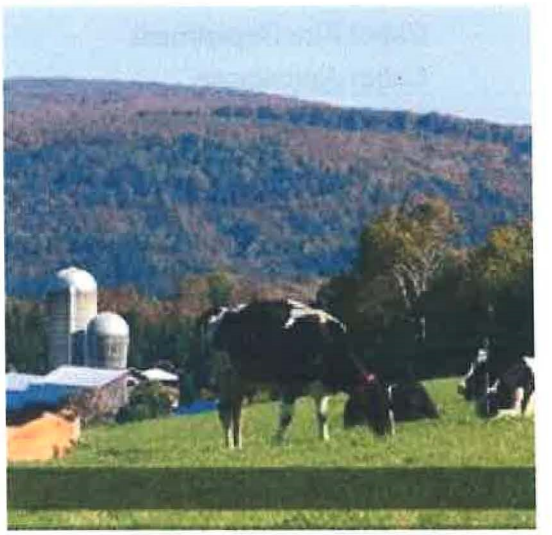
CABOT
Town Plan 2017







Proposed Amendment November 2021

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Thanks to all Cabot residents who participated in the Planning Commission's surveys and the Visioning meeting, and who provided valuable input at public work sessions.

Special thanks to these Cabot residents who assisted in the content of this draft:

Cabot Selectboard
Cabot Library
Cabot Recreation Committee
Cabot Community Association
Cabot Historical Society
Cabot School
Cabot Fire Department
Cabot Ambulance
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Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission

Plan approved by Cabot Selectboard

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. Purpose of the Plan

A Town Plan identifies goals and strategies for maintaining, improving, and developing a livable community. An approved Town Plan enables the citizens of Cabot to have a legal say over both private and State land use decisions in the Town. State statutes grant the plan great weight in determining whether development projects subject to Act 250 are approved, and the conditions applied to approval.

If a town chooses to plan, it must do so within the framework established by State legislation, which sets standards for the way municipal plans are to be developed, reviewed and adopted. An up-to-date plan is required as a basis for any local land use regulations and to be eligible for a variety of grant funds. Cabot's last Town Plan was adopted in 2012.

The 2012 Town Plan, which includes elements on housing, energy, land use, natural and historic resources, community facilities, transportation, and economic development, will be the basis for updating the town's land use regulations and provide a reference in the review of projects before the local Planning Commission and Zoning Board of Adjustment, and projects subject to Act 250 Review.

This plan describes both existing conditions in Cabot (people, resources, challenges) and aspirations for the future of the community. The aspirations are expressed as **goals** and found at the end of every section, along with **implementation strategies** which articulate the policies and action steps designed to help reach those goals. A "measure of progress" is also identified, which will help chart progress made in relation to stated policies or tasks.

B. Public participation

The Planning Commission recognizes the importance of public participation in the planning process. Planning Commission has distributed various sections of the Town Plan to the groups and organizations within the Town. These organizations have provided revisions and feedback regarding the various sections. Draft copies of the various chapters are posted at the Town Hall and on the Town web page for public review and comment.

Progress is also being reported through articles in the monthly *Cabot Chronicle*.

The following vision statement was developed with input from the citizens of Cabot, and has served as a guide for the Planning Commission as it developed the various sections included in this updated Town Plan. The Plan will guide Cabot in a direction that will help the community realize its vision, and accommodate future growth in a way that does not compromise the irreplaceable features and qualities that its citizens want to preserve.

VISION

The Town of Cabot envisions a future that continues our history and identity as a rural community, with an emphasis on stewarding the features that make us a unique and special place to live: a vibrant, compact village center surrounded by acres of open farmland and forest that contain ample recreational resources, majestic scenery, clean and bountiful waters, and historic features. In this future, Cabot residents will meet their needs for food, material, shelter, and transportation using resources managed in an affordable and sustainable manner.

The thoughtful placement of housing, commercial, civic, and recreational spaces in Cabot will strengthen and preserve an active village center, maintain a healthy working landscape, and best steward our natural resources. The many historic features of the village center serve as a focus point for Cabot's identity, and include our school, library, church, and "main street" district.

C. Historic Overview

Much of what we see in Cabot village today has evolved from a rich agricultural tradition that has its roots in the latter part of the 18th Century. This architectural, cultural and topographical record informs an important part of Cabot's identity today.

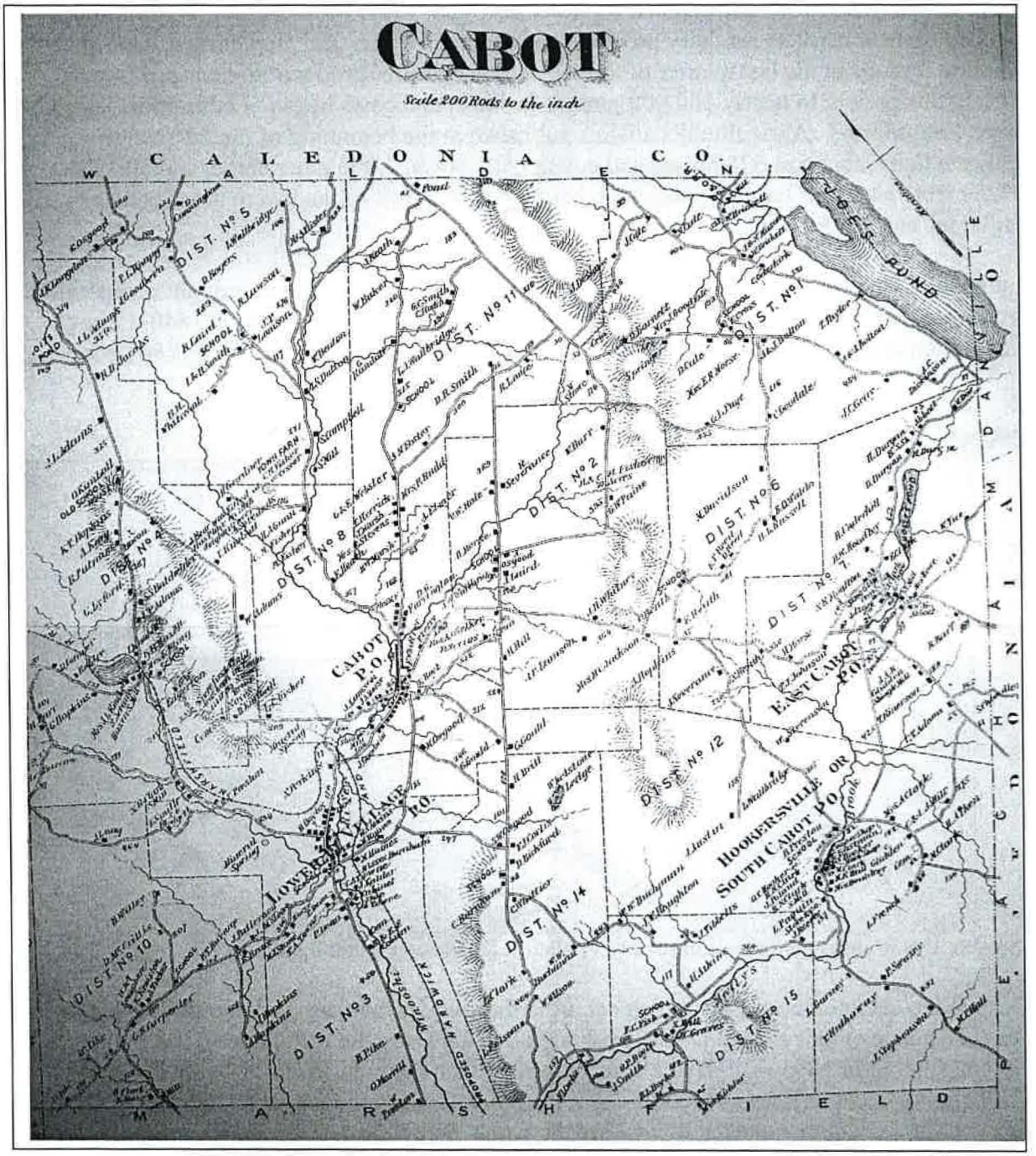
The earliest settlement in Cabot occurred on Cabot Plains in 1779, where the Bayley-Hazen Military Road cut a swath through the northeastern part of what is now Cabot Town. The Bayley-Hazen Road was named for Colonel Jacob Bayley, who began construction of the road in Wells River in 1776, and General Moses Hazen, who continued the road to its ending point at Hazen's Notch in 1779, in what is now the Town of Westfield.

The Town of Cabot was chartered August 17, 1781, and surveyed and lotted in 1786. Historical accounts note that Cabot was named by Lyman Hitchcock, one of the original Town proprietors, in honor of his bride-to-be, a Miss Cabot of Connecticut.
In 1789, saw mills and grist mills were built on the Winooski River in what later became Cabot Village, and by the 1790s, settlement began to spread south, east and west. In 1796, the seat of government was moved to the geographic center of Town. This "Centre", as it was called, was a promising village with a church, school, store, a number of houses, livestock pound, a four-acre common, and cemetery. In 1800 the town population had reached 349 persons.

By 1820, little settlement remained on the high plain, as new settlements grew around the productive mills along the river. From 1800 to 1820 the population had almost tripled to 1,032 residents. In about 1825 the seat of government moved to the present village. That year, the church that had been built in the Center in 1806 was disassembled and moved to Cabot Village.

Farm crops at that time included wheat, flax, hay and apple cider. Sheep were among the livestock raised on the newly cleared land in Town, and a large woolen mill was built about 1825 in Lower Cabot. In 1833 a woolen carding mill was built in the upper village which continued in business for 44 years. Other early industries included a tannery, several blacksmith shops, starch factories, wagon factory, sleigh shop, numerous sawmills, and foundry.

F.W. Beers Atlas of Washington County, 1873

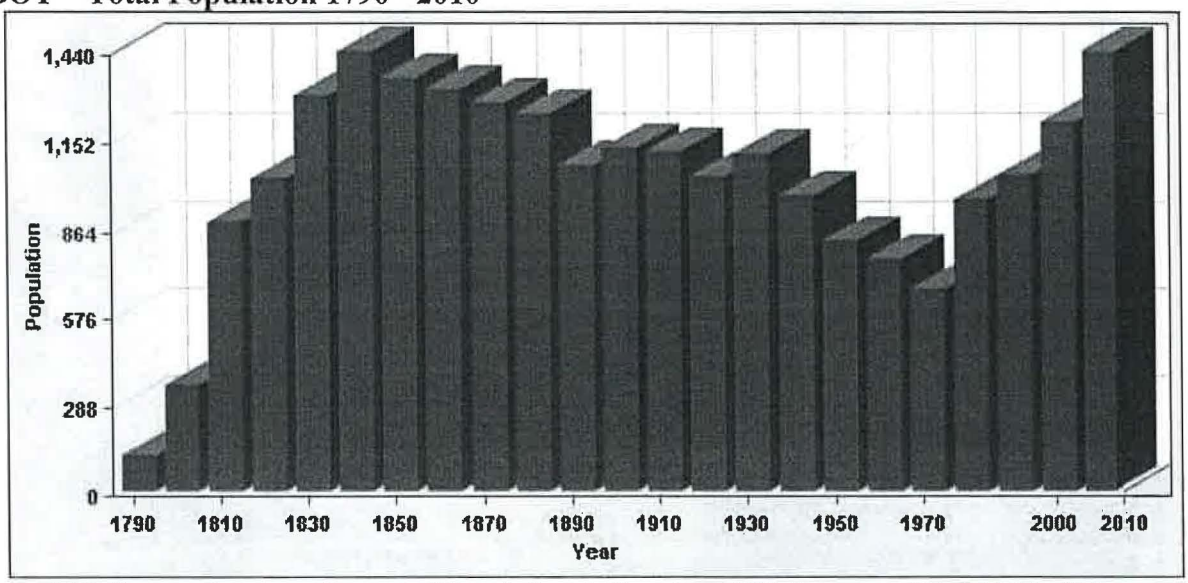


The demand for lumber to build houses for the growing population led to the building of water-powered lumber mills throughout town, including in Cabot Village, Lower Cabot Village, Hookerville, East Cabot, West Hill Pond, and Peterville (now submerged in the Molly's Falls reservoir). The county road connecting the Caledonia County Seat at Danville with Montpelier passed through Cabot, bringing travelers and spurring the construction of the Winooski Hotel in 1833. (In 1914 the hotel burned -- the Willey Memorial Building is now located on the site.) By 1840 the population in Cabot reached the highest point in the Town's history, with 1,440 residents.

Between 1850 and 1880 the demand for wool declined, while the construction of railroads opened up new markets for dairy products and lumber. Apples and maple sugar were also important crops in the last quarter of the 19th century. Butter production increased rapidly during this period, to nearly 160,000 pounds in 1880, and cows began to outnumber sheep on most Cabot farms. Agricultural statistics published at the beginning of the 20th century indicate that Cabot had 675 horses and colts, 3,500 cows, 2,000 other cattle, and 500 sheep. There were also four lumber mills, and about equal amounts of land were described as "tillable" and "in forestry."

Inevitably, the railroads that first opened markets to Cabot farmers also brought competition from farms in New York, Pennsylvania and the Midwest. From the peak in 1840, Cabot's population decreased more or less steadily until 1970, when it reached a low of 663 people.

CABOT – Total Population 1790 - 2010



(Source: U.S. Census Bureau – Census of Population & Housing, 2000 Summary File 1 Table P1)

Despite the decline in farming, which occurred throughout the northeast, a probable factor in the persistence of dairy farming as a livelihood in Cabot was the formation of the Cabot Creamery, first in 1893 as a private enterprise, and then again in 1919, as Cabot Farmers' Cooperative Creamery (as a result of enabling legislation for cooperatives). The success of this enterprise, which managed to weather the Great Depression of the 1930s, has provided a

convenient outlet for Cabot dairy farmers and a place of employment for many other residents to this day.

Sources:

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D. Community Snapshot

Cabot's population in 2010 was 1,433. This represents an increase of about 18% since 2000. Although the population in Cabot has more than doubled since 1970, it has only just about reached the population in town in the year 1840, when Cabot's population peaked at 1,440 residents.

The 2009 census indicated that Cabot's population had a higher percentage of school-aged children (aged 5 – 19), at 20.4% of the population, than was typical in Vermont as a whole, where 8.5% of the population was in this age bracket. The average household size in Cabot in 2000 was 2.5 persons, higher than the statewide average of 2.4. In 2000, 37.7% of Cabot residents were not Vermont natives, having arrived from different states and outside the U.S.

Residents 65 years and older comprised 17.5% of Cabot residents in 2009, whereas statewide, 13.8% were 65 and older. The median age in Cabot in 2009 was 47.0, vs. 40.6 statewide. Of the total Cabot population 25 years and older, 20.1% had some college, and 32.1% had a Bachelor's degree or higher. These figures on educational attainment in Cabot track closely with the figures statewide.

The median household income in Cabot for the five year period 2005-2009 was estimated at $46,989, as compared to $54,227 for all of Washington County and $51,284 for all of Vermont. Median family income in Cabot for that period was estimated at $53,750 as compared to $67,885 countywide and $63,482 statewide.

Table I-1
Employment Status in Cabot, 2009

	Number	Percent
INDUSTRY		
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	48	7.2%
Construction	95	14.2%
Manufacturing	69	10.3%
Wholesale Trade	10	1.5%
Retail Trade	49	7.3%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	17	2.5%
Information	23	3.4%
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	13	1.9%
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	63	9.4%
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	204	30.4%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	22	3.3%
Other services, except public administration	21	3.1%
Public administration	37	5.5%
Employed civilian population 16 years and over	**671**	

(Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2005-2009 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates)

Although these statistics point to the fact that most residents in Cabot earn their primary income in occupations and industries other than agriculture or forestry, Cabot is nonetheless characterized by its rural and forested areas, and has a population density of only 32.53 persons per square mile (as compared to an overall population density in Vermont of 65.82 persons per square mile). An important indicator of the way land is used in Cabot is the "Current Use" program. In 2016, a total of 13,139.23 acres of land in Cabot was in this program, representing about 53% of the total land area in town. In addition, 2,109 acres of farmland and open space are permanently conserved through easements and public ownership. So, while only a small percentage of residents are officially classified in the federal census as having farming or forestry occupations, farming and forest management is a pervasive use that defines the character of the Town.

E. Sustainability

Sustainability was a common refrain at the Town-wide visioning session held in Cabot in September 2010. Residents are looking for ways to move forward on the issues of land use, energy production and consumption, and economic development that will be environmentally and economically sustainable well into the future

Planning for a sustainable future in a time of global climate change is a daunting task: competition, volatility, and uncertainty are factors likely to make long-term planning difficult and costly.

The 2017 Town Plan acknowledges global climate change as a factor that will impact the cost and quality of life for Cabot residents, recognize our responsibility to consider community, environmental and economic sustainability in the plan, and to clarify local opportunities – goals and plans of action – to mitigate the causes and effects of climate change, through the plan.

F. Compatibility with the Region

According to Vermont statute, a municipal plan is considered to be "compatible" with the plans of its neighboring towns and the region if it "will not significantly reduce the desired effect" of those plans. Cabot, located in Washington County, is served by the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission, which has developed and adopted the *Central Vermont Regional Plan* in 2016.

Towns that border Cabot are: to the northeast, Walden, in Caledonia County; to the northwest, Woodbury, Washington Co.; at the northern corner, Hardwick, Caledonia Co.; to the southwest, Marshfield, Washington Co.; to the southeast, Peacham and Danville, Caledonia Co. Of the Towns that border Cabot, the only town that does not have an adopted Town Plan is Walden.

The proposals contained in the 2017 Cabot Town Plan will not reduce the desired effect of the plans of the region or of neighboring Towns.

II. NATURAL HERITAGE

A. Introduction

Natural heritage refers to all the natural resources Cabot residents and visitors value; including forests, clean waters, clean air, healthy wildlife populations, rare species, significant natural communities[1], scenic vistas, and a working landscape – all of which provide us the opportunity to hike, fish, hunt, bird watch, and work the land in a sustainable manner.

To sustain our rural character, fish, wildlife and overall natural heritage for future generations, it is imperative that conservation be one of our priorities in town planning. This means protecting our fish, wildlife, plants, natural communities, prime agricultural soils and the ecological processes and landscapes that allow them to co-exist with our human activities.

Understanding and planning for the protection and sustainable use of Cabot's natural resources requires understanding the physical landscape. The configuration of its mountains, valleys, wetlands, lakes, and rivers is crucial in determining the distribution of natural communities, habitats, and native species.

The following broad environmental factors influence the distribution of species, habitats and natural communities: climate, bedrock and surficial geology, topography, hydrology, and land use history.

