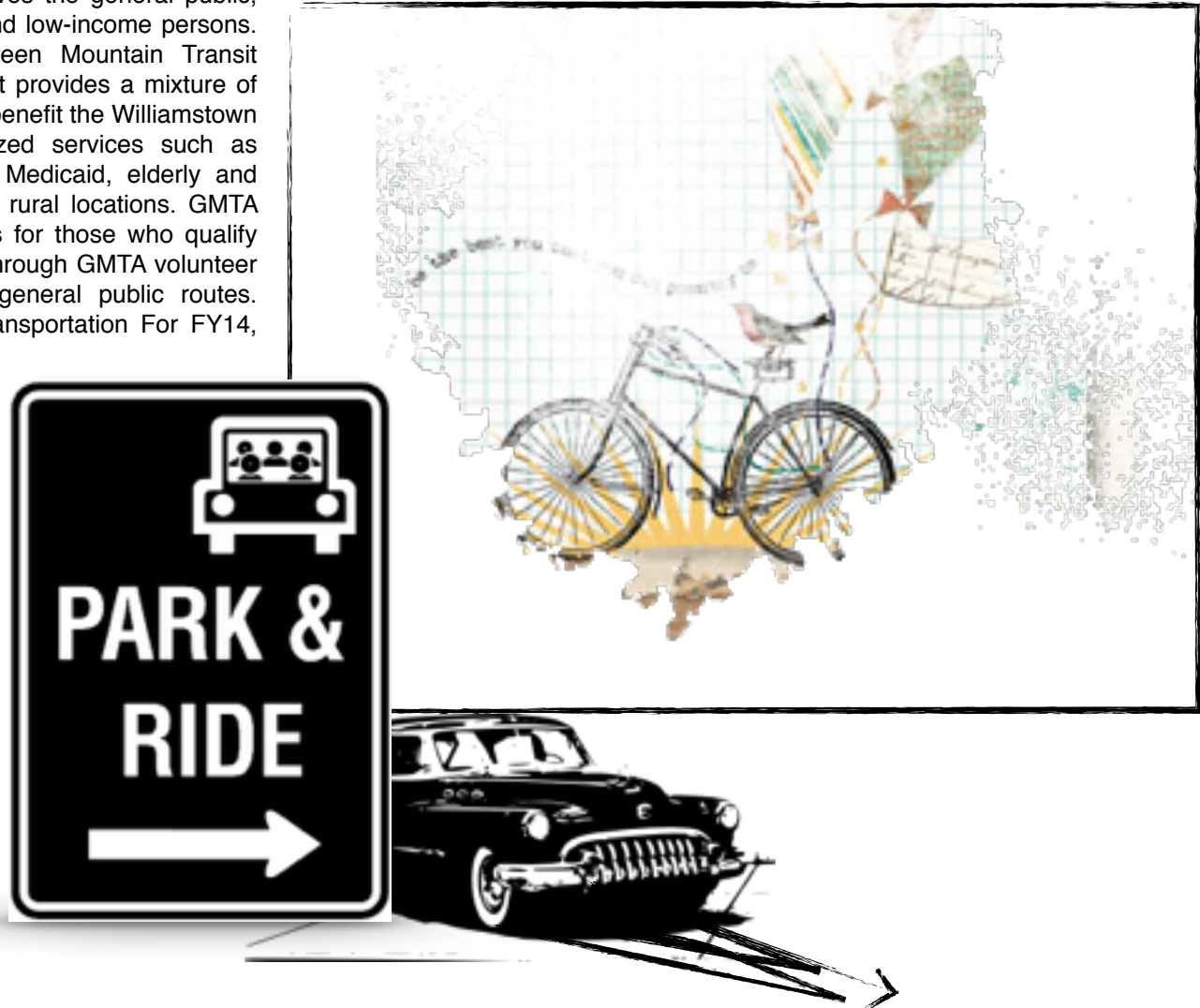
With grants available through The Village Center Designation Program sidewalks can be installed on both sides of Main Street. Footpaths are informal pedestrian byways utilized to move traffic between points or as nature trails and other recreational purposes.

The Planning Commission suggests that the town consider developing footpaths in the waterfall area of Falls Bridge Road and other such scenic areas. Footpaths should also be developed on land owned by the town.

3. Public Transportation

Many people, including the elderly, disabled and poor, cannot live in a community setting without access to public transportation. Public transportation is a vital service that helps people live in less restrictive settings. Public transit serves the general public, elderly persons, disabled persons, and low-income persons. Williamstown is served by the Green Mountain Transit Agency, a non-profit organization that provides a mixture of fixed and non-fixed route services to benefit the Williamstown citizens. GMTA provides individualized services such as shopping and health care shuttles, Medicaid, elderly and disabled services to both urban and rural locations. GMTA offers individual coordinated services for those who qualify and are in need of scheduled rides through GMTA volunteer drivers, special shuttle service or general public routes. GMTA Individual Special Service Transportation For FY14, provided 46 individual Williamstown residents with continuous special transportation service, totaling 2,014 trips and 22,162 total miles driven. A free shuttle picks people up at Williamstown Square and at the Garden Apartments every Tuesday to transport individuals to Hannaford's and offers assistance with grocery bags. (Shopping Special). <http://gmtaride.org/PDF/Web%20Schedules/July%201/GMTAJulyfinal.pdf>

The Williamstown's Park and Ride is located off exit 5, I-89 on Route 64. The paved, lighted, parking area has 23 parking spaces, and 1 disabled space. The parking area facilitates carpooling and rides-sharing and is well used.



F. Transportation: *Goals, Policies & Tasks*

Goal 1:

To maintain and preserve our transportation system



Goal 1 Tasks:

A. Establish a Transportation Advisory Committee

- (1) Work with the Transportation Crew, property owners, merchants, residents, Sheriffs and State Troopers to identify transportation problems and solutions
- (2) Develop an asset management plan, inventory the condition of roads, develop road standards, solutions, costs, priorities and an Transportation vision with an implementation plan
- (3) Develop and adopt a five-year Capital Budget Program, update it once a year with annual capital budgets that provide for and maintain current and future capital improvements
- (4) The Capital Budget Program will prioritize transportation monies, project where it will be spent, including additional funding for unexpected issues and beautification efforts
- (5) Organize beautification projects to encourage tourism, protects and allows for enjoyment of roadside scenic features; i.e. the Vermont Agency of Transportation's Byway Program
- (6) Study possible traffic calming devices, pull-outs for vistas and walking paths
- (7) Organizing groups to do some maintenance work on trails the town still owns the right of way
- (8) Looking at a 5-10 year highway and bridge reconstruction and rehabilitation program

B. Survey residents living on major roads for planning any expansion of the town's paving program

C. Review the Town Highway classification periodically taking into consideration increasing highway needs, changing traffic patterns and growing population

D. Consider applications for acceptance of public highways and roadways to adopt and adhere to an orderly procedure for taking actions on such applications. The decision on an application for acceptance of a highway is reserved to the sole and absolute discretion of the Select Board.