B. Existing Conditions

Geology – Topography

Except for the irregular boundary at Joe's Pond, Cabot is square in shape, six miles on each side, a total of 22,325 acres. Cabot lies in the geographic region known as the Piedmont, in the foothills of the Green Mountains.

There are three distinct rock types in Cabot: (1) metamorphosed limestones of the Waits River formation (northwest and southeast); (2) mica-rich quartzites of the Gile Mountain Formation (central); and (3) New Hampshire Series Granites (southeast). The Waits River and Gile Mountain Formation rocks were originally deposited as sediments in an ancient sea and were later transformed into rock, folded, and uplifted into mountains during the continent-continent collision of the Acadian Orogeny (mountain building event) that occurred 350-400 million years ago.

The highest point in Cabot is Danville Hill (2,246 feet), followed by Joe's Hill (2,198 feet), Burbank Hill (1,980 feet) and Thistle Hill (1,909 feet). The lowest part of town is 880 feet at the point where the Winooski River exits the town at the Marshfield border.

[1] Natural communities can be defined as the interacting assemblages of organisms, their physical environment, and the natural processes that affect them.

Most of Cabot lies within the Winooski River drainage basin, and Coits Pond is considered to be the headwaters of the Winooski. A small portion of the eastern section of town drains to Joe's Pond, a part of the Connecticut River drainage basin.

Soil is the layer of earth that lies directly over the bedrock. It is the layer through which rain and nutrients filter, upon which crops and trees grow, and where wildlife and humans create their lives and homes. The type of soil that develops in an area is dependent on its parent material (bedrock and glacial deposits), vegetation, topography, climate, and time. Understanding the characteristics and capabilities of these soils is important for planning the types, locations, and intensities of future land uses. Soils information can be an important guide for reviewing individual development proposals.

Because of Cabot's location in the upland drainage region, it lacks the abundance of rich bottomland soils found in towns that are lower in the drainage basins of the Winooski and Connecticut Rivers. Nevertheless, Cabot has significant areas of prime agricultural soils which have been mapped (See Map 2b: Natural Resources).

The Natural Resources Conservation Service of the US Dept. of Agriculture has mapped the soils in Cabot. A soils interpretation sheet is available for each soil type which describes the soil and evaluates its capability for certain uses. Information on slope, texture, density, permeability, depth to bedrock, flood hazard, seasonal high water table, and other characteristics is available. Soils are evaluated for their suitability for construction, septic systems, water supply, recreation, farming, woodland management, and wildlife and resource material uses. In general, unfavorable soil types for development typically contain excessive slopes, shallow depth to bedrock, wet soils, excessively drained soils, unstable soils, and erodible soils.

NRCS has classified Vermont's soils into twelve categories, called Agricultural Value Groups, according to their limitations, management requirements, and potential for crop production. Soil map units in Group 1 have the most potential for crop production, while units in Groups 11 and 12 have the least potential. Soils in Groups 1 and 3 are rated prime, and those in Groups 2 and 4-7 are rated as statewide important. Designations of prime and statewide important soils are used both in a regulatory context (i.e., as a potential trigger for Vermont's statewide land use law, Act 250, criterion 9(b), and as a key criteria in determining which farmland should be permanently protected. There are 725 acres of prime agricultural soils and 6,757 acres of statewide soils in Cabot, representing about 30% of the Town's total land area.

NRCS has rated most soils in Cabot for their forest productivity. Given the desire of the Town to conserve forest land, soils with good forestry potential should be considered in development proposals. However, NRCS ratings only reflect physical and chemical compositions of the soils and do not consider location, current land use, parcel size or other relevant factors. A geographic information system (GIS) study could include other criteria for determining the conservation potential of important forest land in the Town such as potential natural community and erosion potential. When prime forest lands are thus identified, the Town could take steps to ensure the land remains productive. If large

parcels of forest are fragmented through subdivision, the natural and economic value of the forest decreases.

Soils in the uplands of Cabot are of the Glover-Calais and Calais-Buckland associations that are generally well drained and have moderate amounts of calcium carbonate (buffering capacity). Although these soils are usually suitable for residential and agricultural uses, there are areas where considerable limitations exist because of steep topography, wetness, shallow depth to bedrock, and unfavorable soil textures. Many areas containing these soil types are unsuitable for septic tank leach fields. Subordinate soils found in depressions in upland areas are very poorly drained loamy soils of the Muck and Peat Peacham Association that are not suitable for any use.

Soils found in the upper Winooski River valley are of the Windsor, gravelly Windsor, and Hartland-Belgrade associations. Windsor-gravelly Windsor-sandy-gravelly soils are found on terraces along streams and creeks in central Cabot, whereas Hartland-Belgrade silty soils are found in the Winooski River valley in southern parts of Cabot. Windsor and gravelly Windsor are generally suitable for all uses; however, some Hartland-Belgrade soils have severe limitations for many uses.

Sand and gravel resource areas in town are very limited. Two areas mapped for sand and gravel resources are both along the South Walden Road, one in the vicinity of Houston Hill Road and the other in the vicinity of Cross Road. The granites of Cabot intruded into the Waits River and Gile Mountain rocks during the waning stages of the Acadian Orogeny. Such granites are frequently quarried as dimension stone. Although no such active granite quarries exist today in Cabot, quarrying was conducted in the northwest corner of town from 1904 into the 1930's. In nearby Woodbury a significant quarry exists that can be seen from higher vantage points to the east of town.

Climate

Climate and weather patterns are important planning and design considerations because of their effect on such things as soil erosion, plant growth, air quality, storm water runoff and flooding, groundwater supplies, road maintenance, energy demand for cooling and heating, access to alternative energy sources and recreational activities, such as snow sports.

Vermont's northern climate is dominated in winter months by cold, dry Canadian air and in summer by warm, moist air from the Gulf of Mexico. Weather patterns vary locally with topography and relief and Cabot has many microclimates because of this. Cabot's average annual rainfall is approximately 44 inches, snowfall is 112 inches (actual statistics are for Danville, VT).

Global climate change predictions and scientific models suggest temperature changes in the next 50-100 years, an increase as high as 5 to 9 degrees Fahrenheit. Northeast average annual temperature has increased by 2 degrees Fahrenheit since 1970. Such an increase would reduce the number of months with average low temperatures below

freezing from the current six to four, and increase the number of months with average highs above 80 degrees from two to three or four.

Warming has resulted in many other climate related changes including more frequent very hot days, a longer growing season, an increase in heavy downpours, less winter precipitation falling as snow and more as rain, reduced snowpack, earlier spring runoff resulting in earlier peak river flows.

While some of us human residents may not miss the extra months of winter, the plants and animals around us will. Climate change will alter the town's natural environment by changing the plant species that can thrive in Cabot, the migrating patterns of birds, the temperature of rivers and ponds, and many other changes throughout the interconnected web of life. The variability and severity of weather is likely to increase and adversely impact the human and natural environments.

If climate change proceeds as currently anticipated, the climate and natural environment in Vermont will resemble that of the mid-Atlantic region by the end of the 21st century. Agricultural production, including dairy, fruit, and maple syrup may be impacted. Climate conditions suitable for maple/beech/birch forests are projected to shift dramatically northward. This may leave a smaller portion of the Northeast with a maple sugar industry and the colorful fall foliage displays which residents and visitors to the area are accustomed to. The projected reduction in snow cover may impact winter recreation and the industries that rely on it. At the same time, warmer and longer growing seasons could bring some positive impacts; for example, increased farm productivity, reduced dependency on heating fuels, and greater opportunity for warm weather recreational activities.

Cabot should anticipate that a changing climate will bring social, economic, and environmental change locally. Climate change has the potential to affect the local economy in numerous ways, pointing to a need for both diversification of the local economy and action to limit future emissions of climate changing air pollutants.

Air Quality

Cabot has various microclimates, causing significant variation in temperature, precipitation, and frost dates. Cabot Village and Lower Cabot are in valleys subject to temperature inversions especially during the winter months. Perhaps Cabot's greatest air quality concerns lie within these areas, when smoke from wood furnaces and wood stoves and other heating sources become trapped in these locations.

Illegal residential burning of trash, including agricultural plastics, can be a significant source of toxic air pollutants and exposure in any part of town, but especially in higher density areas, and in areas where temperature inversions occur. Young children and the elderly can be particularly sensitive to air pollutants, including particulates and airborne toxic materials. In recent years, restrictions against trash burning have been enforced by the Cabot Health Officer as a public health hazard and public nuisance.

Like most of Vermont, Cabot is fortunate to have exceptional air quality. Nonetheless, we are impacted by air pollution generated far from Vermont. Coal burning power plants in the Midwest are a main cause of airborne air pollutants (nitrous and sulfur oxides) that can impact the health of forest and pond ecosystems as well as human health. This air pollution, as well as that which contributes greenhouse gases to the atmosphere, are some of the largest environmental challenges facing Cabot in the next few decades.

Hydrology

Water and its movement have a profound influence on animals, plants, and natural communities, as well as human activities. Lakes, ponds, rivers and streams provide habitat for a diversity of fish, aquatic plants, aquatic invertebrates, and other organisms. Wetlands that form in waterlogged soils, along with riparian areas, provide a variety of habitat functions for wildlife along with other biodiversity values.

Cabot's ground and surface water resources are connected to the Lake Champlain watershed via the Winooski and Lamoille rivers and to the Connecticut River watershed via the Passumpsic River. Wetlands, ponds, and streams in the northwest quadrant form the headwaters of the Winooski River, which winds its way through Cabot and is closely paralleled by Route 215. In Lower Cabot, Jug Brook feeds into the Winooski. Waterways in the northeastern corner of Cabot flow into Joe's Pond and eventually the Connecticut River.

Lakes and Ponds

Five significant lakes and ponds lie at least partially within Cabot's borders:

Molly's Pond: A scenic, productive pond with a large diversity of aquatic plants (including rare species) and outstanding wildlife value. Molly's Pond is a natural, public lake of nearly forty acres, with a maximum depth of twenty-eight feet. Its outlet and shoreline are in Cabot, with the watershed extending into Peacham. There are no public lands adjacent to the pond, although the Vermont Land Trust holds easements on large tracts of land bordering the pond. The Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife reported fair water quality and good recreational fishing, although nutrient levels are most likely high due to runoff from surrounding agricultural land uses.

West Hill Pond: An artificial, privately-owned lake covering about forty-eight acres, with a maximum depth of thirteen feet. Its outlet and shoreline are in Cabot, with the watershed extending into Woodbury. Shoreline includes a fifty-foot municipal beach and state boating access. Fishing and swimming are allowed, motorized boating is not. Due to draining or lowering of the water level, the pond is not always fishable. There is a high percentage of farmland within the watershed.

Molly's Falls Reservoir (Marshfield Reservoir): An artificial, mesotrophic lake (medium productivity and nutrient levels), rich in wildlife (including loons and migratory birds),

covers about 411 acres, with a maximum depth of thirty-five feet. Its outlet and shoreline are in Cabot, with the watershed extending into Marshfield and Peacham. Ninety-eight percent of the land within its watershed is undeveloped. The reservoir is a power supply source operated by Green Mountain Power, which owns around the dam and a small camp lot along the shoreline of the reservoir. The rest of the shoreline, the reservoir and 643 acres surrounding the reservoir is now owned by the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation and is operated as Molly's Falls Pond State Park. The State purchased the land in 2015 from the Vermont Land Trust using federal Forest Legacy Program grant monies, both of which holds a conservation easement on the park land. There is a state fishing access and gas motors and jet skis are allowed on the reservoir. Other activities include swimming, paddling, picnicking and limited camping. Warm water and cold water fishing are permitted, albeit impaired due to water level fluctuations (between one and six feet in summer and ten to twelve feet in the winter) and turbidity.

Joe's Pond: A natural lake with artificial control is a public water that covers about 396 acres, has a watershed area of 18,445 acres, a maximum depth of 78 feet, and a mean depth of 21 feet. Tremendous diversity of plant life exists on the lake and adjoining wetland, which is large and significant. The pond has a heavy concentration of development along its shorelines in both Cabot and Danville. The outlet is in Danville and the watershed also includes Peacham, Stannard and Walden. Joe's Pond is noted for both warm and cold water fish species including yellow perch, smallmouth bass, pickerel, bullhead, and brown and rainbow trout. Other popular recreational activities include boating and swimming. Green Mountain Power regulates lake levels for hydroelectric generation. There is a State boating access and municipal swimming and picnic areas in Danville. The water quality is rated as fair to good, although many pressures exist: a high level of development; close proximity to roads leading to increased runoff potential; fluctuations in the water level; and the size of the watershed in proportion to the lake indicates that the "pond may reach a critical mass of nutrient/sediment loading beyond which water quality degradation may become apparent." (*1990 Lake Assessment*, Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation).

Coits Pond: A shallow, public lake in the northwestern corner of Cabot, with shoreland in Cabot and Woodbury. The State of Vermont owns a 27+ acre tract on the southwest shore of this pond. Current uses include warm water fishing and carry-in boating; motorized watercraft are not allowed. Public access has recently been improved with a small parking area.

Several issues of concern were noted in the 2012 plan concerning Cabot's lakes and ponds, and these issues remain relevant today. They include:

- A 1994 State of Vermont Water Quality Summary noted high levels of eutrophication and acceleration of rates of eutrophication at West Hill Pond, Joe's Pond, and Molly's Pond.

- Rare, threatened or endangered species have been identified on all of these bodies of water. Most notably, loons are present on Molly's Falls Reservoir and Joe's Pond.

- Public access to Cabot's lakes and ponds is very limited.

- Cabot's lakes and ponds are threatened by close proximity to other bodies of water that are infested with Eurasian milfoil, a nuisance aquatic plant. Eurasian milfoil has been reported in Marshfield Reservoir. At Molly's Pond, nutrient levels are high; periphyton and plant growth have been noted adjacent to unbuffered farmland (*1990 Lake Assessment*, Vermont, Dept. of Environmental Conservation)

- Due to development density Joe's Pond is considered to be vulnerable to water quality degradation.

- Molly's Falls Reservoir has a largely undeveloped shoreline, which is owned by the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation. The land surrounding the reservoir is Molly's Falls Pond State Park.

Wetlands

Wetlands are land areas that are saturated or inundated by water and support plant and animal life adapted to saturated soil conditions. Such areas include marshes, swamps, bogs, fens, wet meadows, ponds and vernal pools. Wetlands were traditionally thought of as undesirable places - swamps and wasted land that was either drained or filled and put to use, usually for agriculture. In fact, Cabot Village and Lower Cabot were part of a northern white cedar swamp bordering the Winooski River that was drained and developed. Under today's wetland protection laws, Cabot Village would not have been able to develop in its current location. The mucky soils and high water table characteristic of wetlands makes for poor septic system suitability.

Wetlands are now known to perform important functions such as reducing flooding, filtering sediment and pollutants before reaching surface waters, supporting numerous wildlife species, and providing open space and scenic beauty. Although poorly designed and sited development in or near wetlands can impair their functions, in most cases, development can be accommodated in the vicinity of wetlands when properly planned.

Most significant wetlands greater than an acre in size in Cabot appear on National Wetland Inventory maps. Cabot contains numerous small wetlands, totaling approximately 670 acres or 2.7 percent of the land area. Many of these wetlands were initially designated by the Vermont Water Resources Board as Class Two wetlands. Class Two wetlands have an initial buffer of 50 feet. Class I wetlands have an initial 100 foot buffer. Class III wetlands are those that are either not significant or have not yet been evaluated and are not protected under the Vermont Wetland Rules. Allowed uses include most farming and forestry activities; recreational activities, and repair and maintenance of

utility lines and poles. Vermont's Wetland Rules indicate that local Planning Commissions are responsible for undertaking studies, making recommendations on wetland protection, and indicating those areas for wetland protection in the land use plans, including undesignated wetlands. No municipality may grant a zoning permit for the development of a wetland prior to the expiration of a period of 30 days following the submission of a report to the Agency of Natural Resources describing the proposed use, the location requested, and an evaluation of the effect of such proposed use on the Town Plan and Regional Plan. The present zoning ordinance does not designate or protect these areas.

There is one large wetland complex in East Cabot that is greater than forty acres in size. This complex consists mainly of forested wetland, with smaller areas of scrub-shrub and emergent zones. The remainder is small wetlands from one to ten acres in size, scattered along the Winooski River and to the west. The most common wetland type is forested wetland, followed by scrub-shrub and emergent, and a small amount of aquatic bed wetlands. Perhaps the richest, most diverse wetlands occur in association with several ponds, including Coits, Joe's, Molly's and West Hill.

Many wetlands in town have not received study or characterization for significant values. There has not been a study of so-called Class III wetlands. Any kind of comprehensive wetland evaluation in Cabot is likely to take a significant amount of time and resources. From the standpoint of wildlife significance, the wetlands adjacent to and bordering the ponds in town should be studied first, especially in identifying significant wildlife habitat in the town.

Rivers and Streams

The State of Vermont has passed Act 64 clean water act which will impact a variety of municipal functions in an effort to reduce phosphorous run off into Lake Champlain. Cabot has over 40 miles of upland streams and rivers. Most streams are small but some of the larger streams support recreational trout fishing. Little information is available on upland streams in Cabot. Some water quality information is available on the Winooski River. Until recently the Winooski was affected by failed and discharging septic systems and occasional straight pipes to the river in the village. With the construction of a community wastewater treatment facility, water quality should improve significantly for recreational uses such as fishing and swimming. Vegetative buffer strips along farmland adjacent to the river are sparse or non-existent.

In 2006, the Cabot Conservation Committee completed a geomorphic assessment of the main stem of the Winooski River and a few tributaries with funding obtained through the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources. A River Corridor Management Plan was developed to identify and prioritize areas of significant stream bank instability. Many problem areas were identified, particularly along the main stem of the Winooski River. Non-vegetated, eroding stream banks degrade fish habitat, increase water temperature, and add excessive silt and nutrients that degrade water quality. The towns of Cabot, Marshfield, and Plainfield have formed the Winooski Headwaters Community Project,

and with funding and assistance from various groups, including Cabot Creamery, Friends of the Winooski, and the Winooski Natural Resources Conservation District, several restoration projects are underway. Several riverfront properties have been assessed for stream bank stabilization projects, and five sites have undergone extensive tree plantings to stabilize banks. The Project also continues to do extensive water quality monitoring for physical, chemical, and bacteriological parameters to assess water quality health. Effort to improve rivers and streams are a long-term project that requires adequate funding for research, technical studies, and project implementation; landowner education and cooperation; and committed volunteers. The geomorphic assessment work and the formation of the Winooski Headwaters Community Project are the foundation for moving forward and improving river and stream water quality and habitat for fish and wildlife. As a hazard mitigation project the Town of Cabot is planning removal of the dam at Sawmill Road on the Winooski River.