E. Designing roads that comply with A-76 State of Vermont Standards

F. Investigating Access Management techniques from VT Trans

Goal 1 Tasks: (continued)

G. Continue to use pavement, gravel, and maintenance management systems to maintain all roads

- (1) Developing a program that over time upgrades those roads that are currently below serviceability criteria
- (2) Improve driveways with excessive spillage (the grade in front of a dwelling or other building adjacent to the road cannot be changed by more than 3 feet without following quasi-judicial procedures)

H. Continue to address the project backlog and implement shelf projects

I. Limiting the construction of new roads in open fields and design them so they do not significantly increase forest fragmentation

J. Developing roads that are logically related to the topography to produce reasonable road grades

K. Encouraging subdivisions adjacent to roads designated as scenic to be appropriately designed with respect to the sighting of any infrastructure and site alteration, including grading filling, removal of trees, stone walls, or other existing landscape features that are consistent with the scenic quality of the road

L. Encouraging landowners understanding that all newly planned roads and driveways meet environmental laws (i.e. approval for paving/disrupting flow near wetland and other areas)

(1) Designing, if possible, an access/curb cut permit with the State Department of Transportation/Natural Resources)

M. Studying and taking appropriate steps to correct unsafe roads and improve safety on bends on Hebert Road and Cogswell Street

N. Continue to inventory, inspect and repair the Town's culverts

O. Using established sign-off inspection report forms for all new roads (adequate drainage, grade and width for essential services)

P. Designing standards and declare all substandard roads as a public nuisance (too narrow, twisty, poor drainage)

Town Manager
2018

Selectboard &
Town Manager
Ongoing

Williamstown's
Beautification
Guild
2017

Selectboard &
Town Manager
2017

Town Manager
Ongoing

Selectboard
Ongoing

Planning
Commission
2017

Town Manager
Ongoing





Goal 2:
Increase the safety and perception of safety and choices in transportation including non-motorized users, pedestrians, bicyclists, horses, that share our streets

Goal 2 Tasks:

- A. Investigating roads frequently used by pedestrians, joggers, bicyclists and horseback riders to provide appropriate and safe walkways to the greatest extent possible
- (1) Using the Bike Sufficiency Ratings to further investigate pedestrian/bicycle path opportunities
 - (2) Placing bike racks and benches along roads and paths in the village areas
 - (3) Planning for both villages of Williamstown, and outlying neighborhoods of new growth areas, for integrating non-motorized transportation via bike paths, walking paths and recreational trails. Where traffic is less than 1500, Annual Average Daily Traffic sharing of the road should be looked at
 - (4) Consider Williamstown's CL-4 Town Highways for hiking and horseback riding trails
- B. Consider sidewalks and pedestrian walkways for the safety and convenience of pedestrians and vehicular traffic. Future planning should include:
- (1) Adding new sidewalks to connect Construction Hill Road to South Main Street at the Post Office conforming curbs with existing sidewalks in the Village areas
 - (2) Repaving and upgrading of existing sidewalks in the village
 - (3) Working with the State to develop two pedestrian crosswalks along Route 14 in Williamstown Village for the safety of residents: from the Gardens to Pump and Pantry and from Lake Sunapee Bank to Behind the Scenes Cafe and Bar
- C. Encouraging new projects to afford enough parking space so cars are not forced to park along the road
- D. Encouraging road and driveway projects allow enough room for emergency vehicles to enter and turn around
- E. Placing warning signs, as necessary, near places that have horses and near farms that regularly drive tractors and pull farm equipment on roads. In areas considered unsafe, town officials should place luminous signs so visitors and residents can avoid these problem areas at night, if they meet warrants

Town Manager 2018

Planning Commission 2017

Planning Commission Ongoing

Town Manager 2018



Goal 3:
Enhance the street environment

Goal 3 Tasks:

- A. Seek funds to plant at least five tree/bushes per year on Town property in the village area and other beautification areas along our rural roads
- B. Require attractive transportation system elements and surroundings to reinforce community identity. Preserve treelined areas of roadways. Property owners should be encouraged to plant new trees where older trees have been removed
- C. Study the reestablishment of a few roads which will help with traffic circulation including Henry Road, which does not currently connect to Flint Road as shown on the Highway Map, Erskine Road from Graniteville to Gilbert Road, and have Grand View reconnect with Chelsea Road. Study the potential for adding a connecting road from Pump and Pantry to Poulin Lumber/ Ace Hardware Store.
- D. Encourage developments to keep large parking lots in the back of their buildings
- E. Update and adopt a long-plan scenic road plan based on scenic Roadway standard promulgated by the Agency of Transportation. Williamstown has many rural, primarily gravel roads that should be preserved for their scenic, cultural (stonewalls) and rural qualities
- F. Improve entryways into the village to set image and bring speed down in the villages by using suggestions of the *Better Back Roads Manual*

Town Manager Ongoing

Town Manager 2018

Selectboard & Town Manager 2017

SPEED LIMIT 45

Goal 4:
Promote the reduction of transportation energy

Goal 4 Tasks:

- A. Develop an integrated plan for non- motorized transportation in Williamstown Village
- B. Encouraging Green Mountain Transit Agency to expand the shuttle to the Foxhole Village Area
- C. Seek transportation enhancement grants for infrastructure /community attribute projects that are small in scope to reinvigorate Williamstown enhancing pedestrian/bicycle paths and scenic and historic assets
- D. Preserving Class4 roads for recreational use, and/or downgrade their status to a legal trail retaining the public's interest in using them
- E. Study and coordinate planning efforts for extending plans for the Bike Path from connecting towns along the old train tracks
- F. Promote car pool programs and public transit
- G. Encourage non-motorized travel by accommodating walking, bicycling and use of public transit as well as a safe, coordinated street system
- H. Encourage concentrated settlement patterns which minimizes transportation related energy costs

Planning Commission Ongoing

Town Manager Ongoing

Planning Commission Ongoing

Goal 5:
Be accountable and educate the community about Williamstown's roads

Goal 5 Tasks:

- A. Maintain a longterm schedule for major and minor road improvements
- B. Seek technical assistance from the State of Vermont Department of Transportation, Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission and Vermont Local Roads Program (St. Michael's College) to help our community learn about local road building and maintenance strategies
- C. Update the official Town Highway Map with the state to be more accurate

Town Manager Ongoing

Goal 6 Tasks:

- A. Promote driveway interconnection with adjacent developments along major highways
- B. Limiting one driveway per parcel, with special conditions for additional driveways. For example, lots with larger frontages, or those with needs for separate right and left-turn entrances
- C. Encourage shared driveways
- D. Encourage subdivision design where lots fronting on major roads have internal access from a residential street (sometimes known as "reverse frontage")
- E. Provide adequate distance between the interstate and nearby curb cuts according to the following standards:
 - (1) 30 mph curb cut spacing: 200 feet
 - (2) 35 mph for curb cut spacing: 225 feet
 - (3) 40 mph for curb cut spacing: 275 feet
- F. Coordinate land use, subdivision and site design decisions that affect access management needs along state highways with the Vermont Department of Transportation
- G. Limit curb cuts by developing a curb cut application process
- H. Promote provisions for all parcels having road frontage on town and state highways, access to be located at least 150 feet from the intersection of public road rights of way, for all uses except for single and two family dwellings, which shall be located at least 50 feet from such intersections. Distance will be measured from the radius of the driveway
- I. Comply with Williamstown's Highway Policy
 - (1) Ensure all newly developed private roads are Class 3 standard roads
 - (2) Ensuring maintenance of all roads not designated as Class 3 Town Highways or higher is the responsibility of the subdivider. The subdivider will provide evidence that said roads will be adequately maintained either by the subdivider or an owner's association
 - (3)Manage access to public roads, define design standards for new roads, protect scenic features along existing roads, and the upgrades or protection of
- J. Continue to participate in Central Vermont Regional Planning

Goal 6:
Manage Roadway access

Selectboard Ongoing

Planning Commission Ongoing

Planning Commission Ongoing

Town Manager Ongoing

**USE →
CROSSWALK**

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LIMIT
45**



Chapter X. Land Use

A. Overview

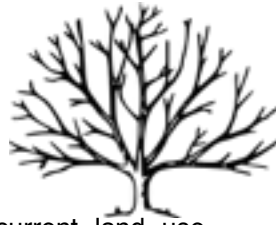
This chapter is intended to describe past and current land use patterns in Williamstown and to articulate expectations and desires regarding the town's future growth and development. The Planning Commission believes that the values expressed here are in concert with the beliefs and ideals of the residents of Williamstown.

- Protect Williamstown's rural character
- Grow at a measured and careful pace
- Avoid poor development & poorly designed projects that can be bad for business and quality of life
- Enhance and invigorate Williamstown Village
- Develop new common spaces to help bring the community together while fostering aesthetic enhancement and recreational opportunity
- Respect individual rights while recognizing that private actions must be balanced against community welfare
- Have clear, fair rules and policy in place to guide growth

There are different ways to approach land use planning and different balances that can be achieved between competing uses. While there is no correct answer, we can make choices. As the community moves forward, residents must work together to plan the way they want to use the land in Williamstown. Ideally, we will do so in a way that will benefit the common interests of our residents and our natural environment.

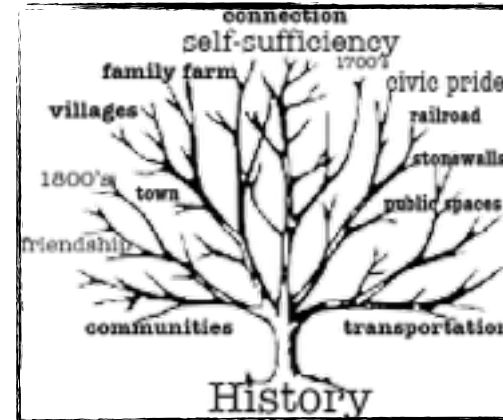
B. History

Early on, most of Williamstown's land was used for farming. Farm families grew, or manufactured, almost everything they needed to live. Self-sufficiency on the family farm was a product of necessity because of isolation. Our villages started to develop in the middle



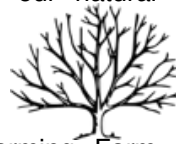
1800's due to the railroad and improved transportation that connected Williamstown to other communities. In time, they became symbolic of culture, close friendships, and places to work and residents developed beautiful public spaces that conveyed civic pride.

Originally, in the 1700's, all the land in Williamstown, and all other Vermont towns, was plotted-out on 100 acre lot grids. The State regulated the land use on a Lot and Range numbering system. Many of the town roads, tree lines, stonewalls, fence lines, property boundaries tend to follow these so called straight lot lines. For example, Williamstown's Lot 2, Range 15 was originally designated as "School Lease Land." Long abandoned, this old grid system no longer applies to land ownership or taxing structure.



C. Evolving Land Use Patterns

Historically in Williamstown, as in many Vermont communities, most new growth occurred in a compact form within or adjacent to established centers. This pattern allowed businesses and residents to take advantage of existing services and facilities and helped to reinforce the economic and social importance of our cities and villages. It also allowed resource based industries (farming, forestry and mining) to operate with minimal interference from residential uses and access to prime land resources.



Over the past several decades, however, this pattern has changed. Much of the residential construction over the past thirty years has taken place on large lots located on back roads in more rural parts of town. With the number of new housing units outpacing population growth the impacts of this phenomenon on land use in Williamstown are significant. In some adjacent municipalities, new businesses have located along the state highways, interstate exits, and collector roads which bring commuters back and forth to work and tourists to and from their destinations, or in areas where other infrastructural improvements have been provided. While only a few locations have experienced full blown "strip development," or suburban sprawl, most of the region's communities, including Williamstown, are witnessing the emergence of these patterns to some degree. (Footnote: The Vermont Forum on Sprawl, a project of the Orton Family Foundation, defines sprawl as: "low-density development that spreads from compact village centers along highways and into the countryside. Sprawl separates the places that people live from the places where they work, shop, learn, worship, and play").

In spite of these recent trends, Williamstown's historic landscape remains largely intact. There are still distinct village areas separated and surrounded by a rural countryside characterized by farm and forest lands interspersed with residential uses.

D. Desired Land Use

1. Introduction

It is in Williamstown's best interests to preserve its traditional land use pattern – not just for its intrinsic values, but also because we recognize the pitfall of "sprawl". The argument is often made that sprawling patterns of growth are unnecessarily consumptive of land and energy, taxing on public services, destructive of downtowns, inflationary for land and housing costs, and in conflict with the aesthetic character of Vermont. As such, the notion that our interests shall be best served by concentrating new development in or near existing settlements and/or mixed use areas is gaining traction.

Williamstown, too, supports this so called "smart growth" concept with the expectation that a future influenced by this model could deliver economic, social, and environmental benefits to its residents, specifically:

- maximizing the utility and efficiency of public service, energy and infrastructure expenditures
- reinforcing and revitalizing the role of Williamstown village as the center of commerce, industry and community life
- reducing development pressures on important natural resource lands
- preserving the character and aesthetic integrity of the town and thereby, the tourism economy

Williamstown recognizes that not all new growth will or should occur within growth centers. In fact, some industrial or warehousing operations may be incompatible with the mix of uses found in residential, and hence better suited to single use industrial parks. Furthermore, residential uses in the rural parts of town can be designed to be more sensitive to aesthetic and environmental concerns. **The following sections set forth the town's land use vision for four distinct areas of our community:**

2. Village/ Mixed Use Areas

Williamstown village is the hub of our town. The village is laid-out in a linear configuration, with one square pattern in the center of the village. It contains a mix of development types and people who live in its residential areas have access to the downtown. The downtown provides the variety of employment, shopping, services, and social and municipal activities typical of a traditional village center. Another advantage for people living in the village area is that their homes are served by the public sewer and water system.



This infrastructure should also allow for expansion of this relatively dense mixed-use development pattern into the future. Williamstown therefore encourages concentrated growth in and in close proximity to the existing village and encourages a mixed-use concept within these areas. Shops and services within the village, and the school, should all be within walking distance of homes, thereby reducing reliance on cars.

There is a growing awareness that the village has lost some of its historic appeal and beauty due to unplanned growth. Furthermore, the square has been developed without setting aside a common/green space. As the Williamstown grows, it will be important to ensure that the village center is a visually interesting and an aesthetically pleasing place to live and visit.



Foxville Village (also known as Graniteville) may also provide room for guided expansion. The area of Cogswell is served by a municipal sewer from Barre Town through an inter-municipal agreement. Mixed use growth is envisioned for this area in the long-term future. Williamstown should consider any additional infrastructure improvements needed to implement this vision.

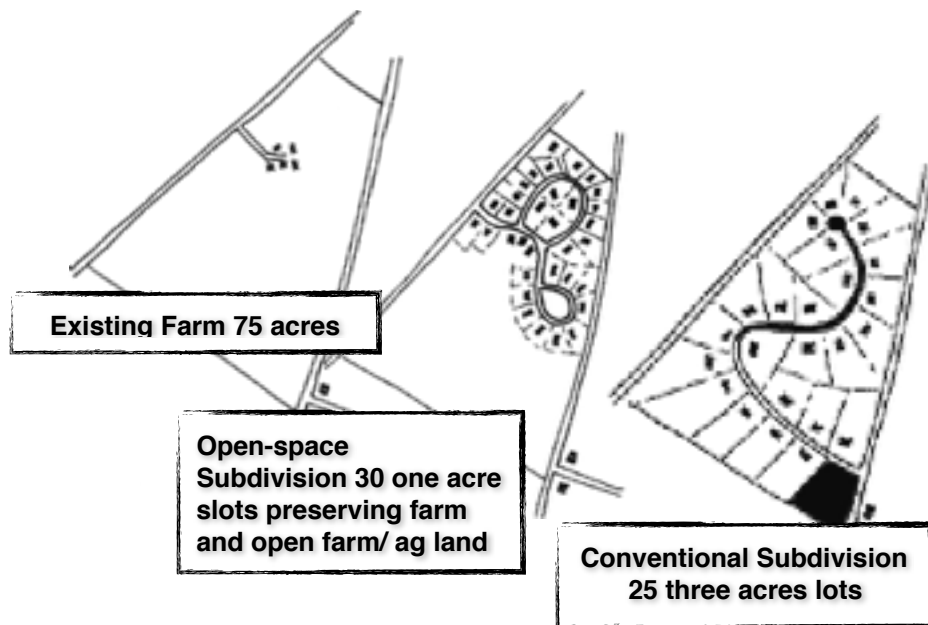
Williamstown Industrial Park is located south of the Williamstown village. Currently, the industrial park is fully developed.

Other areas that exhibit the characteristics of more traditional neighborhoods include Chelsea, Stone, Felicity, McLean, Graniteville Roads and Mountain and Crabapple Street. In the long-term future, these areas could be studied and considered for light mixed-uses including country stores, small shops, office space, common spaces, roadside vegetable/flower stands, and the like.