Floodplains, Flood Hazards and Fluvial Erosion

Floodplains are low lying areas of land adjacent to streams and rivers that are frequently inundated by water. While these places 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 and Region. In fact, over the last 50 years flood recovery costs have averaged $14 million per year (not adjusted for inflation) statewide. Unfortunately, it appears that Vermont can anticipate more frequent flooding occurrences in the years ahead as climate change models predict wetter summers with more intense rainfall events.

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"). Surprisingly, however, erosion from flash flooding (i.e. *fluvial erosion)* 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.

Cabot is not immune to either of these hazards. Over the years the Town has experienced several damaging floods and high water events. Like the rest of Vermont, Cabot witnessed severe flooding in November of 1927. More recently, a flood in June of 1998 took Cabot by surprise, with upland streams jumping their beds, carving out new channels, and filling Main Street with silt. The recent storm events in May and June 2011 caused severe erosion along roads and tributaries to the Winooski River as well as the main stem of the Winooski in Cabot

Unfortunately, our society's historical response to floods and fluvial erosion has been to treat the symptoms as opposed to the causes – repairing damage rather than preventing it. Furthermore, some of the traditional "cures", such as rip-rapping, dredging and land-filling, actually exacerbate the problem they attempt to fix by accelerating currents, raising base flood levels and shifting problems downstream. The disaster response paradigm is changing, however, as more communities are taking a proactive role in both inundation and fluvial erosion hazard mitigation and avoidance, as opposed to the traditional reactive stance. The State is assisting with mapping of river corridors.

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 for flood insurance through the program at rates far below what would be available on the private market. It is essential, therefore, that Cabot 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.

Washington County recently underwent a FEMA-directed "map modernization process" and the Town was provided with updated digital maps of Cabot's Flood Hazard Zones. Because the new maps use ortho-photographs as a base, they may be more accurate and easier to interpret. In 2009, the Cabot Selectboard adopted a Flood Hazard Ordinance consistent with federal standards, and has since readopted the ordinance twice as an interim bylaw.

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. Accordingly, the Department of Environmental Conservation has completed fluvial erosion hazard assessments and created state wide river corridor maps. While Flood Hazard and Fluvial Erosion Hazard (FEH) Zones typically have large areas of coincidence, they are seldom, if ever, identical. The State is encouraging municipalities to adopt new river corridor zones.

Even if Cabot were to restrict new development from flood hazard and River Corridors, it would not solve every problem. 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. Cabot's zoning regulations have not historically identified upland stream corridors as areas needing protective setbacks for development. By establishing setbacks in its zoning regulations, the Town can prevent people from building structures too close to rivers, such that the structures could be flooded or swept away by strong currents in a storm.

Finally, it is important to consider how land use within a watershed impacts flooding. Impervious surfaces, such as roads, driveways, parking areas and buildings prevent water from soaking into the ground, increasing runoff and erosion potential. 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 Cabot. Logging is another. Excessive logging 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. Private driveway culverts are often undersized, causing washouts and road damage during intense storms.

Land Use History

A critical factor in determining the distribution of plants, animals and natural communities is the history of land use. For instance, the degree and type of forest cover have a great influence on the species that inhabit an area. Cabot has much more forest than it had in the mid-1800s, when forests were cleared and rivers were choked with silt. Fish and wildlife populations were decimated largely due to habitat destruction and alteration as well as unregulated fishing and hunting. In this period, even some common species such as beaver and deer disappeared. When railroads and other transportation access opened the Midwest in the mid 1800s, Vermonters left in droves, and the hills began to return to forest. With the return of the forest and the recolonization and reintroduction of animal species, the beaver, deer, wild turkey, fisher, bobcat, moose, and others have returned in great numbers. Many species of fauna and flora, however, have not recovered their populations and may never do so. For instance, the passenger pigeon is extinct, and mountain lions and wolves, once top predators in Vermont, no longer roam the land.

Wildlife Resources

Wildlife Natural Heritage Elements

The elements of our natural heritage – all of the things that are important to consider when planning for conservation – range from individual species and their particular habitat needs to large landscapes and the many species and ecological functions they support. We have a reasonable knowledge of the habitat needs of some species, like black bear and peregrine falcon, but for most species there are major gaps in our knowledge.

Conserving our natural communities is one way to ensure that we retain most of our native wildlife species. But conserving natural communities in isolation is not enough. To ensure the proper functioning of these communities and to provide habitat for wide-ranging and reclusive species, we must conserve and foster the stewardship of larger landscapes and areas of undeveloped land, with all of their component species, habitats, and natural communities.

The following discussion addresses the three conservation levels important in conserving our wildlife natural heritage; landscape level, community level and species level.

Landscape Level: Contiguous Forests and Connecting Land

Contiguous forest habitat is an area of forested land with either no roads or low densities of Class III or IV roads and little or no human development. Contiguous forest areas may have various age classes or forest cover and may be composed of other habitat types such as wetlands or old meadows that are part of the overall contiguous habitat complex. Ideally, these areas are connected with other similar areas so the animals that use them can move freely to other forested areas and habitats. It is important to keep in mind that there is no minimum or maximum number of acres to define contiguous habitat; rather it is important to consider the size of the contiguous forest habitat and associated species of plants and animals within the context of the level of fragmentation in the region/area. In addition, the configuration of the habitat is also an important consideration for identifying contiguous forests. For instance, an area of forest habitat that is highly irregular in shape, with a high degree of forest edge may be less functional than a similar size area of regular shape. Contiguous forest is important because it:

- Supports the biological requirements of many plants and animals, including those species like bobcats and black bears, that require large areas;
- Serves as habitat for source populations of dispersing animals for recolonization of nearby habitats that may have lost their original populations of those species;
- Supports public access to and appreciation of the forested landscape;
- Provides forest management opportunities for sustainable extraction of forest resources; and
- Provides forest management opportunities to yield a mixture of young, intermediate, and older forest habitat.

Connecting lands or habitat is land that links larger patches of habitat within a landscape. These connections are essential to keep habitat patches (genetic reservoirs) from becoming isolated; if cut off from the local and regional movement of wildlife, populations can die out. Many of the smaller wetland or wooded areas in Town retain their wildlife populations only because they are connected to larger, less disturbed areas. These connection or linkages are disappearing, mostly due to housing development. There are few large and unbroken tracts of wetland or forest left in Town. Cabot is part of a high priority habitat linkage area referred to as the Worcester Range – Northeast Kingdom linkage area as identified by the State and conservation organizations.

Connecting habitat is important because it does the following:

- Allows animals to move freely across their range;
- Allows plants and animals to colonize new habitat as climate change, succession, or other ecological processes force them to migrate;

- Reduces the risk of population isolation and provides for the exchange of genetic information among populations;
- Allows seasonal movements (migrations) to essential range or habitat; and
- Allows young adult animals to access new range.

Community Level: Natural Communities

A natural community is an interacting assemblage of plants and animals, their physical environment, and the natural processes that affect them. As these assemblages of plants and animals repeat across the landscape wherever similar environmental conditions exist, it is possible to describe these repeating assemblages as natural communities.

Identifying natural communities is a powerful tool for developing effective land management plans, determining conservation priorities, and increasing our understanding of Cabot's natural heritage. The Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department currently recognizes 80 upland and wetland natural community types in Vermont. Some examples of upland natural communities are Northern Hardwood Forest and Temperate Calcareous Cliff, while examples of wetland natural communities are Red Maple – Black Ash Swamp, Cattail Marsh, and Northern White Cedar Swamp. Each community type is assigned a state rank that describes the rarity of the community on a statewide level. In Vermont, inventories for significant natural communities have only taken place at the county and watershed levels. Identification of significant natural communities at the town level can help focus efforts on those areas in need of conservation and management attention.

Several types of natural communities are deserving of particular attention. These include:

- Wetlands – that provide fish and wildlife habitat, flood and erosion protection, nutrient and pollution filtration, groundwater recharge, and aesthetic diversity;
- Riparian and aquatic habitats – that have a wide variety of plant and animal communities with an interconnected food web that includes reptiles, amphibians, plants, waterfowl, songbirds, bats, mink, and otter. Healthy riparian ecosystems give life to all the species that inhabit them, including those species that use bodies of water only at certain times during their life cycle, such as during breeding or migration.

Species Level: Rare, Threatened and Endangered Species; Deer Winter Habitat; Mast Stands; Important Turtle Habitat; Grassland and Bird Habitat; Early Successional Forest and Scrub Habitats

The Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department recommends that town conservation planning processes consider the following additional species level elements because they are not necessarily protected or properly represented through either landscape level or natural community level conservation.

- Rare, threatened and endangered species – Rare species such as the loon, which is found in Cabot, are important conservation challenges of our time and will serve as indicators of whether we can create sustainable economies and lifestyles, locally and beyond.

- Deer Winter Habitat – Deer yards can vary in size from a few acres to hundreds of acres, consisting of mature or maturing softwood cover that provides protection from deep snow, cold temperatures, and wind. A variety of other wildlife species also benefit from dense softwood stands, including snowshoe hare, coyote, fox, fisher, bobcats, crows, ravens, and many others. Logging can be either beneficial or detrimental to the habitat depending on harvest method, and education on management practices is important. Cabot's mapped deer yards can be found on Map 2a. About 24% of Cabot's land area is considered deer winter habitat.

- Mast Stands – The seeds of shrubs and trees serve as important wildlife food for numerous species including mammals, birds, amphibians and reptiles. Beech and oak stands are absolutely essential for the survival of black bears in Vermont. Mapping significant mast stands and encouraging their protection through education will protect wildlife diversity.

- Important Turtle Habitats – Turtles are a long-lived group of animals that face many threats from human activities. Seven species occur in Vermont and nearly all spend most of their time in aquatic environments. The greatest challenge facing turtles is their ability to produce young by finding suitable nesting habitat where young hatchlings safely make it to an aquatic environment.

- Grassland and Bird Habitat – There are several birds, including rare and endangered species that rely on grassland habitat for their survival in Vermont. Populations of grassland birds have declined due to loss of habitat. Although Cabot has limited grassland habitat that would allow for reproductive success, there are management opportunities, such as mowing practices that could increase the amount of grassland habitat.

- Early Successional Forest and Shrub Habitat – Many species of wildlife require early successional forest and shrub habitat, including ruffed grouse, American woodcock, New England cottontail rabbit, and songbirds such as the golden-winged warbler. It appears that Cabot and the Northern Piedmont region of the state as a whole have an adequate amount of this habitat type.

Wildlife Data for Cabot

Species-level data for Cabot is documented to various degrees through state and regional surveys, such the Breeding Bird Atlas, Small Mammal Atlas, Herptile Atlas (reptiles and amphibians) as well as harvest data from hunting which is compiled by the Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife. Harvest data from hunting shows that the following species are regularly harvested in relatively small numbers: black bear, bobcat, fisher,

otter, mink, raccoon, muskrat, skunk, weasel, coyote, red fox, and beaver. Turkey hunting became legal in Cabot in 1997, and the harvest ranged from a low of one in 1997 to a high of 90 in 2008. In 2008, Cabot had the fifth highest total of turkey for the spring hunting season. Deer harvest over the last 20 years has totaled 701 bucks and 1,580 total deer. There are 5,400 acres mapped as deeryard in Cabot, totaling 24% of Cabot's land area. Although there have been no legal harvests of moose in Cabot, moose are abundant near the periphery of town, which is more forested and less developed than the center of town. Ten incidental mortality reports for moose were filed from 1997-2008 in the vicinity of Route 2, most of which were road kills. Moose have been legally harvested in adjacent towns, including Woodbury, Walden, Marshfield, and Peacham. Fish & Wildlife's Natural Heritage Program maintains information on rare and endangered plants and animals. Cabot has five mapped vernal pools – small temporary wetlands typically found in upland forests over a relatively impermeable substrate layer.

Fisheries data from the Agency of Natural Resources show abundant wild brook trout populations on the main stem of the Winooski River from Cabot Village upstream. Temperature and habitat conditions deteriorate downstream. Jug Brook has wild brook trout populations; Kidder (Hooker) Brook has wild brook and brown trout; and Molly's Brook has wild brook and brown trout above Marshfield Reservoir, but extreme flow reductions due to hydroelectric bypass and unregulated minimum flow limits wild trout populations downstream of the dam, in part due to higher water temperatures.

The Agency of Natural Resources has documented the following fish species to be common in occurrence lakes and ponds in Cabot:

- Joe's Pond – brown and rainbow trout, smallmouth bass, yellow perch, chain pickerel, brown bullhead, rock bass, and pumpkinseed.

- Coits Pond – chain pickerel, yellow perch, and brown bullhead.

- West Hill Pond – largemouth bass, chain pickerel, yellow perch, and brown bullhead.

- Molly's Falls Pond (Marshfield Reservoir) – northern pike, smallmouth bass, yellow perch, rainbow trout (stocked), brown trout (stocked), and brown bullhead. Late fall, early winter water drawdown impacts littoral (shoreline) productivity and may affect spawning tributary access.

- Peacham Pond – brown trout (stocked), yellow perch, and rainbow smelt. Late fall, early winter water drawdown impacts littoral (shoreline) productivity and may affect spawning tributary access.

- Molly's Pond – chain pickerel, yellow perch.

C. Planning and Land Use Considerations

To better plan for natural heritage conservation, it is important to understand the effects of development. The following discussion explains seven major mechanisms by which current development patterns degrade Vermont's natural heritage:

- Direct loss of diversity;
- Destruction of habitat;
- Habitat fragmentation;
- Disruption of movement, migration, and behavior;
- Introduction of invasive exotic species;
- Degradation of water quality and aquatic habitat; and
- Loss of public appreciation for the environment.

Direct Loss of Diversity

As development alters natural habitats and ecological functions, the types and number of species change. Human activities, most notably land conversion and development have contributed to the listing of over 150 plant species and over 40 animal species in Vermont as threatened or endangered. Like plant and animal species, whole natural communities can be lost to or negatively affected by human development. Vermont has over 80 types of upland and wetland natural communities. Some are rare and highly sensitive to human disturbance. More common communities, such as Northern Hardwood Forests, may be abundant, but reduction in their size and loss of connectivity between them still threatens their function as habitat for fish and wildlife.

Destruction of Habitat

As buildings, parking lots, roads, and lawns replace the natural vegetation, we lose significant wildlife habitats including deer winter habitats, riparian habitats, feeding and denning habitats for black bears, and habitat for threatened and endangered species. Loss of habitat from development is almost always permanent.

Habitat Fragmentation

One consequence of human settlement of the landscape is fragmentation of habitat into smaller and smaller areas. The creation of gaps in the forest and barriers to wildlife movement such as housing and commercial development, roads, and power lines results in the direct loss or inaccessibility of important habitat. The reduction in size of forest patches can render the forests and other habitats unsuitable for certain species of native plants and animals. The smaller the habitat patch, the smaller the number of species that can occupy the habitat. Fragmentation of a forested area affects species composition, favoring species like raccoons that are more tolerant of human activities and more general in their habitat requirements. Furthermore, these tolerant species may out-compete native species for the same resources, like food, leading to further native species decline. Fragmentation disrupts connections between habitats that are essential for

movement, and ultimately the survival, of many species of large, wide-ranging carnivores such as black bears, bobcats, and fishers.

Disruption of Movement, Migration, and Behavior

Roads are a good example of disruption to wildlife movement, migration, and behavior. Roads not only lead to motor vehicle collisions with wildlife, but fragment habitat and affect movement of wildlife ranging from salamanders to black bears. Roads can isolate populations, limit reproduction, and reduce genetic diversity of a population. Small, inadequate, or poorly placed culverts can create barriers to fish migration in streams.

Introduction of Invasive Species

Exotic species are those introduced, either deliberately or accidentally where they do not naturally occur. Examples include Eurasian milfoil, purple loosestrife, Japanese knotweed, goutweed, buckthorn, and honeysuckle. Invasive exotic species are ones that proliferate, aggressively displace other species, and even alter natural communities. It can take over an entire area it invades. Invasive parasites and diseases are altering the composition of our forests, killing off elms, beeches, hemlocks and ash trees.

Degradation of Water Quality and Aquatic Habitat

Soil erosion from a tilled field, construction site, gravel road or severely eroding stream bank has a negative impact on water quality and aquatic habitats. Siltation of stream bottoms can destroy the habitats of stream invertebrates, an important part of the aquatic food web and suffocate incubating eggs and young of many fish species. Increased silt loads in streams can also absorb more solar radiation, increasing stream temperatures, which reduce oxygen level in the water, thereby reducing habitat quality for cold-water species such as brook trout.

Development affects the hydrology of a watershed in many ways. Roads built along riverbanks can effectively confine the river in its current channel, preventing its natural meandering and causing it to cut a deeper channel, and losing its access to the flood plain, where the energy of moving water is dissipated and can be deposited. Land clearing and development, including paved surfaces, can change the quality, quantity and time or water running from the land into our lakes, rivers, and streams, thereby exacerbating erosion.

Loss of Public Appreciation for the Natural Environment

As communities become more suburban and urban, people tend to have fewer positive experiences with wildlife. Animals are seen more as a nuisance than an integral part of our quality of life. As people become more accepting of a human-developed landscape, they can lose their connection with the land and their appreciation for wildlife and its importance.