Densities for new development in Williamstown Village shall reflect the traditional pattern. Lot sizes for residential uses shall be relatively small (~1/4 acre or less) as shall setbacks and street frontages. Commercial uses should be relatively close to the street, forego front yard parking, and be architecturally compatible with a Vermont village setting.

3. Residential/ Agricultural Areas

The purpose of the Residential and Agricultural District is to balance residential development with agricultural needs, open space, and natural resource protection by supporting low-density or “clustered” development that is appropriate with the physical capabilities of the land. Residential and agricultural land uses include, but are not limited to houses, farms, flower and vegetable stands. Other appropriate use may include small businesses, low-impact outdoor recreation, forestry, mining, and educational uses.



Open land continues to contribute to the rural character and scenic beauty shared by all our residents. Fragmentation of open areas by non-agriculture uses should be carefully evaluated. Development should occur away from the prime agricultural soils, whenever possible to minimize the loss of existing or potential agricultural land within these areas, "cluster" housing, (i.e., "open space subdivision", or Planned Unit Development).

Open space subdivisions provide for increased density on a portion of a subdivided parcel in return for a commitment to keep some portion of the tract undeveloped. This can help a community meet its open space and natural resource protection goals, concentrate its service areas, while allowing the landowner to realize his or her property equity. In addition, this form of development may reduce the cost of housing while providing home buyers with reasonably sized lots and access to protected open spaces. Research has shown that homes in "clustered" subdivisions generally appreciate faster than those in conventional subdivisions, may reduce the developer's infrastructure investment by 30 to 50 percent, and can reduce municipal service costs significantly.

Overall densities in the Residential/Agricultural areas should be lower than in those areas with sewer and water infrastructure. Lot sizes under an 1 acre are discouraged except as part of a Planned Residential Development/Planned Unit Development (PRD/PUD) subdivision.

4. Interstate Interchange Areas

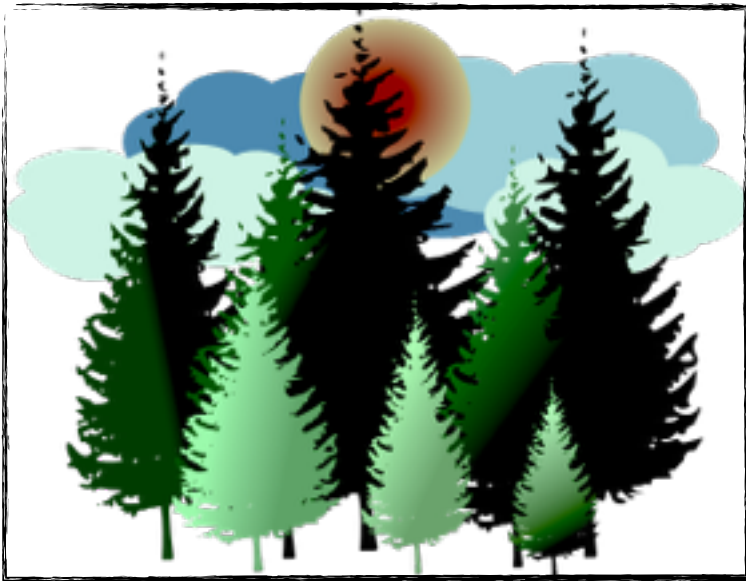
Interstate interchange areas tend to receive high pressure for the development of commercial and industrial uses. A study conducted by VAOT concluded that "Once development starts in these areas, sprawl begins by filling in the vacant lands between the commercial use areas. Commercial development also tends to increase. Soon people find it difficult to enter or leave businesses or homes along the road. Serious accidents increase, resulting in a higher public cost of lessening these impacts. In response, Towns tend to widen the roads in order to handle more cars and install traffic signals. The overall town population increases at a rapid pace".

Large-scale commercial/industrial development close to the Interstate Interchange areas could lead to a decline in economic development for Williamstown Village, an overtaking of town roads, increased congestion and accidents, and increased local taxes. Such development can also place undue impacts on our natural resources, wildlife, and scenic areas. Thoughtful development of interchange areas could provide needed services, jobs, and reinforce existing development patterns. It shall be recognized that not all interchange zones are appropriate for the same kind or degree of new growth.

The State of Vermont, by Executive Order and under the auspices of the Agency of Commerce and Community Development, has recognized the importance of interstate interchange areas through the production of a manual titled " *Vermont Interstate Interchange Planning and Development Guidelines*". This document explores policy issues, characterizes interchange areas by type and offers text and pictorial guidelines to illustrate both the consequences of poor design/policy and the advantages of alternative design options.

5. Conservation and Forestry Areas

The purpose of the Conservation and Forestry Area is to protect high elevation lands that have shallow soils and steep slopes, and the fragile resources that occur there. These areas also provide significant recharge to the ground and surface water supplies of the municipality and the region. This district encompasses the least accessible and more sparsely developed area of town where limited developmental potential exists.



Compatible uses in this district include agriculture and forestry, game preserves, environmental education, recreation, and very low-density residential development. Lot sizes under 4 acres are discouraged. Use of open space design principles is encouraged, where feasible. Town officials shall not provide community facilities and services to these areas.

E. Growth Management Tools

1. Act 250

Act 250 is the law governing Vermont's unique development review process. Under this Act, larger development proposals come before a citizen panel known as a "District Commission". This panel uses a quasi-judicial process to review proposals under its jurisdiction for compliance with ten environmental criteria. These criteria address issues ranging from traffic to water quality, wildlife and aesthetics. In order for a project to receive an Act 250 Land Use Permit, the District Commission must make "positive findings" under each criterion – that is to say it must find that the project will either have no significant undue adverse impacts, or militate against the same where they do occur.



Because Williamstown is without local land use regulations, the town's knowledge of, and participation in, Act 250 is particularly important. Criterion 10 of the Act states that all projects must be shown to be in conformance with the municipal plan before being permitted. Generally speaking, plan language must be explicit and its directives clear to be enforceable. While the District Commission welcomes municipal participation (in fact, the host town is a "statutory party" to the proceedings), it, rather than the town makes the final judgment and ruling on this "conformance" issue.

A study of the Vermont Natural Resources Council discovered, “Act 250 is one of the reasons that Vermont has one of the strongest banks in New England: it discourages undercapitalized development that can lead to bad loans, and bad development is bad business.” While Act 250 can help to realize better designed and more environmentally sensitive development, most new construction in Williamstown is not large enough to trigger jurisdiction.

District 5 of the Environmental Commission covers Williamstown. Anyone with questions about Act 250, or needing assistance in preparing an application for a project can contact the office at 5 Perry St. Suite 60, Barre VT 05641-0186 and call: (802) 476-0186.

2. Local Land Use Regulations (Zoning & Subdivision)

The vast majority of municipalities in Vermont employ local land use regulations to help enforce community goals as expressed in the town plan. Originally, the primary intent of land use regulation was to separate incompatible land uses.

It has, however, evolved into a more sophisticated science designed to reinforce land use goals, protect important resources, promote economic development and safeguard the public health, safety and welfare. Generally speaking, zoning bylaws prescribe allowable densities and land uses for various districts within a community, while subdivision regulations control the design and layout of projects. These mechanisms are authorized by the Vermont Municipal and Regional Planning and Development Act (commonly known as Chapter 117).



Williamstown voters have, in the past, rejected the idea of using locally developed standards to regulate and track new development. However, the planning commission and residents should strive to understand the pros and cons of local regulation in case future circumstances should call for more direct action on land use patterns.

3. Non-Regulatory/ Incentive Based Programs:

While land use regulations provide the most direct avenue for impacting and implementing land use pattern goals, there are some non-regulatory strategies Williamstown could consider:

a. Land Trusts/Use Value Appraisal

As previously discussed, land trusts can enable open land to remain productive by infusing capital into agricultural or forestry operations, through the purchase of easements and/or development rights. Vermont's Use Value Appraisal program allows productive land to be taxed on the basis of current uses rather than development value.

b. Village Center Designation

The Vermont Downtown Program, established under the Department of Housing and Community Affairs, recently released its application guidelines for the village center designation process. This village center designation, as provided for in 24 V.S.A chapter 76A, was created by the Legislature to recognize and encourage local efforts to revitalize Vermont's traditional village centers. The definition of a village center, according to the statute, is: "a traditional center of the community, typically composed of a cohesive core of residential, civic, religious, and commercial buildings arranged along a main street and intersecting streets. Industrial uses may be found within or immediately adjacent to these centers." According to the Downtown Program, village centers are to be designated to support the revitalization of what exists, not as a growth center. New growth should be expected in these village centers; however, they should not be used as a target for all new growth in a municipality.

Applications for designation must be made by the select board. Decisions regarding designation will be made by the Vermont Downtown Development Board. A municipality may seek designation for more than one village center, but each must meet the specific application requirements. Also, village centers will be designated on a three-year basis, so renewal requests will be due every three years. These renewals must demonstrate that the village center continues to meet all requirements for designation.

Williamstown was approved for Village Center Designation in 2015 and under this program it is eligible for the following benefits:

- 5% Vermont Income Tax Credit for Substantial Rehabilitation of Certified Historic Buildings. This credit is available for income producing buildings that apply for and qualify for the 20% Federal Rehabilitation Investment Tax Credit. Therefore, qualifying projects receive a total tax credit of 25%.
- 50% Vermont Income Tax Credit for Code Improvements to Commercial Buildings. This credit is available for capital improvements to commercial buildings in order to comply with: fire, life safety, and accessibility codes; Health Department rules for food establishments; Agriculture Department rules for the sale of dairy and meats; and Agriculture Department rules on weights and measures. Only one award, up to \$5,000, can be awarded to any one building. * *Designated village centers will be given priority consideration for all grants administered through the State's Municipal Planning Grant Program and the Consolidated Plan for HUD funding, including the Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG).*
- Designated village centers will be given consideration and priority by the State Building Department when leasing or constructing buildings, in consultation with the community.
- A special assessment district in a designated village may use funds for operating costs in addition to capital expenses

http://accd.vermont.gov/strong_communities/opportunities/revitalization/village_center

c. Vermont Village Greens Initiative

The Village Green Initiative is reviving awareness about Vermont's village greens and the important cultural and economic role they play. Vermont's village greens (and commons) serve as the physical, historic and cultural heart of many communities – hosting concerts, fairs, parades, seasonal festivals and farmers markets. They provide residents and visitors a place to gather, exercise, recreate, celebrate, and engage in commerce and community. Integral to the Vermont brand, village greens anchor and strengthen our communities, and make our cities and towns more attractive places to live and work. However, when budgets are tight, many of the 148 village greens around Vermont suffer from deferred maintenance, poor preservation and lack of investment.

To address this issue, a new partnership is working to document, showcase, and revitalize these shared public spaces to assure that future generations enjoy the economic, cultural and social benefits Vermont's village greens provide.

http://accd.vermont.gov/sites/accd/files/Documents/strongcommunities/cpr/150317_Village_Greens_Overview.pdf

d. Landowner/ Developer Education

Even in the absence of land use regulations, the Planning Commission may wish to consult with landowners and prospective developers, on a voluntary basis, to identify and mitigate potential development impacts and discuss design



alternatives.

F. Land Use: Policies, Goals and Tasks

Goal 1:

To maintain vitality of Williamstown and Foxville Village areas by encouraging high-density growth.

Goal 1 Tasks:

- A. Deny infrastructure extensions for any large development outside Village/mixed-use areas.
- B. Establish design guidelines in mixed-use areas, such as: lighting requirements, landscaping, pedestrian amenities, community gathering places, walking paths, recreational opportunities, services, and signage.
- C. Study expanding the Williamstown Industrial Park
- D. Study undeveloped land in the Williamstown village to determine if the Town sewer system has the physical capacity to accommodate average single-family residences.
- E. Educate about Village Center designation for Williamstown Village
- F. Conduct GIS "sampling" of village areas to determine prevailing densities, setbacks and frontages.

Planning
Commission
2018

Goal 3:

Adopt an ordinance that regulates designs of all new commercial

Goal 3 Tasks:

- A. Encourage exterior designs in keeping with the rural landscape already established
- B. Designs subject to review by The Planning Commission

Planning
Commission
2018

Goal 2:

To preserve working landscape by sustaining farm and forest land and other rural resource lands to maintain contiguous tracts of open land and minimize land use conflicts.

Planning
Commission
Ongoing

Goal 2 Task A:

- A. Encourage future development to occur in the following locations or areas:
 - (1) On the edges of fields where scenic and agricultural resource values are low in forested areas that are not critical to wildlife habitats, water supply, and public recreation wetlands
 - (2) Work with developers to create innovative, well designed cluster developments, and conservation subdivisions
 - (3) Conform to recommended slope development as follows:
 - 0-3% is suitable for development
 - 3-8% is most desirable for development
 - 8-15% is suitable for low density development
 - 15-25% is unsuitable for most developments and septic systems
 - 25% is not acceptable for development and should be avoided
 - Strive to have new development be consistent with the form and function of existing uses in each of the proposed land districts
- B. Strive to have new development be consistent with the form and function of existing uses in each of the proposed land districts
- C. Strive to update the 2020 Town Plan to include an Official Map that includes all public improvements planned for Williamstown that includes sidewalk, paths, village common areas and others
- D. Consider the principles highlighted in the Interchange Design Guidelines Manual
- E. Encourage repurposing and reusing existing commercial structures

Selectboard
Ongoing

Chapter XI. Adjacent Municipalities and Regional Coordination

A. Overview

Williamstown does not live in its own world isolated from our neighboring towns. Our local land use decisions can have impacts outside our jurisdictional boundaries. Consideration of bordering communities' plans can help assure that the Williamstown Town Plan is consistent with the efforts our neighbors, and vice versa.

B. Summary of Contiguous Towns

Williamstown shares boundaries with 6 other municipalities: Barre Town, and the Towns of Brookfield, Berlin, Northfield, Chelsea, and Washington. A summary of the existing and planned land uses follows:

1. Barre Town

Williamstown shares its northern boundary with Barre Town (except for a minor section of land near the Interstate at the northwest corner). Recommended uses for areas adjoining the Barre Town border land include residential, agricultural, and recreational. It should be noted that there are many wetland areas mapped in this area. Williamstown coordinates sewer disposal with Barre Town. Barre Town serves Foxville Village which is located within Williamstown. Williamstown is linked to Barre Town via Hebert Road, Falls Bridge Road, West Road, Miller Road Extension and Vt. Route 63. The town should work with Barre Town to solve potential traffic/safety concerns and land use issues on the access roads especially near the interstate interchange area. Mutual agreements are in place. Effort needs to be invested to avoid sprawl that is continuing to spread along Route 14 into Williamstown.

2. Brookfield

Brookfield shares one of our most important natural resource areas, Ainsworth State Park, as well as a moderate span of land at the southwestern section of our Town's border. This land area is very

rural, mostly forested, hilly, and has a number of wetland areas and areas of significant habitat. The areas along Route 14 and Stone Road have scattered residential, and flood hazard areas.

Land uses in both communities are agricultural, low-density residential, and recreational. Brookfield's zoning ordinance restricts most developments to 5 acre lots along the road corridors on the Williamstown border. Williamstown Gulf is protected within Ainsworth State Park.

3. Berlin

The town of Williamstown shares a small boundary with neighboring Berlin along our northwestern corner. This part of Williamstown is mostly forested, hilly, and contains some wetlands. Berlin considers this area as "Highland Conservation". Williamstown residents access Berlin via Hebert Road to Vt. Route 63 and I89 and Falls Bridge Road to West Road and Miller Extension to Route 63 and I89.

4. Northfield

The Town of Northfield occupies Williamstown's western boundary along Interstate 89. Williamstown links roads with Northfield via interchange 5. Northfield considers this interstate exchange area as rural. If Williamstown decides to develop this area, town officials should work with Northfield town officials to solve potential traffic/safety concerns, impacts on natural heritage areas, and land use issues.

5. Chelsea

Williamstown borders Chelsea at its southeast corner. The area is characterized by low-density residential uses. Our land use areas and planning goals are largely compatible with Chelsea except, however, Chelsea has expressed concerns about Williamstown's lack of zoning and increasing population growth. Williamstown should support efforts that balance the concerns of both towns.