D. Goals and Implementation Strategies

Goal	Implementation Strategy	Key Implementer(s)	Future Measures of Progress
II.1 Conserve and provide stewardship for existing patches of forest and connecting habitat (corridors) and minimize subdivision and parcelization of this habitat.	**II.1 (a)** Maintain a map of contiguous forest patches in Cabot and their potential connecting habitat.	Conservation Committee	Map created
	II.1 (b) Identify benchmark acreage of contiguous forest in consultation with VT Agency of Natural Resources and other conservation organizations.	Conservation Committee	Benchmarks identified
	II.1 (c) Minimize the subdivision of large forested areas by encouraging cluster development and tools such as Planned Unit Developments (PUD).	Planning Commission	Subdivision regulations in place and increased use of cluster development
	II.1 (d) Provide landowner education on the importance of contiguous forests and connecting habitat and promote voluntary methods to protect these.	Conservation Committee / Planning Commission	Education materials developed and distributed
	II.1 (e) Manage a *conservation reserve fund* for acquisition and perpetual protection of critical agricultural, forest and open land, including wildlife migration corridors, wetlands, and riparian buffers. Consider tax incentives for conservation easements.	Conservation Committee / Planning Commission	Conservation projects identified for use of conservation funds.
II.2 Encourage the conservation and/or proper stewardship of significant natural communities and species including deer wintering areas, mast stands, turtle nesting sites, and grass lands and other critical wildlife habitat.	**II.2 (a)** Conduct a natural community mapping project and map areas with extensive invasive plant species.	Conservation Committee/Naturalist	Natural Community Map developed
	II.2 (b) Provide public and landowner education on significant natural communities.	Planning Commission	Overlay district identified and zoning regulation adopted
		Conservation Committee / Planning Commission	Education materials produced distributed

Goal	Implementation Strategy	Key Implementer(s)	Future Measures of Progress
II.3 Reduce damage from future flooding events; prevent changes to the landscape which could increase hazardous flooding.	**II.3 (a)** Maintain Cabot's Flood Hazard Ordinance, consistent with the National Flood Insurance Program. Consider zoning regulations more restrictive than Federal Flood Insurance Program eligibility requirements.	Planning Commission/ Selectboard	Flood Hazard Ordinance maintained and enhanced, Hazard Mitigation plan updated and maintained
	II.3 (b) Develop a unified flood hazard overlay district that incorporates RC and NFIP maps.	Selectboard with ANR and CVRPC assistance	Map and overlay district created.
	II.3 (c) Maintain development set back distances (at least50 feet) from smaller streams (those for which a RC zone has not been mapped) to minimize the potential for flash flood damage.	Planning Commission	Setbacks developed.
II.4 Prevent degradation of water resources and their associated habitats, and improve water & air quality.	**II.4 (a)** Implement zoning and voluntary conservation measures that will protect Marshfield Reservoir from impacts of shoreline development.	Planning Commission/ Conservation Committee	Measures implemented
	II.4 (b) Enhance riparian buffers and stream bank stabilization along the Winooski River and its major tributaries through landowner cooperation and education using the River Corridor Management Plan and other resources.	Conservation Committee	Increased miles of stream bank protection with vegetated riparian buffers
	II.4 (c) Enhance water quality and habitat in the Winooski River system by continuing to be an active participant in the Winooski Headwaters Community Project.	Conservation Committee	Continued participation and projects implemented
	II.4 (d) Provide improved access to the Winooski river	Community	Community input in development of the new state park
	II.4 (e) Provide input and comment to Forest and Parks for the development of the new state park at Molly's Falls Pond.	Conservation Committee	
	II.4 (f) Provide community outreach and education on air quality issues related to outdoor burning and wood as a fuel source	Conservation Committee	Increase awareness of wood smoke hazards.

III. HISTORIC RESOURCES

A. Introduction

The Town of Cabot's rich history is evident in buildings, road markers, the remains of old mills, and even in the patterns of fields, forests and roads lined by century-old trees. All of these physical remains of Cabot's past are valuable in understanding and connecting with the Town's history. Cabot's historic resources are valued by local residents, as evidenced by the restoration and interpretation activities of the local Cabot Historical Society, and in the responses to the 2010 Cabot Community Planning Survey. Respondents to the survey identified historic resources as one of the top three most valued features in Town, and historic resources also ranked in the top three features to be protected when development occurs.

Old buildings teach us about history and promote respect for those who lived in the past. They cultivate civic pride; historic structures have character and charm.

Old buildings attract tourists. The "feel" of a town is reflected in its architecture. Restoring locally important historic structures generates jobs. Careful restoration needs skill. Higher salaries and lower material costs can help the local economy.

Restoring an old building is sometimes cheaper than building new. Grants and other financial assistance may be available. Building "green" buildings is important, but restoring old ones preserves resources. Preservation and restoration is a kind of recycling that reduces construction waste and saves energy used to manufacture and transport building materials.

B. Existing Conditions

Properties in Cabot listed on State Register of Historic Places

From 1978 to 1979, the State Division of Historic Preservation undertook a survey of historic resources in Cabot. Some of these resources were also identified by the Cabot Historical Society as being historically significant in the 2003 Town Plan.

The State identified a total of 62 resources in Cabot, two of which were Historic Districts: the Lower Cabot Historic District, consisting of 30 surveyed structures; and the Cabot Village Historic District, consisting of 68 structures.

Figure II-1 is the location map included in the State's 1979 survey. It identifies the locations of historic resources in Cabot by numbers next to circled structures. The two historic districts are identified by shading on the map. The list of resources in the subsection entitled "Locally Identified Historically Significant Buildings and Sites" (below) are labeled with the corresponding number assigned it in the State survey. The Inventory forma are available online.

It is noted that a comprehensive inventory of Cabot's historic resources has not been undertaken in over 40 years, so it is possible that some of the resources described in the State survey are no longer extant.

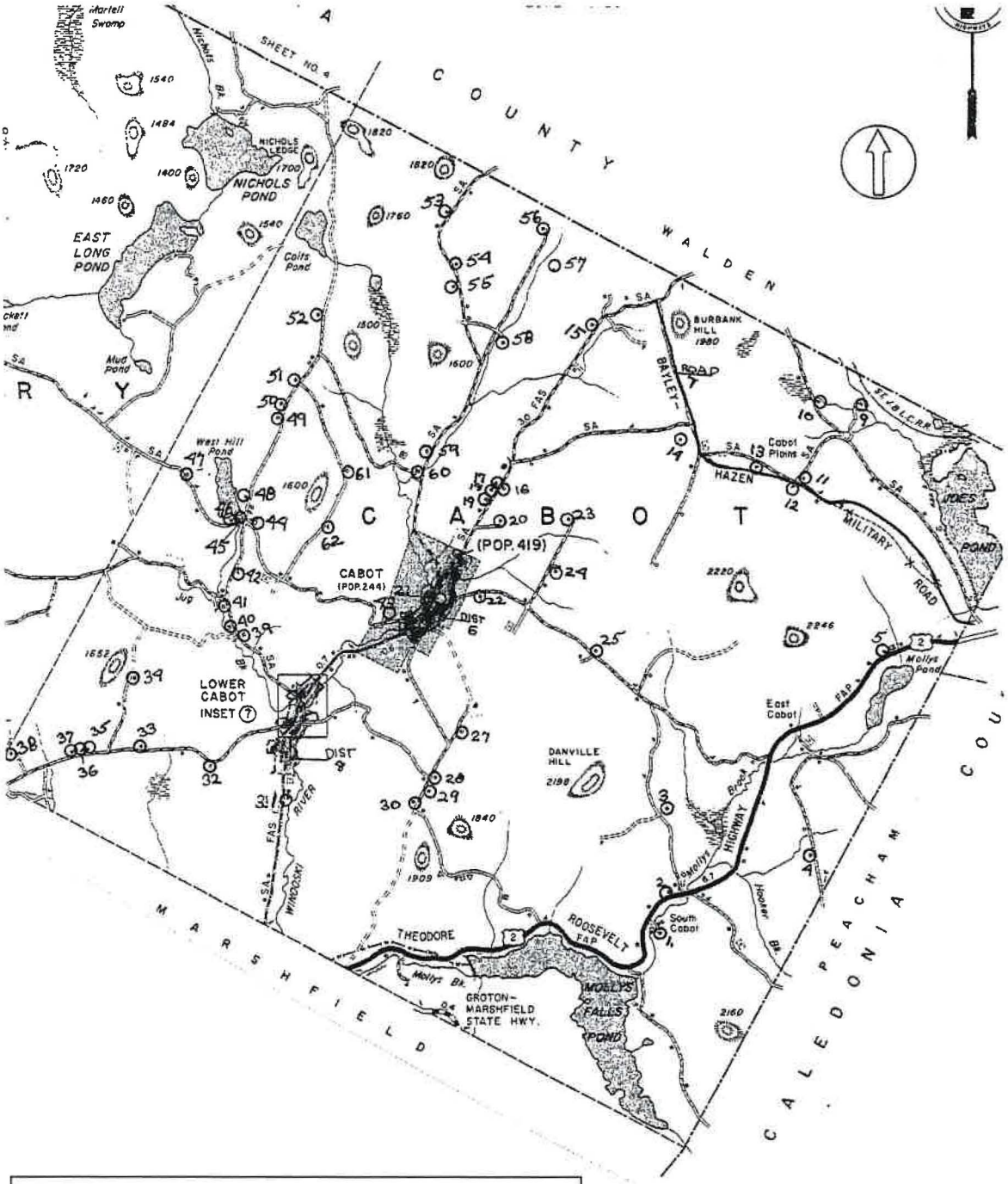


Figure III-1
Historic Resources identified in
1979 Historic Sites and Structures Survey
Prepared by
Vermont Division for Historic Preservation

Descriptions of the two historic districts, as included in the State's 1978 - 1979 survey and prepared by Division staff, are as follows:

Lower Cabot Historic District

"The Winooski River provided water power for small mill operations and manufacturing in Lower Cabot. The first settlement was in 1799 and by 1889 it was a thriving post village of about 30 dwellings with two meeting houses and a woolen mill (built 1825) producing "cassimeres and flannels" and doing custom carding.

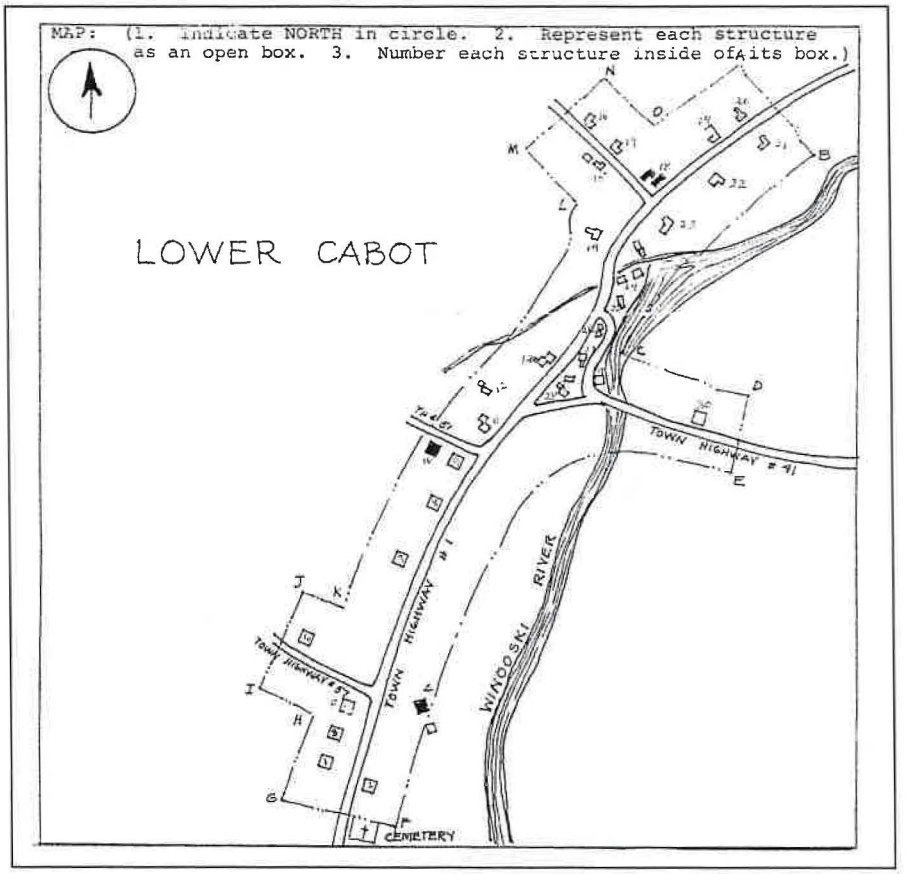
The village declined with the demise of small manufacturing, but into the 20th century there was a vigorous community spirit centered around activities in the Lower Cabot School (#12), presently used as a residence.

Now the meeting houses and mills are gone, but many of the original houses remain. Several were built by True Asaph Town, a builder and wood products manufacturer in the 3rd quarter of the 19th century. Also still extant are a school (built in 1880), a store, and the water-powered Davis sawmill, now in ruins (#29)."

Figure III-2

Lower Cabot Historic District

As depicted on 1979 Historic Sites and Structures Survey



Cabot Village Historic District

"This long linear district along T.H. #1 (Main Street) and #35 (Elm Street) includes a village green with a Civil War monument of Barre granite, a cluster of late 19th century commercial buildings and a row of workers houses along Elm Street adjacent to the location of a former carriage factory which was on what is now Clough Lane and grist mill on the corner of Elm and Main. The village is rich in Greek Revival architecture. The Wiswell-Coyle house combines mid and late 19th century components. The interior has outstanding examples of Eastlake design.

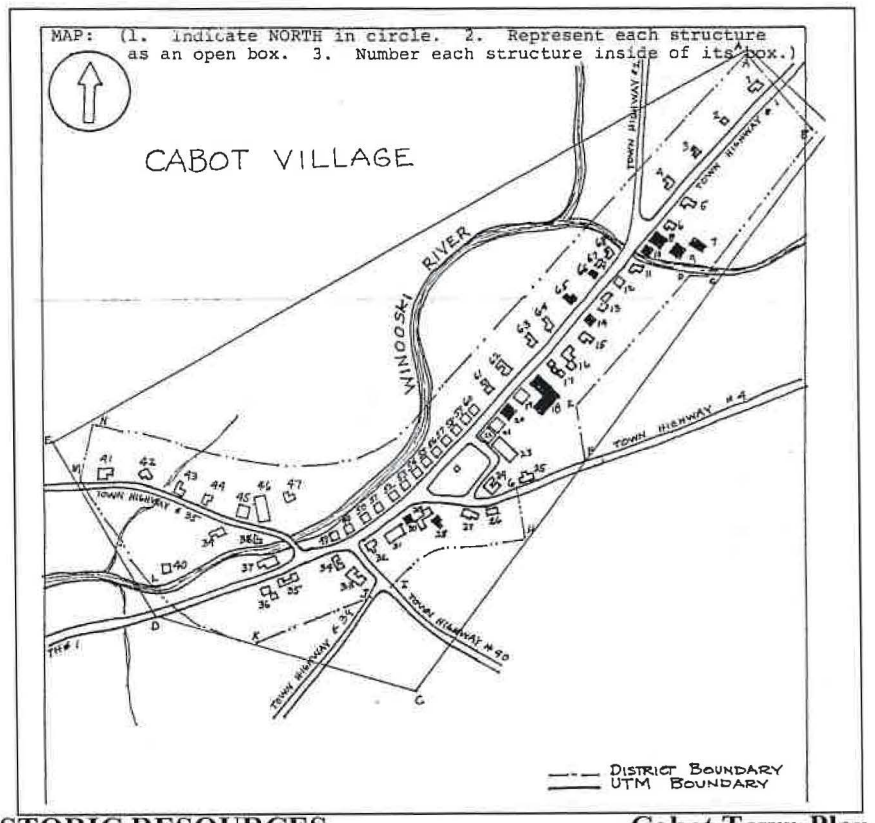
Cabot Village was incorporated on November 19, 1866. Its site on the Winooski River was selected by Thomas Lyford and his son, Thomas Lyford Jr., for saw and grist mills built in 1789. The original Town center on the plateau east of the village decreased in importance compared with the settlement which grew up around the water powered mills. In the 1820's some buildings were actually moved to the valley location, which in the 1880's held several stores, potash and pearl ash manufactory and distillery, cloth-dressing and wool carding mill, two blacksmith shops with a trip-hammer and foundry. Other businesses included a harness shop, barber, doctors, lawyers, and milliners. The Village's location midway between Montpelier and St. Johnsbury made inn-keeping a lucrative business. The Village of Cabot was dissolved in 2010 and incorporated into the Town of Cabot.

Cabot Village is an important historic resource because it provides a nearly intact view of a small 19th century manufacturing and agricultural settlement."

Figure III-3

Cabot Village Historic District

As depicted on 1979 Historic Sites and Structures Survey



Locally Identified Historically Significant Buildings and Sites

The Cabot Historical Society has identified the following historically significant sites and structures in Cabot. The corresponding listing of the site in the State survey is noted in parentheses:

The Hazen Road and Markers (Site No. 7)
The Bayley-Hazen Road was built in two phases, the first in 1776, financed by Colonel Jacob Bayley, from the present village of Wells River in Newbury to Cabot Plains, the second in 1779 by General Moses Hazen from Cabot Plains to Hazen's Notch in Lowell. It was intended as a supply route for American Revolutionary forces in Quebec, but later proved useful as a route for settlers. As shown on the reference map, the Bayley-Hazen Road cut through the northeastern section of Town, from Peacham north of Molly's Pond.

Seven small granite markers were placed beside the road in about 1901by the Old Home Days Committee (precursor of the Cabot Historical Society). From south to north:
1) Bearing the words "Hazen Camp," it marks the probable site where General Hazen began the second phase of the road;
2) Near the Plains Cemetery at the junction of the roads is a marker worded simply "Hazen Road";
3) A hundred yards to the north on the western side of the road is a marker, "Smuggler's House," locating a house that was used as a smuggler's haven during the War of 1812;
4) A hundred yards to the north on the same side of the road a marker designates "First School";
5) A hundred feet to the north on the eastern side of the road is a marker near the site of the "Yellow House," the first frame building in the town, built around 1792. It was operated as an inn serving travelers and locals on the Bayley-Hazen Road;
6) One-half mile to the north on the southern side of the road, a marker reading "First Settler" marks the location of the home of Benjamin Webster, who came to Cabot with his family in 1783;
7) Approximately one mile to the north on a portion of the road that is now abandoned is a marker with the words "Gordon Shot," a reference to the death of a British General during the Revolutionary War, who was shot in an attempt to get his boots. The marker that refers to the shooting of British Brigadier General Patrick Gordon is misleading. He was shot from ambush in the province of Quebec, near Chambly, by American Benjamin Whitcomb, a Lieutenant at the time.

The Center Cemetery, Pound, and Markers
Cabot Center, located in the geographic center of Town, was the main settlement in Town prior to the mid-1820s, when the area which is the present village center gained prominence. The Center Cemetery, located on Old Center Road, contains the oldest gravestones in Cabot, including many of the first settlers. About 1915, the stones were removed and the ground was ploughed and planted with potatoes. The stones were later replaced and set in rows. The Center Pound, where stray animals were confined in early settlement days, was rebuilt about 1915. The former location of the first Congregational Church in Cabot is marked by a large boulder bearing an inscription. (The church building was moved to the village in 1826.) About one acre of land encompassing the pound and church markers was given to the town in 1803, and is recorded on page 27 of the land transfer book. A time capsule was buried on the site which is opened and

replenished on every fiftieth anniversary of the Congregational Church. The last opening took place in 2001. The capsule was not replaced...