6. Washington

At our eastern border is the town of Washington. Our land uses here are mostly low density and are compatible with Washington's town plan and zoning regulations.

C. Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission

The Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission (CVRPC) was created in 1967 to provide planning assistance to municipalities within the region and create a forum for addressing those issues which transcend municipal boundaries. Williamstown is a member of the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission (CVRPC). The Williamstown Planning Commission worked with the CVRPC in preparing this town plan to ensure it was consistent with statewide goals and compatible with the plans of adjoining towns. The Williamstown town plan is also in compliance with the Central Vermont Regional Plan.

D. Adjacent Municipalities & Regional Coordination: *Goals, Policies & Tasks*

Goal 1:

To cooperate and communicate with surrounding communities



Selectboard &
Town Manager
Ongoing

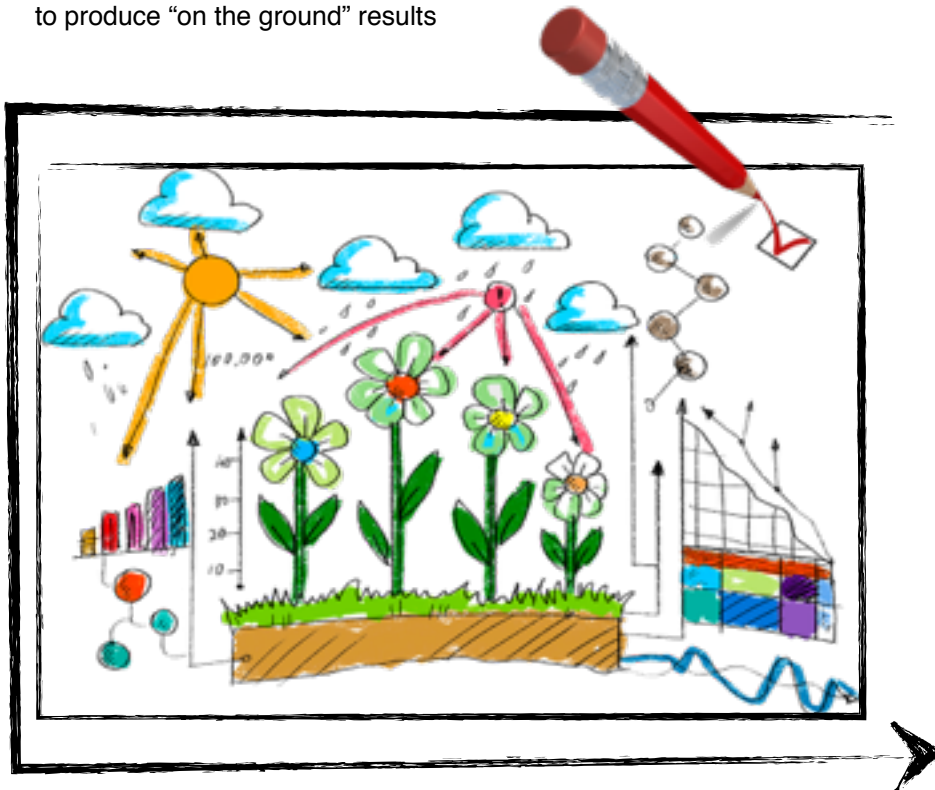
Goal 1 Tasks:

- A. Encourage information sharing and working with other local, regional and state agencies to ensure that good planning practices are followed
- B. Continue support for and participation in CVRPC

Chapter XII. Implementation Priorities

The Williamstown Planning Commission hopes that this plan reflects the residents' vision of growth and development in Williamstown's future. Most of the goals described in the town plan cannot be realized overnight and town officials cannot accomplish the vision alone. Residents have an important part to play, as well.

While the planning commission believes all of the recommendations contained in this document are important, we also recognize that some are more critical and achievable than others. We also believe that success builds on success. Accordingly, it is recommended that the town focus its energies on the following objectives over the five year lifespan of this plan as they are achievable and likely to produce "on the ground" results



- Survey the residents, town officials and employees feelings, hopes and desires for Williamstown biannually submitting a report of the results at Tow Meeting Day.
- Continue to install additional sidewalks and pedestrian walkways in Williamstown village
- Seek space and funding for a common area in Williamstown village
- Organize citizen advisory groups including an Economic Committee, Energy Committee, Conservation Commission, Transportation Committee, Facilities Improvement Committee, Housing Committee, and Williamstown Village Revitalization Committee, as described in previous chapters
- Keeping residents well informed and engaged regarding planning through the town's website, town newsletter, surveys, local media, public meeting, and town forums
- Seeking funds for monitoring wells in the town landfill, properly controlling site access, and coordinating protection efforts with the State Department of Natural Resources and Federal Environmental Protection Agency
- Investigating opportunities to enhance our scenic areas, including; creating parking for cars at viewing vistas, adding benches for viewing areas, and creating trails, bike paths, and footpaths for cyclists and pedestrians
- Continuing support for our farmers market in Williamstown village
- Organizing a celebration of Williamstown (Municipality Open House, Founder's Day Celebration, Memorial Day, Veteran's Day, etc)

Appendix I: Town Officials



Town Manager:

Jaqueline Higgins

townmgr.williamstownvt.org

Delinquent Tax Collector:

Jaqueline Higgins

Water and Sewer Collector:

Jaqueline Higgins

PO Box 646 Williamstown, VT
05679

(802) 433-6671 ext 201

Administrative Assistant:

Don Angolano

adminassistant@williamstownvt.org

(802) 433-6671 ext 202

Town Clerk:

Barbara Graham

clerk@williamstvt.org

(802) 433-6671 ext 203

Assistant Town Clerk:

Susan Lyons

asstclerk@williamstownvt.org

PO Box 646

Williamstown, VT 05679

Selectboard:

Larry Hebert - Chairperson

Matt Rouleau - Vice Chairperson

Edward McGlynn

Scott Vailancourt

Francis Covey

PO Box 646 Williamstown, Vt
05679

(802) 433-6671

**The Selectboard is also the
Board of Sewer Commissioners**

The Selectboard meets
7:00 pm on the first and
third Monday of each
month at the Williamstown
Middle High School unless
otherwise posted

Town Website:

www.williamstownvt.org

Physical Address:

2470 VT Route 14

Williamstown, VT 05679

Schools:

Williamstown Elementary School

100 Brush Hill Road | Williamstown, VT 05679

| Phone (802) 433-6653

[http://www.williamstownelem.org/pages/
Williamstown_Elementary_School](http://www.williamstownelem.org/pages/Williamstown_Elementary_School)

Williamstown Middle High School

120 Hebert Road

Williamstown, VT 05679

(802) 433-5350

[http://www.williamstownmhs.org/pages/
Williamstown_Middle_High_Sch](http://www.williamstownmhs.org/pages/Williamstown_Middle_High_Sch)

Town Highway Crew:

Town Garage: (802) 433-5571

Ed Farnham - Road Forman

Jim Miller

Joe Perusse

Bryan Palmer

Ed Salls

Board of Listers:

Gordon Murray

Bill Peabody

Stanley Peake

Planning Commission:

Matt Rouleau -

Chairperson

Don Angolano

Horace Duke

Margaret Phillips

Kim Richards

Karen Rielly

The Planning
Commission meets
7:00 pm on the
second Wednesday
of each month at the
Town Hall unless
otherwise posted

Board of Cemetery Commissioners:

Orville Lasell

John Taylor

John Perkins

Matthew Couillard

Groundskeeper:

Kevin Henessey

Town Treasurer and Tax Collector:

Position to be filled

treasurer@williamstownvt.org

Assistant Town Treasurer:

Horace Duke

Appendix II: Maps

Map 1

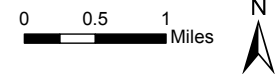
Town of Williamstown Roads and Building Locations

Legend

- Other
- ▲ Residential
- Commercial
- ▨ Village (Redefined)