Ducharme Place. Located on the south side of Ducharme Road. The State survey notes that the main section of this house, constructed ca.1814, may be the oldest in Cabot and is a good example of the early construction methods and building form used by the early settlers in Cabot. (Site No. 32)

Wiswell-Wells-Coyle-McKay House. Located on the southeast side of Main Street, this house is described in the State survey as a Greek-Revival style house that partially burned and was replaced in 1866. In 1889 the house was altered with the addition of a Mansard roof and two-story circular bay, and a shingled porch was added in the 1920's. (Site No. 21, and No. 16 in Cabot Village Historic District)

Judge Lamson House. North Side of Elm Street. Built in the Italianate style in 1869. (Site No. 43)

Town-Currier-Thompson-Spencer House. Lower Cabot. This house is a good example of Carpenter-Gothic Victorian style, built about 1875. State survey notes that it was built by True Asaph Town, a local wood products manufacturer and builder and owner of a sawmill. (Lower Cabot Village Historic District Site No. 3)

Lower Cabot School House. Presently used as a home, the Lower Cabot School House was built in 1880. It was altered to include a kitchen, library, and theater, and served for many years as the focal point for frequent Lower Cabot community events. (Lower Cabot Village Historic District Site No. 12)

West Hill School House. Built in 1854 and used as a school until 1917. Owned by the Cabot Historical Society and has undergone substantial restoration. Good example of its type. (Site No. 44)

The Walbridge School House. Moved from its original location on the Walden Heights Road to the old settlement area on Cabot Plains. It was extensively renovated while retaining its original appearance. It is a fine example of adaptive reuse of an historic building that otherwise would have been lost. (Site No. 14)

The South Cabot School Houses. Both are historic sites now in private ownership. Mid-19th century school located on a 0.1 acre parcel on Route 2 near Last Road (parcel 12-016.000); and 1930's school located on Ennis Road. (Sites No. 1 and 2)

Old Village School or Brimblecombe Shop. The Cabot Village School, built in 1845 in the Greek Revival style. (Note: the first Cabot School was on the plain in district one.) The building was bought by the Independent Order of Good Templars, a temperance organization, which converted it from a tenement into a meeting hall in 1898, with a paneled auditorium and stage upstairs. On the ground floor were a kitchen, cloakroom, and dining hall. The Good Templars also introduced to the deed the proviso "no dancing in the building" which remains on the deed

today. Later, the Morrill Women's Relief Corps and the Modern Woodsmen had their meetings there. Bob Brimblecombe bought and used the building as a plumbing shop for a number of years before it was purchased by the Cabot Historical Society, which has been working to restore the building as a meeting hall and museum. A restored painted curtain is located in this building. (Cabot Village Historic District Site No. 21)

Reade School House. Historical marker located on Urban Road. This school house was built prior to 1870 and burned in 1910.

United Church of Cabot. Was originally organized as the Congregational Church in 1801. The present church house was re-built in 1849, after the original church was knocked down, moved and set up twice, the second time with more modern Greek Revival styling. The Congregationalists and the Methodists formed the United Church in 1928. The church building has a handsome late Victorian interior, a fine Greek Revival exterior and forms the visual centerpiece for the village common area. (Cabot Village Historic District Site No. 22)

Willey Memorial Hall. The Town Hall was built in 1921, on the site of the Winooski Hotel which was destroyed by fire in 1914. The money for the Willey Building was raised by solicitation, and Mr. C. W. Willey gave matching funds. It was built of lumber cut and milled in Cabot. It was owned and maintained by the Judith Lyford Women's Club, but was given to the town in 1974. It contains a stage and auditorium, kitchen, dining room, club room, lounge, public library, Town Clerk's offices, and meeting space. Town Meetings were held in the auditorium. A restored painted curtain is located in this space. Substantial renovations to the building were completed in the 1990's and included a sprinkler system, a new heating system, a lift for handicapped accessibility, a new entranceway, a new Town Clerk's office and vault, expanded library space, improved lighting, addition of storm windows, new restrooms, and external painting of clapboards and roof.(Cabot Village Historic District Site No. 31)

Methodist Church Building. Most recently a theater and painted in Victorian colors, it was built in 1827 in the Greek Revival style. It was converted from a church into a gymnasium in 1938 and was used by the school for four decades until sold to its present owner. (Cabot Village Historic District Site No.27)

Mill Site on Carpenter Road. Near the Marshfield town line (Site No. 37)

Old Ford (or Haines) Mill Dam. Lower Cabot. Site of a former woolen mill (Lower Cabot Historic District Site No. 29). The present saw mill ruins date from the 1920's, built after the Haines mill building burned.

West Hill Pond Dam and Mill Site. Mill house converted to residence. (Site No.45)

Mill Site in South Cabot. Located in the former settlement known as Hookerville, a mill village. (Part of Site No. 1)

Peterville. The site of this settlement was flooded by the creation of Molly's Falls Reservoir. Archaeological potential.

Cemeteries

There are eight cemeteries in Town that are historically significant. Seven are still active and maintained by the Cemetery Commissioners. They are:
Center Cemetery - Established in 1799; the Town's first cemetery;
Durant Cemetery - Established in 1813 in Lower Cabot;
Cabot Village Cemetery (Elm Street) - established in 1820;
Kimball Cemetery - Established in 1814 (not maintained as a town cemetery);
West Hill Cemetery - Established in 1817;
Cabot Plains Cemetery - Established in 1825;
South Cabot Cemetery - Established in 1834;
East Cabot Cemetery - Established around 1847

C. Historic Preservation Statutes and Programs

Local Statute

Section 3.11, "Historic Sites," of Cabot's existing zoning ordinance requires that any application for the proposed use of a parcel that contains an historic site or building listed in the Cabot Town Plan must receive site plan approval by the Planning Commission prior to issuance of a permit.

State and Federal Statutes

Sites listed in or determined eligible for the State Register are considered under criterion 8 of Act 250 for proposed projects that require land use permits. During the permit process the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation makes recommendations to district environmental commissions, who issue permits and may deny them for projects that have an undue adverse effect on historic resources. Adverse effects can usually be avoided through early planning and coordination with the Division.

Other projects using state funds or requiring a State license, permit, or approval must also take into account resources listed in or eligible for the State Register.

The State Division of Historic Preservation reviews projects that require federal permits under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. Section 106 requires that all federal agencies funding, permitting, licensing or assisting a project must consider the effect of that project on historic properties listed or *eligible for inclusion* on the National Register of Historic Places.

Village Center Designation

The purpose of Village Center Designation by the State is to recognize and encourage local efforts to revitalize Vermont's traditional village centers. Benefits include various tax credits that are designed to assist with rehabilitation and code improvements for older and historic

buildings located within the designated center. Application is made to the Vermont Downtown Program. (see the Economic Development section for more information on this program)

D. Planning Considerations

Inventory

The first step in assessing and mitigating potential impacts to historic resources is to undertake a complete inventory and assessment of Cabot's historic resources. The last comprehensive inventory conducted by the State, referenced in this section, was completed over 40 years ago so it is likely that some of the resources are no longer extant or have been significantly modified over the years.

Design Guidelines

Cabot's historic buildings evoke a unique sense of place. In the areas of Cabot Village and Lower Cabot Village, the architectural features and orientation of these historic buildings provide the context for new construction, and should be a starting point for public outreach to educate landowners on the significance of historic properties in our community.

Village Center Designation

Village Center designation was received by the State in 2014 and will help forward the goal of revitalizing Cabot's Village Center while preserving Cabot's historic fabric, through the provision of financial incentives to owners of income-producing properties in the village center.

This brief slide show is an introduction to saving historic structures:
https://savingplaces.org/stories/six-reasons-save-old-buildings#.V_zpy_Tp3TQ

More details:
https://www.wbdg.org/design/historic_pres.php

http://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/implement/physical-social-environment/historic-preservation/main

https://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/four-treatments.htm

E. Goals and Implementation Strategies

E. Goals and Implementation Strategies	Implementation Strategy	Key implementer(s)	Future Measures of Progress
III.1 Provide a means to identify and interpret Cabot's existing historic resources.	**III.1(a)** Create an up-to-date inventory of historic structures and sites in Town (including photographic documentation) using the State Register listings as a starting point. **III.1(b)** Match an E-911 address or coordinate with each site to enable GIS mapping of resources.	Cabot Planning Commission/ Cabot Historical Society in consultation with State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) Planning Commission with assistance of Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission (CVRPC)	Historic Resources inventory updated Historic resources mapped
III.2 Retain historic resources Town-wide that provide a physical connection to Cabot's past and provide a unique sense of place.	**III.2(a)** Educate residents on the location and value of historic resources in Cabot. Participate in the UVM PLACE program to enhance educational focus and develop specific Cabot **III.2(b)** Educate owners of historic properties on weatherization and energy retrofits that can significantly reduce operating costs and energy use in historic buildings while retaining historic features. **III.2(c)** Clarify standards for site plan review of historic sites/structures contained in existing section 3.11 of Cabot's zoning regulations.	Cabot Historical Society, Conservation Commission and Planning Commission Ad hoc Energy Team with assistance of SHPO Planning Commission/ Selectboard	Educational programs scheduled PLACE community learning Educational programs scheduled Site Plan standards created
III.3 Preserve campsite of General Hazen in 1779. Preserve First school house location accurately	**III.3(a)** Secure deeded access to 1779 encampment of General Hazen Relocate marker to correct location	Planning Commission/ Selectboard/ Historical Society Historical Society, Landowners Selectboard	Preserved site access

IV. HOUSING and POPULATION

A. Introduction

Housing and the population it accommodates, both seasonal and year-round, has a bearing on all aspects of the community of Cabot. All the services, facilities and infrastructure in Town, all of the Town's natural resources, and the Town's retail business uses are impacted by the location and intensity of housing. While personal choice and affordability play a large role in where housing development occurs, climate change and flooding, land use regulations and infrastructure improvements can serve to guide development to areas that are most advantageous for the Town as a whole.



B. Existing Conditions

Population and Housing Counts

The 2010 census count of 1,433 shows that the population of Cabot has just about reached the peak established in the mid-nineteenth century. However, as shown in the data below, the percentage of growth in housing units has surpassed the growth in population.

Table IV-1
Housing Units and Households vs. Population in Cabot 1970 – 2000

	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010
Population	663	958	1,043	1,213	1,433
Total Households	195	323	365	452	570
Total Housing Units	257	449	496	634	771
Source of 1970 to 2010 data: U.S. Census Bureau – Census of Population and Housing, Summary					

As shown in Table IV-1 above, the population from 1970 to 2010 more than doubled (116% increase), while the number of housing units tripled. The difference in the rate of growth of population vs. housing units is due partly to changes in household size during that time period, and partly due to the greater number of seasonal houses built in Cabot since 1970. Census statistical data versus parcel data from the Cabot Lister's Grand list Data shows a much more restrained rate of growth and a variation in the number of available housing units. While this data does not currently recognize houses with accessory dwellings this data indicates that in 2010 on 856 parcels there were approximately 693 dwelling units. The 2016 data shows that for a gain of 10 parcels the number of available dwellings increased to 713. There is a statistical disconnect between dwelling units and family units within the census data constraints. A more accurate way to track accessory and two family dwellings should be developed by the town to more closely track changes in population growth. The Cabot Lister statistics indicate a net growth in housing units of a more modest 2.8% over the last 6 years.

In the last 6 years, the rate of housing and population growth has been more closely aligned parcel numbers in town have increased from 856 to 866 during this period and from 2010 to 2016, 20 housing units were added. New legislation also allows for accessory dwellings on a parcel if water and wastewater systems are appropriately sized. There are many parcels within Cabot that have taken advantage of this legislation to allow for an additional apartment or secondary dwelling on a parcel for a caretaker or family member. It is also noted that the percent growth in number of year round versus seasonal households has increased, indicating that a higher percentage of the houses in Cabot are occupied year-round than 20 years ago.

Housing and Household Characteristics

As shown on Table IV-2, a majority of householders in Cabot in 2010 owned their home, with owner-occupied and seasonal units accounting for 83.5% of all occupied housing units that year. This percentage has remained basically unchanged since 1990. There were 78 renter-occupied housing units in 2010, representing 10.1% of all occupied housing units.

Table IV-2
Housing by Type of Occupancy 1990-2010

Cabot	1990	2000	2010
Total housing units	496	634	771
Total occupied housing units	363	452	570
Owner occupied	305	381	492.
Renter occupied	58	71	78
Total Vacant	131	182	201
For seasonal, recreational or occasional use	84	158	158

Source: U.S. Census Bureau – Census of Population and Housing, Summary File 1

The number of housing units identified for seasonal, occasional or recreational use rose by 74 units from 1990 to 2000, from 84 to 158. In 1990, 16.9% of housing units were used

seasonally; in 2000, 24.9 % of all housing units were identified as seasonal, indicating a growth trend in vacation homes in Cabot during this period.

In regard to housing type, census data shows single family homes are the predominant housing type, accounting for 90% of all housing units in 2010.

Table IV-3
Housing Units by Units in Structure, 2009

Cabot	1990	2000	2010 Census data	2010 Lister data	2016 Lister Data
Total Housing Units	**496**	**634**	**771**	**693**	**713**
Single-family houses	422	554	602	624	646
Apartments in multi-unit buildings	21	35	16	3*	4*
Mobile homes	41	38	52	66	63
Other	9	7			

Source: U.S. Census Bureau – 2000 Census of Population and Housing, Summary File 3 Tables H32 and H31, and 2005-2009 American Community Survey, Lister statistics do not reflect apartment units but buildings with apartments.

There were no significant changes in the percentages of housing types in Town from 2010 to 2016. However the Census data indicates an increase in available multi-family and rental units that are not reflected in the Town's data.

The percentage of the population of Cabot (in both owner-occupied and renter-occupied housing units) that have lived in their homes since 1979 or earlier is similar to those found in the County and State. Census data from 2000 shows that about 30.2% of Cabot residents in owner-occupied units had lived in their home since 1979 or earlier, with about 42.8% having moved into their house within the previous 10 years. About 83% of residents in renter-occupied units had moved to their homes within the previous 10 years, with only 4.2% having lived in their home since 1979 or earlier. (Source: U.S. Census Bureau – Census of Population and Housing, Summary File 3)

Special needs housing

Cabot has eight affordable housing units dedicated to seniors in the Cabot Commons development on Glinka Road. These 8 units represent about 1% of the total housing unit count in Cabot in 2000. In comparison, the 2000 Census counted 35 households in Cabot with one or more people 75 years or older, representing 7.7% of all households in Cabot. As the general trend statewide is an aging population, it is expected that there will be a need for additional senior housing in the future. Accessory dwellings for family members may fill some of this need and are also becoming more prevalent in Town. This data is not easily tracked by the Town Lister's in the current grand list.

Housing Demand and Affordability

Table IV-4 shows data on land and home sales in Cabot as compared to Washington County and the State. The residential property type with the most number of sales in Cabot was in the category "Residential on 6 acres or more" for which there were 6 sales in 2010. The median price of a home on 6 or more acres in Cabot was $240,000, which is just under median price for the same property type in Washington County ($241,250) but higher than the median price statewide for this type of property, which is $215,000. Only 3 residential properties on less than 6 acres were sold in Cabot in 2010, the median price of which was $190,000, about 13% higher than the median price of the same type of residential property in Washington County, which was $168,000. It is also slightly higher (1.6%) than the median price state-wide for this type of property. However, the median price of a mobile home with land in Cabot (for which there were three sales in 2010) was $54,700, as compared to $68,000 county-wide, and $66,572 state-wide.

Table IV-4
Property Transfers 2010

Location	Property Category	Number of valid sales	Average Selling Price	Median Selling Price	Average price per acre	Median Price per acre	Median Acres
Cabot	Res. < 6 acres	3	$198,333	$190,000	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
	Res. 6 > acres	6	$241,500	$240,000	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
	Mobile Home w/land	3	$ 69,200	$ 54,700	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
	Seasonal < 6 ac.	1	$410,000	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
	Seasonal 6 > ac.	1	$ 88,000	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
	Open Land	9	$ 76,133	$ 61,000	$ 2,357	$ 1,974	26.2
Wash. County	Res. < 6 acres	710	$176,474	$168,000	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
	Res. 6> acres	198	$259,877	$241,250	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
	Mobile Home w/land	28	$108,788	$ 68,000	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
	Seasonal < 6 ac.	88	$200,221	$180,000	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
	Seasonal 6 > ac.	29	$259,680	$140,834	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
	Open Land	195	$ 70,074	$ 42,000	$5,760	$10,039	4.0
	Woodland	35	$ 87,386	$ 57,500	$2,052	$1,923	27.0
Vermont	Res. < 6 acres	4,449	$209,507	$187,000	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
	Res. 6> acres	1,060	$272,082	$215,000	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
	Mobile Home w/land	224	$77,146	$ 66,572	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
	Seasonal < 6 ac.	497	$214,359	$170,500	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
	Seasonal 6 > ac.	200	$208,232	$126,500	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
	Open Land	839	$112,336	$ 47,500	$5,922	$8,578	5.0
	Woodland	248	$105,420	$ 55,000	$1,475	$2,117	24.0

Source: Vermont Department of Taxes, State of Vermont Property Transfer Tax System, Accumulated 2010 Year-to-Date Returns Processed through 12/31/10

The median household income in Cabot for the five year period 2005-2009 was estimated at $46,989, as compared to $54,227 for all of Washington County and $51,284 for all of

Vermont. Median family income in Cabot for that period was estimated at $53,750 as compared to $67,885 county-wide and $63,482 state-wide.

The median income for a family of four established county-wide by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for 2010 was $67,600. This median income level is used by HUD to calculate the income limits of its major affordable housing programs such as Public Housing, the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher program, the Section 811 program, and the Section 202 program. It is adjusted for these programs based on household size and other program regulations.

According to HUD the income needed to afford an apartment in Washington County at the 2010 Fair Market Rate (FMR) and pay only 30% of income towards housing, is $26,840, $33,600 and $45,400 respectively for a 1-bedroom, 2-bedroom, or 3-bedroom housing unit.

The median earnings for employed Cabot residents for the 2005-2009 period were estimated at $27,824, as compared to $29,557 in Washington County. (For a breakdown of occupations of the employed population in Cabot for this period, see Table I-1 in "Introduction")

2010 data on median monthly costs for housing, data compiled by *Vermont Center for Rural Studies* indicates that Cabot residents were less stressed financially than those who lived elsewhere in Washington County or the State of Vermont as a whole. Housing costs are considered "affordable" if they do not exceed 35% of household income. Based on sample data from the 2010 census, 22.2% of renters in Cabot paid 35% or more of their income on housing costs, while 24.6% of homeowners spent 35% or more of their income on housing.

The rental vacancy rate for Cabot according to the 2010 census was 4.9%. The *Vermont Housing Needs Assessment Guide* notes that, in general, a rental vacancy rate is considered "healthy" when it is approximately 5 percent. A vacancy rate below that indicates that there may be a need for additional rental housing.

Patterns of residential development

Today, in part due to technology (e.g., cars, telecommunications) and land use regulations, new residential development tends to be more dispersed, also known as sprawl, can have costs. These include increased roads and infrastructure maintenance, increased vehicular traffic, and fragmentation of open space and wildlife habitat.

Positive results of developing more dense housing close to the center of Town include decreased development costs due to proximity to existing infrastructure; increased opportunities to create a variety of housing types; increased vitality and economic activity in the town center: increased viability of mass transit; and preservation of natural resources and agricultural land.

Another option for minimizing sprawl and preserving agricultural and forested land is to encourage the use of planned residential developments (PRD). This is an existing provision in the Town's zoning regulations that allows the Planning Commission to modify the required lot area, setback, and other provisions applicable in the zoning district in order to encourage optimum preservation of open space and more efficient use of land.

Cabot's existing zoning regulations permit residential uses as well as PRDs in all four zoning districts.

Housing and the Regional Plan

In 2008, the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission (CVRPC) adopted a *Housing Distribution Plan* as part of its Regional Plan. CVRPC's Housing Committee developed the Plan, in part, to encourage the adoption of more meaningful and practical local housing plans and to promote the equitable and efficient distribution of housing throughout the region. Specifically, the Housing Element of the Cabot Town Plan needs to provide:

- A detailed map of Cabot showing the preferred location for future housing units, consistent with current or proposed zoning, for 80 percent of the anticipated 10 to 15 year housing demand.
- Mapping updates that identify the locations and numbers of housing units created in Cabot since 2003, the year of the previous Town Plan adoption.

This information is required in order for Cabot's Town Plan to receive regional "approval" by CVRPC. The assignation of housing units to locations in Town is considered a planning exercise, rather than a mandate, and will allow Cabot to be prepared for future housing growth.

Table IV- 6
2008 CVRPC Housing Distribution Plan for Cabot

New Units	2003-2004	2005-2009	2010-2016	2017-2020	Total projected (2010-2020)
Projected	--	43	35	45	80
Actual	26	42	20	--	--

(Source of actual new units: Cabot Zoning Administrator records of building permits issued)

As shown in Table IV-6, CVRPC's projection for new housing units in Cabot for the years 2005-2009 were close, with the actual count of new housing during this period being 42 units. It is noted that a majority (approximately 86%) of these new housing units has occurred outside the central village areas. The number of housing units projected by CVRPC to be constructed in Cabot from 2010 to 2020 is 80 units. Therefore, the required Housing Distribution Plan for Cabot needs to show where 80% of these units (64) can best be accommodated in Town. Based on data from 2010 to 2016 the projected housing

buildout does not appear likely, however new housing would be best accommodated where existing infrastructure exists as indicated on the housing buildout analysis maps in appendix B.

Map c included in Appendix B shows the locations of existing housing units in Cabot. According to the Federal Census, the total number of housing units in Cabot was 771 in 2010, representing an increase of 137 housing units (22%) from 2000 to 2010. However, since CVRPC's count is based on satellite imagery and E-911 addresses, there is a slight disparity in the total number of housing units. The existing housing unit count used in CVRPC's analysis is 754 units and Cabot Lister Data indicates a total of 693 units in 2010.

As an aid to the Planning Commission in determining where and how much housing can reasonably be expected to occur under current zoning, it was requested that CVRPC prepare a build-out analysis looking not only at where housing can be expected to occur in the next 10 years, but how the Town may eventually be built out further into the future, should existing land use regulations remain in effect.

The three build out scenarios described in the "Town of Cabot Build Out and Village Sampling Report" prepared in March 2011 by CVRPC are shown on Maps a – c in Appendix B of this Plan.

C. Planning Considerations for Future Housing Development

Based on the dual goals of protecting farmland and important natural resources, and supporting the vitality of the historic village centers in Cabot, the *preferred* location for 80% of the 10 year projected new housing growth in Cabot (64 units), is as follows (see also Map 4 in Appendix B):

Thirty-five percent (35%) of the projected housing growth through 2020 (22 housing units) is projected to occur within the Medium Density Developed District and Undeveloped Village District. Based on Buildout 3, which is the most restrictive of the scenarios, there is the capacity for 88 new units within the existing "Medium Density District" along Route 215, and capacity for 87 new units within the "Undeveloped Village District."

Some of the area within these districts is served by the Town wastewater system, and the northern part of the district is currently served by public water. A Planned Unit Development on Danville Hill Road that was approved by the Cabot Planning Commission in 2011 will provide for seven of the projected 22 new housing units.

Sixty-five percent (65%) of the projected housing growth through 2020 (42 housing units) is projected to occur within the Low Density Residential and Agricultural District. A proposed reduction in permitted residential density coupled with a reduction in minimum lot size will enable better protection of resources in this district. A Planned Unit Development on Coits Pond Road in this district was approved by the Planning

Commission in 2011, providing for 4 of the 42 projected new housing units in this district. This proposed development includes the conservation of open and forested land.

A factor that will influence the location of new housing units in the central village area, in addition to zoning regulations, natural constraints, and the personal choice of future homeowners, is the remaining capacity in the Cabot wastewater system. The wastewater system is currently at about 50% capacity. An allocation plan that prescribes that amount of reserve sewer capacity that will be made available for residential, commercial and civic uses (e.g., school) will help better determine the number of housing units that can be developed in the downtown village districts.

D. Goals and Implementation Strategies

Goal	Implementation Strategy	Key implementer(s)	Future Measures of Progress
Affordability:			
IV.1 Ensure the availability of affordable housing options in Town for all ages – single and multifamily homes for sale, rental and new construction – particularly in areas accessible to Town facilities and services.	**IV.1(a)** Investigate grant and loan programs available through the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board, Central VT Community Land Trust, and other organizations that can be used to renovate existing rental housing and/or develop new housing.	Planning Commission/ Selectboard	Housing data indicates that both owners and renters in Cabot spend less than 30% of income on housing and that income vs. home values/rents are more closely aligned.
	IV.1 (b) Investigate ways that Cabot's UDAG funds can be leveraged to improve housing opportunities.	CCIF Committee/Planning Commission	Discussion occurs
	IV.1 (c) Investigate ways that accessory dwellings can be utilized to expand affordable and elderly housing opportunities within the community.	Planning Commission	Review of zoning regulations
IV.2 Housing – both owner-occupied and rental – in central village areas will be well-maintained and attractive, and	**IV.2(a)** Investigate and improve local procedures for enforcing the VT Rental Housing Health Code in order to assure that rental housing is well-maintained and safe.	Town Health Officer/ Selectboard	System for periodic inspection of rental units is in place and documented.

pedestrian-oriented to reduce dependence on cars.			
Compact development patterns:			
IV.3 A greater percentage of new housing is concentrated in the downtown village area close to existing infrastructure and community facilities, to the extent practicable.	**IV.3(a)** Prepare a wastewater allocation schedule to ensure that sewer capacity will be available for balanced growth of residential, commercial and public uses, consistent with the goals of the Town Plan.	Selectboard in consultation with Planning Commission	Wastewater Allocation Plan prepared
IV.4 Planned unit developments will be encouraged in the areas outside the center of town, for the maximum preservation of farmland and forested areas and the most efficient use of land.	**IV.4(a)** Review provisions of the Town's zoning regulations, including those pertaining to planned unit developments, and revise as necessary to maximize preservation of farmland and forested areas in locations outside the village core.	Planning Commission	Track the locations of new residential units as they occur to compare actual development to desired patterns of growth.

V. LAND USE

A. Introduction

Decisions regarding land use can have a significant impact on the community, affecting property values, demand for services, and quality of life. Regulation of land use has been recognized as a legitimate public concern in Vermont since at least the 1920's, when the Vermont Legislature first authorized the creation of Municipal Planning Commissions, and then passed State enabling legislation allowing municipalities to regulate land use through zoning.

The Land Use section of the Town Plan is a culmination of the goals articulated in the sections regarding historic resources, natural resources, housing, transportation, recreation, public facilities and economic development. As such, it provided the basis for the Town's land use regulations.

The Community Planning Survey undertaken in June 2010 indicated that Cabot residents highly value working farms, natural areas and historic resources and wished to protect them from adverse impacts when development occurs. This sentiment is reflected in the activities of our active local Agricultural network.

According to the Vermont Council on Rural Development, the number of farms statewide has declined, and the wood products industry has also declined. Locally this trend has reversed and there has been growth in the number of active large scale farms which have increased by 18% from 2010 to 2016. At the same time, small farm enterprises (with sales less than $2,500 per year) have begun to proliferate. Many hope that new farm enterprises can form an economic nucleus for small towns like Cabot. The Vermont Food Venture Center in Hardwick is an incubator to serve farmers and food-related businesses. Examples like these lend hope to reviving and maintaining a working landscape in the region and in shaping a new local economy.

Like so many examples in the past show, the landscape is shaped by local economy. The current landscape of Vermont that has been shaped for over a century by dairy farming and provides a working landscape that is desirable to both residents and visitors. This beauty consists of the mix of woods and fields, mountains and valleys, compact villages and working farms.

The planning commission will consider the following when developing land use regulations:

- Create mixed land uses (residential, commercial, public buildings)
- Take advantage of compact building design
- Create a range of housing opportunities and choices
- Create walkable neighborhoods
- Foster distinctive, attractive community with a strong sense of place
- Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty, and critical natural areas
- Strengthen and direct development towards existing communities
- Provide a variety of transportation choices
- Make development decisions predictable, fair, and cost-effective
- Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration in development decisions

B. Existing Conditions

Land Use/Land Cover

Historically, land use in Cabot has been predominantly agrarian. Although the number of acres actively farmed has decreased, along with the population, over the last 150+ years, Cabot's landscape is still characterized by working farms and forested hillsides, and its village settlements are still distinct and marked by nineteenth-century residential and civic architecture.

Today, agriculture and forestry figure significantly in the Town's land use: in 2016, a total of 13,139.23 acres in Cabot were enrolled in the "Current Use" program, representing approximately 53% of the total area of the Town. Although land currently enrolled in the current use program does not ensure that this land will not be developed with other uses in the future, 2,033 acres of land in Cabot are permanently preserved through easements held by the Vermont Land Trust. (See Maps 1 and 2 in Appendix B)

The Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission has mapped land use and land cover throughout the town of Cabot, as shown on Map 1 "Land Use/Land Cover" in Appendix B. (*Mapping based on satellite imagery, not on classification of uses in Town Grand List*). The percentage of land area in Cabot in various land uses is shown in Table V-1 below.

Table V-1
Land Use/Land Cover

Land Use/Land Cover Class	Acres	Percent of Total Land Area
Agriculture and Open Land	4,856	19.8%
Forested/Shrub Land	18,015	73.3%
Public/Service	23	0.1%
Residential	742	3.0%
Commercial/Industrial	29	0.1%
Surface Water	896	3.6%
Total Acres	24,561	100%

As shown above, agriculture/open land and forested land together comprise approximately 93% of the land area in Town.

Natural Features

Cabot's natural features affect the extent to which land can sustain future development. In some cases natural features such as steep slopes, the presence of bedrock, or wetlands, make development unlikely due to practical building constraints. Other features, such as prime agricultural soils, pastureland, or forests may not pose practical difficulties to development, but the loss of these areas to uses that are not directly related to farming or forestry would significantly alter the Town's character and the ability to sustain farming operations in the future. (See the Natural Resources section of this Plan for a more detailed description of Cabot's natural features, including steep slopes, wetlands, stream corridors, and agricultural soils. See the Economic Development section of this Plan for a discussion of the role of agriculture and food system development in Cabot's economic development.)

Scenic Resources

Scenic resources in Cabot include historic buildings located throughout the Town and concentrated around the Common in the downtown area; views from public roads and lands of wooded hillsides, cultivated fields, and distant mountain ranges, including the Green Mountains; and scenic vistas visible from the vantage point of private lands. Scenic resources contribute significantly to the character of Cabot.

Recreational use of open lands

Open and forested lands in Town provide recreational opportunities, particularly in the winter months when farming and forestry operations are limited. Through permission secured from a number of private property-owners for seasonal use through farm fields and wooded areas, Cabot's recreation committee has delineated and maintained a winter trail system, used for

hiking, snowshoeing and cross-country skiing. (See also the "Recreation" subsection of the "Facilities, Utilities and Services" section IX of this Plan.)

Development Patterns

Although a majority (approximately 86%) of all housing developed in Cabot since 2003 has been outside the historic village areas, this has not yet significantly altered Cabot's predominantly rural character. Cabot has, for the most part, retained its pattern of compact village settlements surrounded by large tracts of forested and open land.

The compact development along the corridor of Route 215 in the areas of Cabot Village and Lower Cabot Village still defines the center of civic and commercial activity in Town. The focal point in Cabot Village is the Common, around which is clustered the buildings of the Cabot School, the Cabot Historical Society, the United Church of Cabot, and residential and commercial structures, all of which comprise the State-Register listed Cabot Village Historic District (see Historic Resources section of Plan). Lower Cabot Village, also listed on the State Register as a distinct historic district, is centered on the intersection of Route 215 and Sawmill Road. The Lower Cabot Village Store (currently vacant) and the Cabot Greenhouse and Nursery are among the few structures that have been used for commercial uses in recent years along this stretch of Route 215.

Dense residential development exists along the shores of Joe's Pond, in the northeastern part of Cabot. About 53 residences are located on approximately 28 acres of lakeshore in Cabot, and take access from West Shore Road. Although this lakefront area was originally a community of summer camps, in recent years the houses have become year-round residences, and many have been substantially renovated and enlarged.

State Route 2 passes through the southeast portion of Town. The land along this corridor has remained largely undeveloped, and lies adjacent to significant environmental features including Molly's Pond, the Marshfield Reservoir (Molly's Falls Pond), wetlands and watercourses, and forested and agricultural land.

Housing development that has occurred in the rural areas of town since 2003 has not resulted in the development of new subdivision roads, and all were built on either existing lots or on lots created through minor subdivisions (less than five lots). This new housing development has been scattered throughout town, and no new loci of development, either residential or commercial, have emerged. Two recent approvals of Planned Unit Developments in Town will result in common access driveways to serve these developments.

Existing Utilities Affecting Land Use

The Town of Cabot has a sewer system with a wastewater treatment facility located on Sawmill Road, and a public water system supplied by two public wells. Currently, the wastewater system infrastructure exists along the corridor that extends from Upper Cabot Village on the north to Lower Cabot on the south, including Main Street (Rt. 215), and portions of Danville Hill Road, South Walden Road, Elm Street, Glinka Road and Sawmill Road. The public water infrastructure exists in the same general area, although it does not extend as far north or south along Route 215 (see Map 3 in Appendix B).

The presence of public water and sewer systems allow for denser development, including residential, civic and commercial uses, in the areas of Town served by these utilities. The two public wells, one on Danville Hill Road and the other on Route 215 North (Bond Hill), are located on the northern and northeastern boundaries of the water and sewer systems. Each well has a delineated Source Protection Area, within which land uses need to be regulated so as not to pose a risk of contamination to these important groundwater recharge areas. (See Map 2 for delineation of Source Protection Areas)

The wastewater treatment system is currently operating at approximately 50% capacity. The development of an allocation schedule for the uncommitted reserve capacity, as provided for in the Town's wastewater ordinance, would help assure that the remaining wastewater capacity was not used by exclusively one use, and would support the balanced growth of commercial, residential, and civic uses in the village center.

C. Existing Local Land Use Regulations and Planning Considerations

Cabot's existing zoning predates the last Town Plan of 2012, although a considerable amount of work was done since 2012 towards the drafting of revised land use regulations based on the 2012 Plan.

Below is a brief description of the key provisions of the Town's existing land use regulations, and descriptions of each of the zoning districts, along with planning considerations for each of the zoning districts.

Site Plan Review

All structures and uses except for one and two-family dwellings and agricultural uses, and enclosed accessory uses associated with them, require site plan approval by the Cabot Planning Commission. While the regulations specify what should be shown on the site plan, they do not currently specify standards to be met through the site plan design.

Conditional Use Review

Any use which is identified as a "conditional use" in a particular zoning district is required to obtain approval by the Cabot Board of Adjustment. The zoning regulations include general and specific standards to be considered in the review of such applications.

Planned Residential Developments

Planned residential developments (PRDs), are permitted in all districts except the Shoreland district. This provision of the Cabot land use regulations allows the Planning Commission to modify general requirements of the zoning district related to lot size and setbacks, in order to better preserve open space and facilitate better planning. Dwelling units are permitted to be single family or multi-family within these developments.

Flood Hazard Area

The Cabot Zoning bylaws include an emergency piece of legislation enacted in March 2010 for the purpose of meeting the requirements of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and ensuring that residents and businesses in Cabot would still be eligible for flood insurance. The ordinance specifically prohibits all new principal structures, "critical facilities," and storage and junk yards in the flood hazard area boundaries, and prohibits accessory structures in the floodway.

Zoning Districts

The Town currently has four zoning districts: the Medium Density Developed District, the Undeveloped Village District, Low Density Residential and Agricultural District, and the Shoreland District.

Medium Density Developed District

The boundaries of this district, as shown on the Current Zoning Map, are defined by the land that is less than 300 feet from the edge of the highway right of way of Route 215 in what was formerly the incorporated Village of Cabot and extending south into Lower Cabot. This district also encompasses a short stretch along US Route 2 from the intersection of Route 2 with Houghton Road extending to a point just east of the intersection of Route 2 with the western terminus of Old Route 2, and also encompasses a portion of Old Route 2 and Ennis Road (see Map 5 "Current Zoning" in Appendix B).

This district permits residential uses, one and two-family dwellings and multi-family elderly housing, along with various commercial and civic uses. Other defined uses, including restaurant and retail stores, require the issuance of a conditional use permit by the Zoning Board of Adjustment.

The minimum lot area in this zoning district varies according to the use and ranges from 12,500 square feet required for an elderly housing development to 40,000 square feet (about one acre) for Group Services.

The "Build Out and Village Sampling Report" prepared by the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission at the request of the Cabot Planning Commission indicates that the average existing lot size in the "Upper Village" area of the Medium Density zoning district is 0.5 acres, with the median lot size being 0.4 acres. In the "Lower Village" the average lot size is 0.81 acres, with the median being 0.58 acres.

Undeveloped Village District

This district extends beyond the 300 feet adjacent to the roadways, extending into the area of the former incorporated Village of Cabot (see Map 5). This district permits uses similar to the Medium Density Developed District, with slight variations on the types of uses permitted by conditional use permit.

The minimum lot size in this district ranges from 1 acre for residential uses to 2 acres for commercial uses and group services.