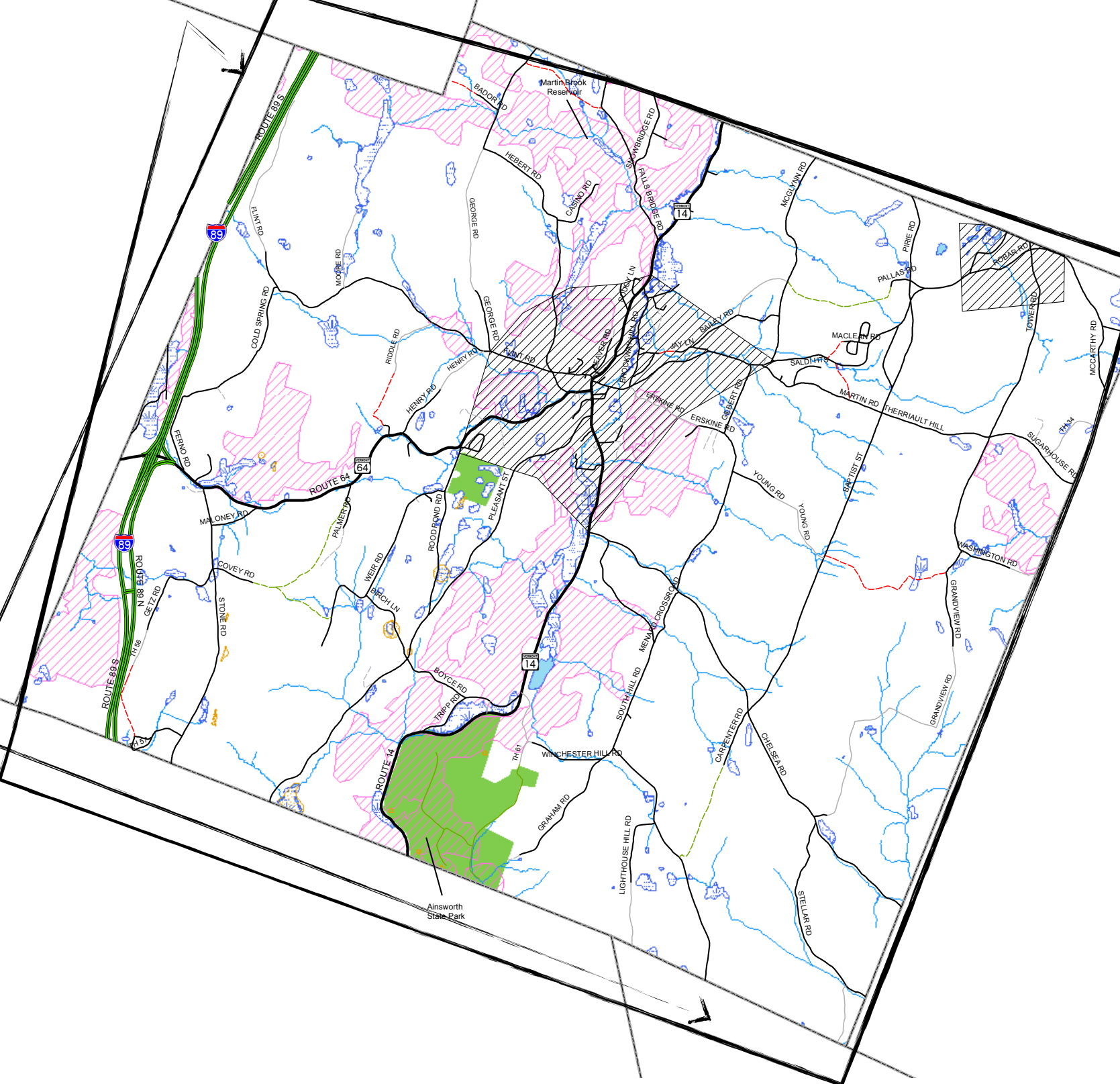
Roads

- Class 2 and 3 Town Highways
- Class 4 Town Highways
- Private Roads
- Legal Trails
- Legal Trails (Unapproved)
- - - Discontinued Roads
- State Forest Highway
- Vermont State Highways
- Interstate



SOURCE:
E911 Esites 2014.
Roads: VTrans, 2014.
Map created 4/13/10 CVRPC.
Updated 9/15/15 by CVRPC.
N:\Towns\Williamstn\Town Plan Maps\2015
Roads and Building Locations.mxd

Data is only as accurate as the original source.
This map is for planning purposes only.
This map may contain errors or omissions.



Map 2

Town of Williamstown, VT Wetlands, Wildlife Habitat and Natural Resources

Legend

- Streams
- Rivers, Lakes, and Ponds
- Natural Resources Area
- Rare Threatened and Endangered Species
- Wetlands
- Deer Reproduction Areas
- Mixed Use Area (Village)

Roads

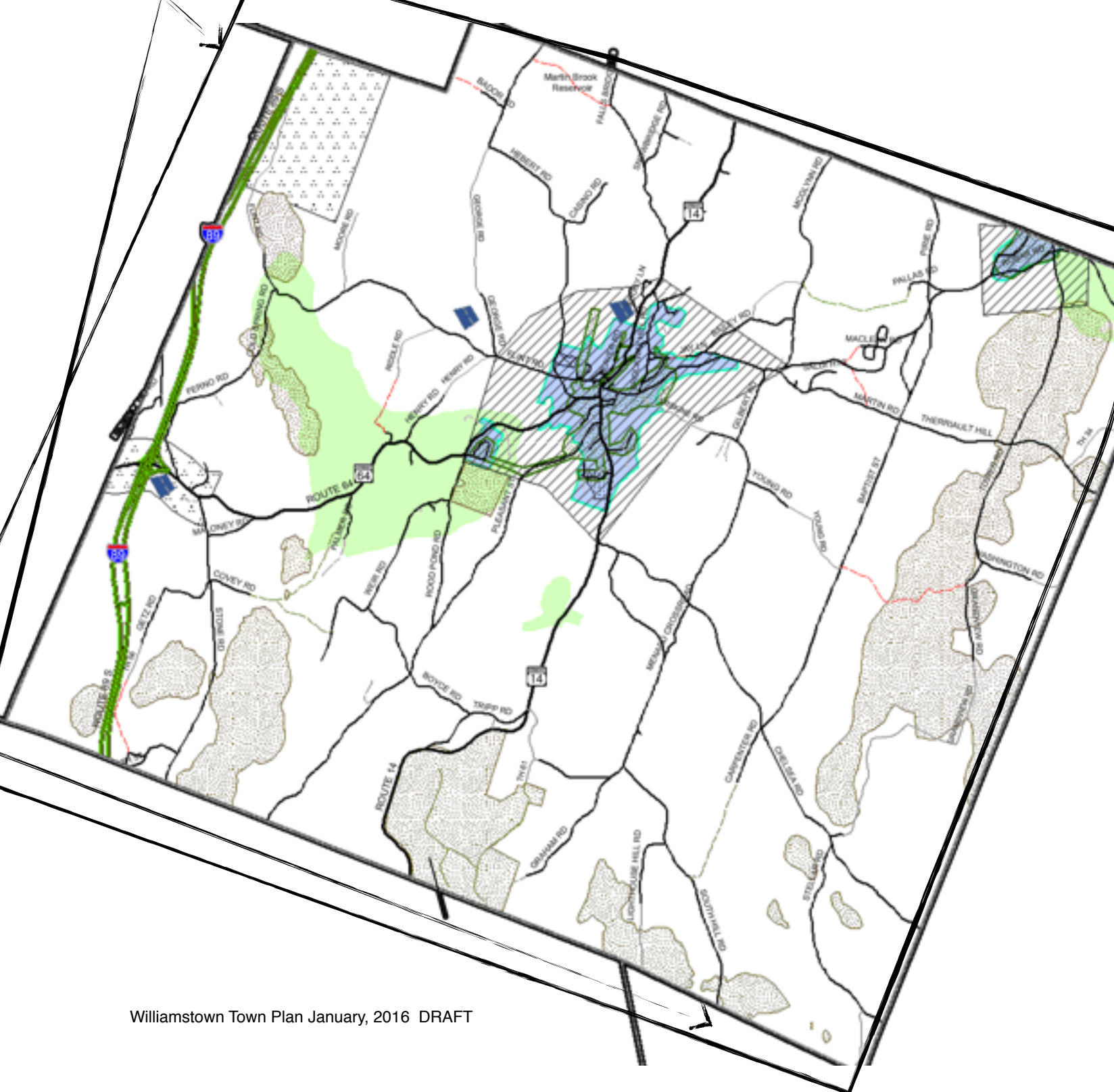
- Class 2 and 3 Town Highways
- Class 4 Town Highways
- Private Roads
- Legal Trails
- Legal Trails (Unapproved)
- Discontinued Roads
- State Forest Highway
- Vermont State Highways
- Interstate