Planning considerations for the *Medium Density Developed District* and the *Undeveloped Village District*: Included in the State of Vermont's substantive planning goals is the directive that development be planned so as to maintain the historic settlement pattern of compact village centers surrounded by rural countryside. To accomplish this, new residential and commercial development should be encouraged near community centers, economic development should be employed to revitalize existing village centers, and public investments in infrastructure should reinforce the planned growth patterns of the area.

The areas of Cabot currently within the "Medium Density Developed District" and the "Undeveloped Village District" include the areas surrounding the historic village center and the area known as "Lower Cabot Village." While the area surrounding the common and Town Hall is the main commercial and civic hub, lower Cabot Village has historically been a smaller commercial hub, and has the potential for additional commercial and residential development.

A newly designated "Village Center District" should be considered in these general areas by taking into consideration the locations currently served by public water and sewer, those areas where it would be desirable to extend public water and sewer in the future, as well as the location of existing land uses and natural features.

Vermont statutes define "village center" as the "traditional center of the community, typically comprised of a cohesive core of residential, civic, religious, and commercial buildings,

arranged along a main street and intersecting streets." The state statute at section 4414 (1) (A) provides direction regarding the establishment of boundaries, requirements and review standards for village center districts with objectives relating to mixed uses, density of residential development, connectivity, multi-modal transportation facilities, public open space and landmarks, and other features that form a cohesive and vital village core. The statute notes that municipalities "may adopt a manual of graphic or written design guidelines to assist applicants in the preparation of development applications" for use in village center districts.

Design guidelines in this district can help ensure that new development accommodates both strollers and wheelchairs, supports walking rather than driving, and fosters connectivity to new and existing public parking areas and public transportation options, while protecting the character of the historic village center areas.

Design standards can also be achieved more indirectly through the dimensional and density standards[1] of the village center district. The new district regulations should take into consideration the existing pattern of development, including lot sizes and setbacks, and the goals of encouraging increased residential density and economic revitalization in these areas.

It is acknowledged that since the Winooski River and its tributaries run through the center of the "Village Center District," the associated flood hazard area will continue to pose development constraints within this district (see delineation of flood hazard areas on Map 6). In order to give the most flexibility in siting new development, while still retaining traditional building patterns, the elimination of a minimum lot size, coupled with the establishment of a maximum density (number of residential units per acre), and the re-evaluation of minimum setbacks and maximum lot coverage will be considered. The lot size "sampling" and build-out analyses conducted by The Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission at the request of the Cabot Planning Commission will help to guide the revision of the boundaries and dimensional and density standards for a new "Village Center" district.

Permitted and conditional uses in the district should contribute to the continued development of these areas as centers of civic and commercial life. The district regulations should reflect the goals developed by the Planning Commission (with the input of Town residents) of protecting natural resources, fostering economic development, and encouraging new retail businesses.

Additional standards regarding permitted uses and development may be needed for the areas that fall within the source protection areas of the Danville Hill Well and the Bond Hill Well,

[1] Common dimensional and density standards include: minimum lot size; maximum use density; minimum frontage; minimum front, side, and rear setbacks; maximum height; and maximum building or lot coverage.

located in the northern part of the existing "Medium Density Developed District." This may be accomplished through the creation of a source protection overlay district.

Areas currently zoned "Undeveloped Village District" that are outside of the area served by public sewer and water and which have land characteristics not suitable to denser development could be incorporated into the adjacent "Low Density Residential and Agricultural District."

Since the area along Route 2 that is currently zoned "Medium Density Developed District" does not contain existing commercial uses or dense residential uses, is not served by public water or sewer, and is not a location where the encouragement of new commercial or dense residential development is warranted, this area will not be included in the new "Village Center District," and will be incorporated into the adjacent Low Density Residential and Agricultural District. (See Map 6).

State statutes, including those pertaining to municipal housing codes and recent revisions to the definition and regulation of salvage yards, will provide guidance for local regulations. In addition, the requirement for a "certificate of zoning compliance" prior to the use or occupancy of any land or structure for which a zoning permit has been issued, would be an aid to uniform enforcement of the local regulations.

Prior to proposing a change in zoning districts, it is strongly recommended that the Town, through the Cabot Planning Commission, engage the community in the development of a Cabot Village Revitalization Plan – that addresses a whole range of issues, including:

- The potential for future development and the most feasible locations given various constraints and conditions such as flood plain, topography, existing development, existing roads, and existing public infrastructure (water and sewer)
- Possibilities for a mix of housing types as well as mixed use buildings (commercial and residential)
- Opportunities to improve pedestrian and bicycle access
- Opportunities for modifying traffic patterns and implementing traffic calming methods
- Enhancing pubic parking and public transportation
- Methods to improve the attractiveness of the village
- Best uses for vacant or underutilized buildings

The planning process should have a major public input in all phases and architectural depictions of the future possibilities for the village, addressing the above-mentioned issues.

Shoreland District

This district encompasses land within 800 feet of the shores of lakes or ponds greater than 20 acres, which includes Coits Pond, West Hill Pond, Molly's Falls Pond, Molly's Pond, and Joe's Pond. Non-residential uses in this district are limited to agriculture, forestry, and recreational or water-dependent uses. The minimum lot size is one acre for residential uses and 2 acres for non-residential uses.

Planning Considerations: Guidelines for the siting of structures within this district, and dimensional standards such as maximum building height and lot coverage, will need to be re-examined to assure that the goals of maintaining high water quality, maintaining vegetative buffers along shorelines, retaining scenic views, and improving public access are realized.

It is noted that the areas currently included in the "Shoreland District" classification vary greatly in regard to existing development and resource value (see discussion of these resources in Section II of this Plan, "Natural Resources"). While existing development on the shore of Joe's Pond is quite dense (almost 2 units per acre), residential development around other water bodies in Town are considerably less dense. The varying recreational and natural resource value of lands around these water bodies should be acknowledged and varying levels of review should be considered through the creation of more than one category of Shoreland District (e.g., "Shoreland District I," "Shoreland District II," etc.). Dimensional and density standards would be tailored to protect the unique features of the resource, and residential density and/or maximum lot size would vary in each district.

Low Density Residential and Agricultural District

The vast majority of Cabot's land area, 21,682 acres, is in this zoning classification. This district encompasses most of the farmland and forested areas in the Town of Cabot, as well as scattered residential development and a few commercial uses.

A variety of residential and non-residential uses are permitted, with most commercial uses requiring a conditional use permit. Notably, under current zoning "bank, financial institution" is the only commercial use unrelated to a residence, recreation or agricultural use that is permitted as-of-right in this district. The minimum lot size currently permitted in this district is 2 acres. However, the existing average lot size in this district is 31 acres, and the median lot size is 14 acres. The current residential density in this district is approximately one dwelling unit per 42 acres of land.

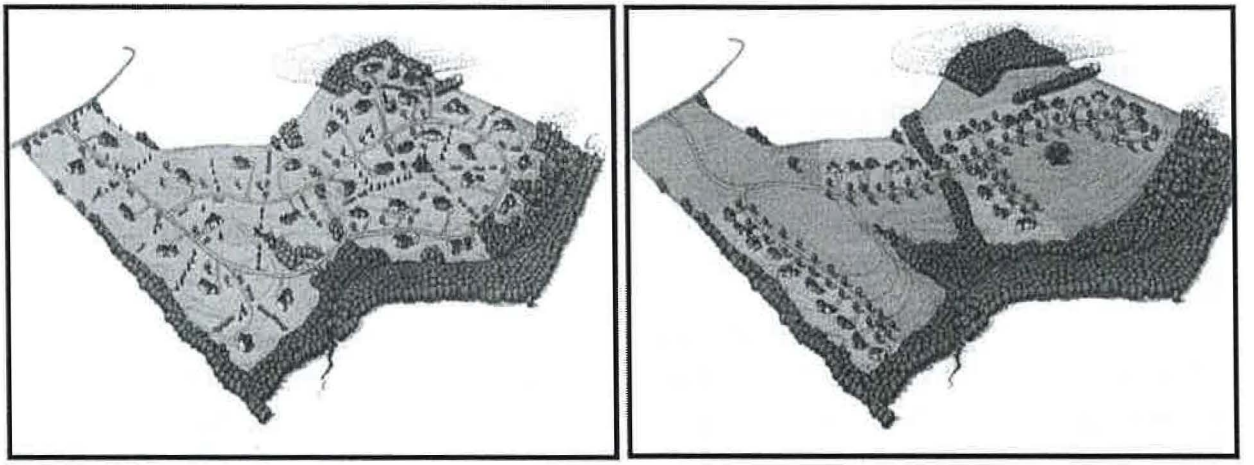
Planning Considerations: A re-examination of the permitted and conditional uses within this district, as well as permitted residential density, is necessary to ensure that the land use regulations do not present barriers to the agricultural use of the land into the future, and that the district regulations reflect the goals developed by the Planning Commission of preserving working farmland, protecting natural resources, and fostering economic sustainability, which is closely aligned with agricultural use of the land.

All land uses permitted as-of-right should be directly tied to agriculture, forestry and/ or residential use, and all conditional uses should be demonstrated to be compatible and/or linked to these aforementioned uses.

While agricultural operations often require tracts of at least 10 contiguous acres, the area needed for a residence does not need to exceed about one acre (in areas not serviced by public water and sewer). In order to conserve agricultural land resources while permitting the creation of house lots, the establishment of a lower maximum residential density in this district (e.g., one unit per 3 to 10 acres), coupled with a smaller minimum lot size (e.g., 40,000 square feet), will help facilitate this. In order to discourage the siting of new houses in locations that hinder the best utilization of the land for agriculture or forestry uses, subdivision regulations will be developed to set clear standards for siting of house lots, the location of building envelopes for residences, and the conservation of land containing agricultural and natural resources.

In addition, the mandatory use of the planned unit development provision for major subdivisions in this district, and the inclusion of a specified percentage of land to be conserved (e.g. 60%), will help to achieve the land use goals of preserving important natural and agricultural resources while permitting residential growth.

Below is an illustration of how land can be conserved using the provisions of planned unit development. The housing density (number of house lots) is the same in both examples, but the layout on the right conserves more forest and open space.



(Photo source: www.resourcefulcommunities.org)

Since the current boundaries of the Low Density Residential and Agricultural District include lands of varying degrees of value for agricultural and forestry uses (as well as wildlife habitat) it is useful to identify critically important agricultural and natural resource lands using available data on agricultural soils and other natural resources, in order to establish resource protection districts that warrant even lower residential densities (e.g., one unit per 10 acres or more) and heightened protection through land use regulations. The establishment of an "Agricultural Overlay District" based on the presence of agricultural soils is recommended, and further study of significant forested areas may warrant the future establishment of a "Forest Reserve District." The depiction of prime agricultural soils on Maps 2 and 6 in Appendix B include both Prime Farmland (meets national standard for prime) and Statewide Important Farmland (meets Vermont standard for prime). It is land that has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed fiber, forage, and oilseed crops.

Other Planning Considerations for All Districts

The development and adoption of subdivision regulations will help to assure that future development occurs in a way that achieves the land use goals in each of the districts. These regulations should include standards to best utilize existing infrastructure and to avoid impacts to natural and historic features, and should include standards for the identification of open space to be preserved. Features that should be considered in the design of subdivisions include agricultural lands, forested areas, scenic resources, steep slopes, wetlands and water bodies, historic resources, trails, hedgerows, and stone walls. Buffers from wetlands and surface waters should be incorporated into subdivision design standards.

It is proposed that all of the provisions articulated in Cabot's existing Flood Hazard Area ordinance be reconfigured as a "Flood Hazard Overlay District," for ease of implementation and enforcement. As an overlay district, the underlying district regulations would still be in effect, except where the Flood Hazard Overlay was more restrictive.

D. Buildout Analysis

At the request of the Cabot Planning Commission, the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission (CVRPC) prepared the "Town of Cabot Buildout and Village Sampling Report" which provides projections of the way in which the Town of Cabot may be ultimately built-out under the existing local land use regulations. (See complete report in Appendix C) At the Cabot Planning Commission's direction, CVRPC prepared three scenarios: Buildout 1, which identified the projected maximum buildout in both residential units and commercial floor area under Cabot's existing zoning regulations; Buildout 2, which removed land areas containing features that would typically pose development constraints, such as steep slopes, flood zones, State and municipally-owned land, and wetlands and water bodies along with their 50-foot buffer areas; and Buildout 3 which removed from potential development all the constraints identified in Buildout 2, as well as lands that were both identified as "agricultural/open lands" on the Cabot "Land Use/Land Cover" map and which contained prime agricultural soils, as defined by the State of Vermont. (See Maps 7a – 7c, Appendix B.)

The "Town of Cabot Buildout and Village Sampling Report" shows that under the Town's existing zoning regulations, and removing from potential development only those areas permanently preserved through easements held by the Vermont Land Trust, (Buildout 1) the Town could eventually be developed with 9,462 dwelling units, with 8,181 of these units occurring in the Low Density Residential and Agricultural District. To put that into perspective, according to the 2010 Census Cabot currently has approximately 771 dwelling units throughout the Town.

In Buildout 2, the number of potential dwelling units dropped to 7,755, with 6,829 of the units occurring in the Low Density Residential and Agricultural district. In Buildout 3, the projected residential build out was 6,601 units throughout the town, with 5,765 of the units occurring in the Low Density Residential and Agricultural District.

Although removing sensitive environmental features from the third build-out scenario reduced the potential build-out by a few thousand housing units, there is still the potential for 5,765 new housing units in the Low Density Residential Agricultural District. Although this may take many years to happen, or may never happen, under current zoning conditions it could happen. **E. Scenic Character**

Cabot's roadways are graced with scenic character, views are highly important to the resident's of Town. Cabot's position in the watershed with varied elevation changes also affords both highly prized short and long range views throughout every season. This is an extremely important feature to the Town of Cabot and significant planning goal.

E. Goals and Implementation Strategies

Goal	Implementation Strategy	Key implementer(s)	Future Measures of Progress
V.1 Plan future residential and commercial development to locate in Cabot's existing residential and commercial development nodes: Cabot Village and Lower Cabot Village.	**V.1 (a)** Prior to proposing changes to village zoning districts, develop a Village Vitalization Plan.	Planning Commission, Selectboard, CCIF, CCA	Village Vitalization Plan developed
	V.1 (b) Prepare and adopt an allocation schedule on a yearly basis for the uncommitted reserve capacity of the wastewater system.	Planning Commission/ Selectboard	Allocation schedule adopted
	V.1(c) Ensure that the development within the Village does not negatively impact the public water supply by establishing a Source Protection Overlay District that encompasses the wellhead protection areas.	Planning Commission/ Selectboard	Overlay District regulations drafted
V.2 Preserve existing Town green/common as the visual centerpiece of community life and commercial development in Cabot, and encourage preservation and adaptive reuse of historic structures	." **V.2 (a)** Village Center Designation as a way to create economic incentives for commercial redevelopment and revitalization in the downtown areas.	Planning Commission/ Selectboard/Cabot Economic Planning Group	Discussions commence with stakeholders

in Cabot Village and Lower Cabot Village.			
V.3 Land is used and developed in a way that retains working farms and productive forest land as major land uses in the Town, and protects natural, historic and scenic resources.	**V.3 (a)** Maintain and map critically important agricultural, open and forested land in Town to serve as an information base in the review of site plans and subdivisions, and in land conservation decisions.	Planning Commission, with assistance of Vermont Land Trust and CVRPC	Map created
	V.3 (b) Strengthen PRD/PUD regulations to specify a percentage of land to be conserved as part of the development; and to provide for buffer areas between residential development and adjacent residential and agricultural uses.	Planning Commission/ Selectboard	PUD regulations revised
	V.3(c) Adopt Subdivision regulations to better guide land use development throughout town.	Planning Commission/ Selectboard	Subdivision regulations adopted
	V.3 (d) Educate land owners about options regarding conservation easements – coordinate with statewide database of farmland.	Planning Commission/ Selectboard/Planning Commission/State and Regional agencies and non-profits (e.g., Vermont Land Trust)	Acreage permanently conserved through easements increases.
V.4 Plan new development in areas served by existing infrastructure, including utilities and roads, while ensuring that the uses and the rate and scale of development is in	**V.4 (a)** Revise existing performance standards for uses in all districts (section 3.15 of Cabot Zoning ordinance) and create specific standards for the siting of residences in the Low Density Residential and Agricultural and Shoreland Districts.	Planning Commission/ Selectboard	Regulations revised

keeping with Cabot's existing character, and that property values are preserved.	**V.4 (b)** Modify regulations for signs, as necessary, to preserve community character.	Planning Commission/ Selectboard	Regulations revised
V.5 Promote pedestrian access for all development in village centers.	**V.5(a)** Develop a capital improvement plan that includes the development of new sidewalks/paths. **V.5(b)** Seek grant funds to accomplish pedestrian infrastructure improvements.	Planning Commission/ Selectboard/CCIF Committee/Cabot CCA Planning Commission/ Selectboard/CCIF Committee/Cabot CCA	Plan created, improvements to infrastructure made in accordance with plan Grants secured
V.6 Retain important scenic resources.	**V.6(a)** Prepare an inventory of scenic views, vistas and roads in Town and map them to serve as an information base in the review of site plans and subdivisions, and in land conservation decisions. **V.6(b)** Examine existing land use regulations, including those regarding telecommunication facilities, to ensure that the siting of structures avoids, to the extent practicable, adverse impacts to scenic views.	Planning Commission Planning Commission	Inventory created Review completed

V.7 The land use goals articulated in this Plan are forwarded by administering the Town's Land Use Regulations in a fair and consistent manner.	**V.7(a)** Review the land use regulations to ensure that regulations clearly state all referenced provisions of the State enabling legislation (for example, procedures for the appeal of decisions) and that they incorporate fire safety, building maintenance, and other safety measures.	Planning Commission/ Selectboard/Town Zoning Administrator/Zoning Board of Adjustment	Revisions to land use regulations completed
	V.7(b) Establish the requirement for a Certificate of Zoning Compliance to ensure these safety and use standards have been met, and that the regulations are consistently enforced.	Selectboard/Zoning Administrator	Provision included in Town Zoning regulations
	V.7(c) Include language in the zoning regulations that sets clear standards for temporary structures and uses of land.	Planning Commission/ Selectboard	Zoning regulations revised

VI. ENERGY

A. Introduction

Energy and energy-related issues are addressed in the Cabot Town Plan because they are likely to become more important to the residents of Cabot over time, for the following reasons:

1) Energy prices are impacted by events far away and out of our control. These events can occur with little advance notice but the changes can be dramatic and occur quickly.
2) Energy supplies may become less reliable due to global shortages of fossil fuel sources and the increasing demand for these resources.
3) Global climate change, due in part to the release of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere from the combustion of fossil fuels, are likely to impact global, national, and local environments and economies. The magnitude and scope of the changes are unknown, and the impacts on agriculture (including our ability to rely on distant food sources) and wild plant and animal populations could be profound.

Cabot acknowledges these issues and shall promote policies to mitigate their environmental and economic impacts on our community. Cabot's planning goals reflect a desire to improve energy efficiency and meet our local energy needs without the consumption of non-renewable energy or the use of any energy source that leads to long term degradation of the environment.

Our vision is that Cabot residents will meet their needs for food, shelter, materials, and transportation using resources managed in an affordable and sustainable manner and sourced as locally as possible.

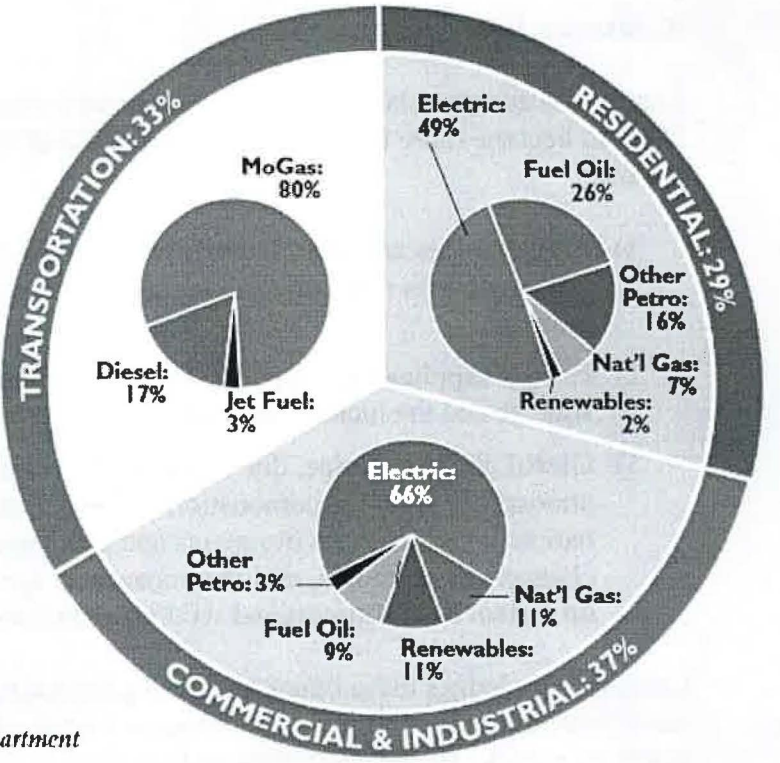
Under act 178 Towns can strive for a determination of compliance to receive "substantial deference" in the review process under section 248 with the public service board. Cabot will continue to develop and update the town plan and community policy as resources are provided and available. Energy efficiency is a priority of our community.

B. Overview

Energy Use

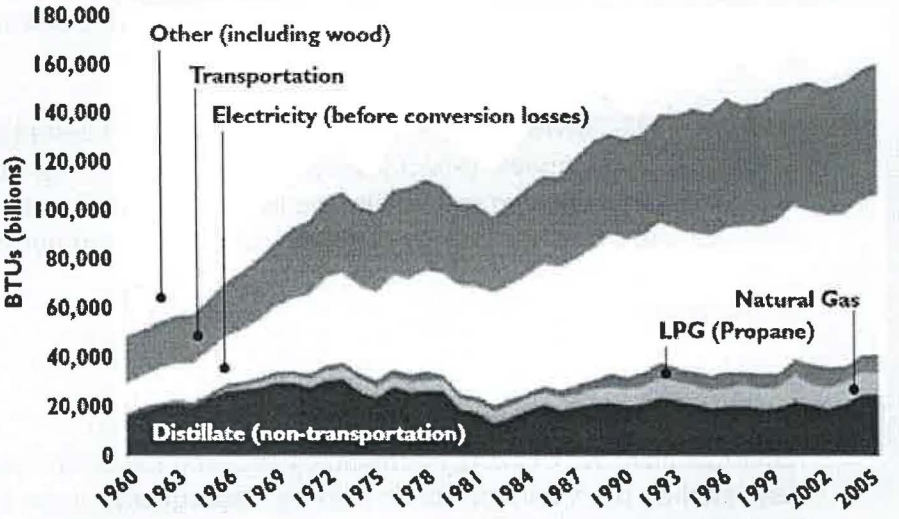
Although analyses of energy demand by fuel and sector are not available for Cabot, data generated by the Vermont Public Service Department for the State as a whole are illustrated below. The State's heavy reliance on fossil fuels across all sectors and the increasing demand for energy over time are readily apparent.

FIGURE VI – 1
VERMONT'S ENERGY MIX



Source: Vermont Public Service Department

FIGURE VI – 2
VERMONT'S ENERGY CONSUMPTION BY CATEGORY



Source: Vermont Public Service Department

Like most Vermont households, Cabot resident's largest energy uses are home heating, electricity, and transportation fuels.

Home Heating: Estimates for primary home heating fuel are available for Cabot as shown in Table VI-1. Many households are dependent on propane or fuel oil, but the use of wood for home heating is much more common in Cabot than Washington County or Vermont as a whole. Wood offers advantages as a local resource, minimal greenhouse gas impact, and economic benefits (approximately 80% of each dollar spent on wood remains in the state compared to 20% for nonrenewable energy sources). Disadvantages are high particulate emissions, however newer wood burning technologies and stricter emissions standards may mitigate this impact. As a whole, Cabot should encourage continued use of wood for home heating.

Table VI – 1
HOUSE HEATING FUEL
CABOT, WASHINGTON COUNTY, VERMONT

	Cabot		Washington County		Vermont	
	Total	Percent	Total	Percent	Total	Percent
# of Households	592	100.0%	24,706	100.0%	256,830	100.0%
Utility gas	0	0.0%	440	1.8%	39,335	15.3%
Bottled, tank, or LP gas	141	23.8%	4,972	20.1%	37,813	14.7%
Electricity	13	2.2%	1,136	4.6%	11,675	4.5%
Fuel oil, kerosene, etc.	178	30.1%	13,646	55.2%	124,072	48.3%
Coal or coke	7	1.2%	57	0.2%	614	0.2%
Wood	247	41.7%	4,056	16.4%	39,423	15.3%
Solar energy	0	0.0%	16	0.1%	156	0.1%
Other fuel	4	0.7%	362	1.5%	3,167	1.2%
No fuel used	2	0.3%	21	0.1%	575	0.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2008-2012 American Community Survey Estimates

Electricity: Grid-connected Cabot residents along the Route 2 and Route 215 corridors receive electric service from Green Mountain Power Corporation (GMP) while the remainder are member/owners of the Washington Electric Cooperative (WEC). Both electricity providers are strong supporters of renewable energy sources including large and small scale hydroelectric, wind, and landfill methane. The fuel mix for each utility is provided on the company websites (see Resources section).

Transportation: The rural character and decentralized settlement patterns of Central Vermont pose a difficulty in efforts to minimize the consumption of traditional fuels in the transportation sector. Like many rural communities, Cabot residents are heavily reliant on privately owned motor vehicles for mobility. As an illustration, commuting times for Vermont and the United States as a whole are shown in Table VI-2. See the Land Use (Section V) and Transportation (Section VIII) sections for actions to reduce reliance on private motor vehicles.

Table VI – 2
COMMUTING TIMES
VERMONT AND UNITED STATES

	Vermont		United States	
	Total	Percent	Total	Percent
# of workers 16+ years old who did not work at home	294,908	100.0%	135,165,557	100.0%
< 5 minute commute	16,524	5.6%	4,261,513	3.2%
5 to 9 minutes	40,894	13.9%	13,665,098	10.1%
10 to 14 minutes	47,126	16.0%	19,118,214	14.1%
15 to 19 minutes	45,753	15.5%	20,908,743	15.5%
20 to 24 minutes	39,984	13.6%	19,975,565	14.8%
25 to 29 minutes	18,964	6.4%	8,356,337	6.2%
30 to 34 minutes	33,431	11.3%	18,463,798	13.7%
35 to 39 minutes	8,069	2.7%	3,769,500	2.8%
40 to 44 minutes	9,265	3.1%	5,037,201	3.7%
45 to 59 minutes	19,323	6.6%	10,409,233	7.7%
60 to 89 minutes	10,712	3.6%	7,742,141	5.7%
90 or more minutes	4,863	1.6%	3,458,214	2.6%

Potential Local Energy Sources

Wood/Biomass. Forest and shrub land cover almost three-quarters of Cabot's total land area. The generation of heat from biomass is a strategy that will continue to benefit the Town.

Solar. Solar energy is inexhaustible, does not emit greenhouse gases, and reduces reliance on foreign energy supplies. Passive solar (incorporating design principles into buildings to capture free heat and light) and active solar (thermal collectors and photovoltaics) should be encouraged in Cabot.

Wind. Cabot probably does not have viable sites for industrial scale wind generation (generally at elevations between 2,500 and 3,500 feet). Small scale wind turbine technology is a 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, and small scale turbines that returns energy to the power grid are exempt from local bylaws and are instead reviewed by the Public Service Board under Act 248.

Geothermal Power. Geothermal energy is the use of the Earth's near constant temperature (45—58 degrees F) a few feet below the surface for heating and cooling applications, often through the use of ground source heat pumps. The two types of geothermal systems with

potential for use in Vermont are open loop systems using a water well and closed loop systems using underground or underwater pipes. Suitable applications are site specific.

Biofuels. Biofuels are renewable, agriculturally derived liquid fuels. Some varieties of plants with high oil or cellulose content including corn, sunflower, canola, soy and hemp can be employed to produce biodiesel, ethanol, and even straight vegetable oils that can be used to run vehicles and heat buildings, Biofuels could be produced in Cabot, and doing so could help keep money circulating in the community, create jobs and sustain local agriculture, while helping to avoid the external costs associated with fossil fuels. However, it may also take farmland out of food production and some question the energy *inputs* processing requires.

C. Planning Considerations for Energy Sustainability

Cabot should make investments in energy efficiency for low cost, immediate economic and environmental benefits and explore renewable energy options for energy consumption.

Buildings and Structures

Cabot should support residents in improving the energy efficiency of their homes and businesses, both existing and new construction. Such investments will reduce the percent of income residents spend on energy, per capita energy consumption and environmental degradation.

Cabot has made energy efficiency investments in town-owned facilities based on 2010 energy audits for Cabot Town buildings by Building Energy, under contract with the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission. As a result of the 2010 energy audits all town buildings have all made improvements in energy efficiency and conservation.

Transportation and Settlement Patterns

Cabot should support actions that reduce reliance on motor fuels such as improved access to, and increased use of, alternative and public transportation options such as bus, van-pooling, ridesharing and bicycling will decrease energy consumption. (See Section VIII Transportation.)

Cabot should support settlement patterns that reduce travel such as the concentration of employment opportunities, housing and social services, the expansion of broadband access, and increased use of local goods and services. (See Section V Land Use).

D. Resources

Statewide energy use data:

http://www.vlct.org/assets/Resource/Handbooks/Energy-Planning-Guidebook.pdf

House heating fuel data (http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_12_5YR_B25040&prodType=table)

Vermont Comprehensive Energy Plan 2016 (https://outside.vermont.gov/sov/webservices/Shared%20Documents/2016CEP_Final.pdf)

Town Energy Plan guide (http://www.trorc.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/TRORCEnergyPlan_draft_051916-1.pdf)

Vermont Renewable Energy Resource Center (http://www.rerc-vt.org/)

Efficiency Vermont (https://www.efficiencyvermont.com/)

Net metering (http://publicservice.vermont.gov/energy-efficiency/ee_netmetering.html)

Green Mountain Power (http://www.greenmountainpower.com/fuel-mix/)

Washington Electric Cooperative (http://www.washingtonelectric.coop/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/2015-Load-and-Resource-Summary.pdf)

Vermont Energy Atlas (http://www.vtenergyatlas.com/)

D. Goals and Implementation Strategies

Goal	Implementation Strategy	Key Implementer(s)	Future Measures of Progress
VI.1 Create a mechanism for the creation of Ad Hoc task-specific energy teams (rather than a standing Energy Committee) and for publicizing efforts underway for the implementation of energy strategies	**VI.1 (a)** Authorize Ad Hoc Energy Teams as the need arises. Use existing means of communication (e.g., Cabot Chronicle, e-mail list, Front Porch Forum) to get word out about the creation of ad hoc energy teams and about individual energy tasks.	Planning Commission, Select Board	Energy Teams formed
VI.2 Increase awareness of local energy conservation	**VI.2 (a)** Provide information to residents, including	Ad hoc energy team	Communications sent

Goal	Implementation Strategy	Key Implementer(s)	Future Measures of Progress
resources.	farmers, on energy conservation resources and services. **VI.2 (b)** Explore the practicalities of establishing a Clean Energy program in Cabot. **VI.2 (c)** Involve local students in projects.	Selectboard/Planning Commission/CCIF Ad hoc energy team/local teachers	Decision made on whether to establish Program Projects with local students developed
VI.3 Promote energy conservation measures in new construction and enhance on-site renewable energy generation opportunities.	**VI.3 (a)** Provide printed information on energy conservation measures and the benefits of third-party certification and audits for Cabot residents and businesses.	Ad hoc energy team/Zoning Administrator	Monitor number of new structures that have been third party-certified for energy efficiency (e.g., Efficiency Vermont)
VI.4 Promote energy conservation in existing buildings.	**VI.4 (a)** Post information on available energy efficiency & weatherization services at Town Clerks office and Town web site.	Ad hoc energy team	Postings
VI.5 Promote access to a regional transportation network (carpool, van pool access, local bus link)	**VI.5 (a)** Maintain a park & ride lot in an appropriate location. **VI.5 (b)** Follow up with GMTA on possibility of extending service up Route 215.	Ad hoc energy team Planning Commission	P&R lot created Increased use of public transportation by local residents
VI.6 Minimize non-renewable energy consumption and promote energy conservation in Cabot School and Town-operated buildings, facilities, and operations (Willey	**VI.6 (a)** Carry out improvements to school buildings, including installation of energy-saving insulation, as recommended in 2008 report by Vermont Superintendents' Association.	School Board	Efficiency of heating plant at school is optimized and requires less input of fuel oil and/or wood chips

Goal	Implementation Strategy	Key Implementer(s)	Future Measures of Progress
Building, Masonic Hall, Town Garage and road maintenance operations, water system, waste water system).	**VI.6 (b)** Use August 2010 municipal energy audit results to continue to implement cost effective recommendations.	Selectboard	Continued investment at all Town facilities.
	VI.6 (e) Base purchasing decisions for Town equipment on life cycle analysis, including fuel costs.	Selectboard	Life cycle cost estimation underway for new equipment purchases.
VI.7 Promote consumption of local food and other local products and services to reduce energy usage.	**VI.7 (a)** Ensure that funding continues for existing Farm-to-School lunch program.	Cabot School/Selectboard	School continues to use local produce for lunch program
	VI.7(b) Use more locally-produced wood chips than oil in the heating plant at Cabot School.	Cabot School	Greater percentage of wood chips than fuel oil used
	VI.7(c) Investigate use of UDAG, CCIF funds to incentivize consumption of local products.	CCIF Committee	Economic incentives in place
VI.8 Continue to develop policy and encourage the use of energy conservation to meet state energy goals in the community. Including development of policy for renewable energy siting	**VI.8 (a)**Promote and provide data to the community to target infrastructure improvements	Selectboard, Planning Commission, CVRPC	Increase Town's use of renewable resources, to meet state goals.
	VI.8 (b) Identify areas suitable for installation of renewable energy develop policy consistent with conservation and land use goals		Meet requirements for substantial deference

VII. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

A. Introduction

A "Healthy Economy" was indicated by residents as the number one factor for economic development. Economic health at the local level can be greatly affected by various factors, including how a community plans for infrastructure improvements, how it invests in its public and recreational spaces, and how it retains the unique scenic and historical features that create a distinct sense of place. These factors can impact Cabot's ability to retain and sustain existing businesses as well as attract new ones.

Downtown development, the intent of which is to encourage public and private investment in infrastructure, housing, historic preservation, transportation and human services in downtown areas in order to support an economically strong downtown. Cabot benefits from a compact, historic village center that is home to a mix of businesses. Cabot also has several productive home-based businesses which rely on the public road infrastructure to both get their goods to markets and allow customers to visit their place of business.

Whether and how to promote economic growth was a pivotal question during Cabot's Visioning Meeting. While growth is sometimes considered a measure of a healthy community and economy, efficient connections among people and goods and services within the community are perhaps more important to maintain a healthy local economy. A Village center that enables residents and visitors to access services and businesses with minimal transportation needs can facilitate these connections.

Census 2010 data shows that Cabot grew in both population and housing from 2000 to 2010. While all of Washington County experienced a population growth of only 2.6% in the last 10 years, Cabot's population increased by 18.1% to 1,433 residents. While housing growth county-wide was 8.3%, the number of units in Cabot rose 21.6%, bringing Cabot's total housing count to 771 units. .

Growth in Cabot represents both opportunities and challenges. The goal of the Town Plan is to guide growth in a way that supports the local quality of life.

B. Existing Conditions

Existing Businesses/Employers

Cabot has one large employer, the Cabot Creamery, founded in 1919. It joined the Agri-Mark Cooperative in 1992. Approximately 1,100 dairy farm families in New England and New York supply Agri-Mark, which markets 40% of the milk in New England. The Cabot plant is one of three, employing approximately 350 workers, 7% of which are Cabot residents. Its specialties are cheese, cottage cheese, sour cream, yogurt, and butter. The best-known product sold under the Cabot brand is traditional cheddar cheese, which has won many prizes, including World's Best Cheddar. Much of this cheddar is aged in the Cabot warehouse and wrapped in the packing plant.

Cabot's smaller retail businesses include a general store, a hardware store, several auto repair businesses, two hairdressers, professional offices, and landscaping and garden suppliers.,

The Cabot public school employs a total of approximately 50 full and part time people, of which one-third are local residents, including teaching, administrative, maintenance, and food service staff.

Home-based businesses include skilled tradesmen, artisans, crafts people, a bed and breakfast, several building trades contractors, several day care centers and summer camps.

Agriculture

Cabot residents have ranked farms and farming as an important community issue, including the development of value added agriculture and farm based businesses. Agriculture has been identified as a critical component of a sustainable economy, not only in Cabot but state-wide. The state's historical agrarian base, the recognition of the Vermont brand as a mark of quality, and