0 0.5 1 Miles



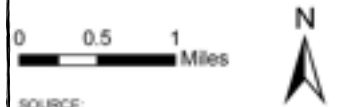
Sources:
 Deer Reproduction Areas: VANR, 2010
 Rare Threatened and Endangered Species: VCGI, 2015
 Wetlands: VSWI - VANR, 2010
 Surface Waters: CVRPC Surface Water Data, 1998
 Roads: VTrans, 2014.
 Map created 7-15-04 CVRPC.
 Map edited 9/14/15 CVRPC
 N:\Towns\Williamstn\Town Plan Maps\2015\Natural Resources.mxd

Data is only as accurate as the original source.
 This map is for planning purposes only.
 This map may contain errors or omissions.



Map 3 **Town of Williamstown, VT** **Land Use Plan**

- Legend**
- Solar Farms
 - School Area
 - Industrial Park
 - Interstate Interchange Area
 - Conservation and Forestry Area
 - Village (Redefined)
 - Wellhead Protection Area
 - Sewer Treatment
 - Water Supply
- Roads**
- Class 2 and 3 Town Highways
 - Class 4 Town Highways
 - Private Roads
 - Legal Trails
 - Legal Trails (Unapproved)
 - Discontinued Roads
 - State Forest Highway
 - Vermont State Highways
 - Interstate







SOURCE:
 Land Use: CVRPC, 2015
 Roads: VTrans, 2014.
 Map created 7-15-04 CVRPC.
 Map edited 8/15/15 CVRPC
 N:\Towns\Williamstown\Town Plan Maps\2015landuse.mxd

Data is only as accurate as the original source.
 This map is for planning purposes only.
 This map may contain errors or omissions.










Map 4

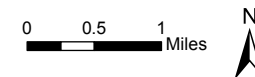
Town of Williamstown Soils and Mineral Resources Map

-  Quarries/Sand and Gravel Pits
-  Natural Resources Area
-  Prime Agricultural Soils
-  Village (Redefined)

Roads

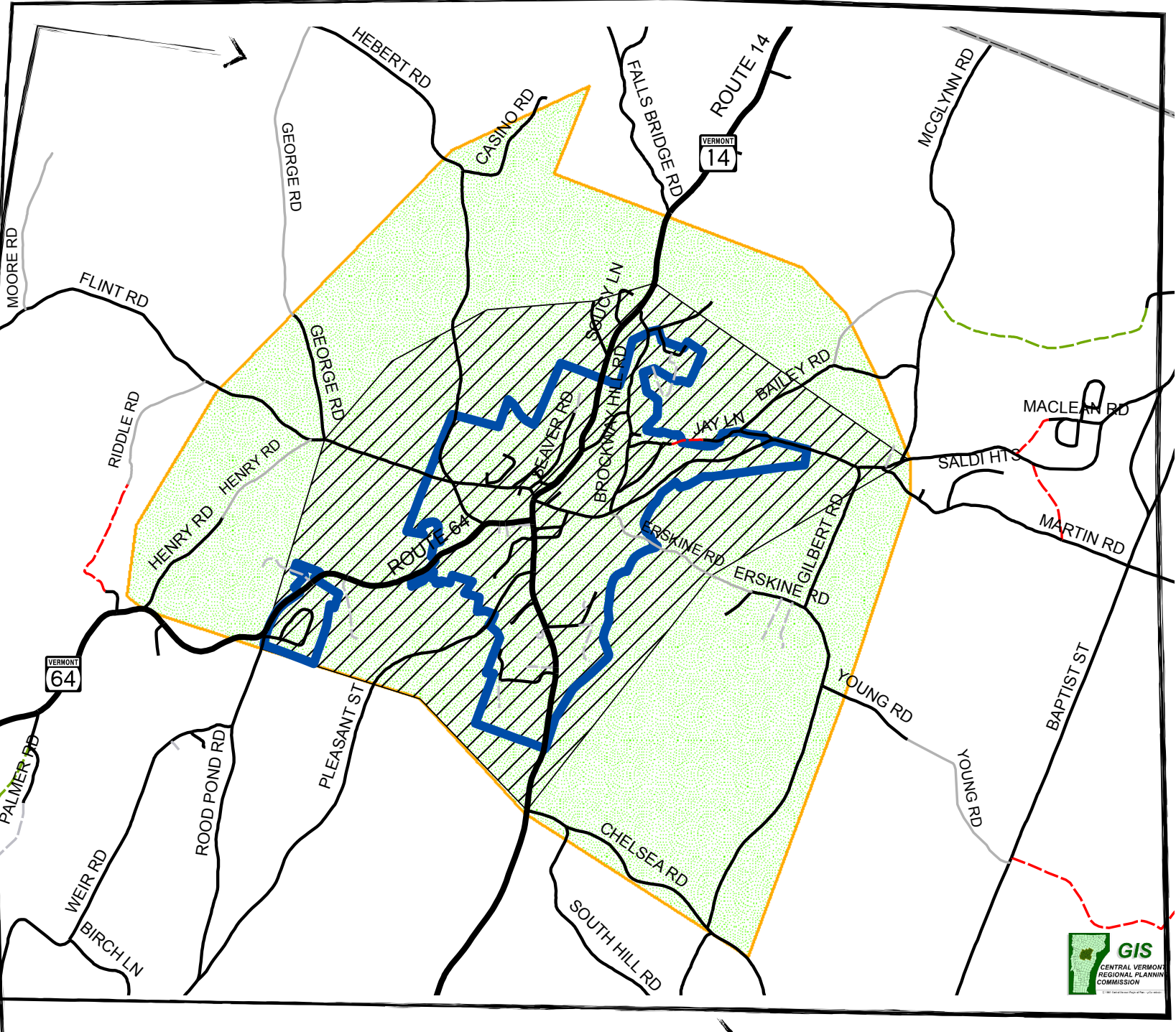
AOTCLASS

-  Class 2 and 3 Town Highways
-  Class 4 Town Highways
-  Private Roads
-  Legal Trails
-  Legal Trails (Unapproved)
-  Discontinued Roads
-  State Forest Highway
-  Vermont State Highways
-  Interstate



SOURCE:
Mineral and Agricultural: VT NRCS, 2008
Roads: VTrans, 2014.
Map created 9/25/15 CVRPC.
N:\Towns\Williamstn\Town Plan Maps\2015\Earth and Mineral Resources.mxd

Data is only as accurate as the original source.
This map is for planning purposes only.
This map may contain errors or omissions.



Map 6

Town of Williamstown New Houses Built Between 2009-2014

Legend

Building Locations

- All Existing Residential Buildings
- New Homes from 2009-2014 (72 Buildings)

- ▨ Village (Redefined)

Roads

- Class 2 and 3 Town Highways
- Class 4 Town Highways
- Private Roads
- Legal Trails
- Legal Trails (Unapproved)
- Discontinued Roads
- State Forest Highway
- Vermont State Highways
- Interstate

0 0.5 1 Miles



SOURCE:
Roads: VTrans, 2014.
Housing Points: E911 and Town of Williamstown 2014
Map created 9/16/15 CVRPC.
N:\Towns\Williamstown\Town Plan Maps\2015\Housing_Growth_Map.mxd

Data is only as accurate as the original source.
This map is for planning purposes only.
This map may contain errors or omissions.



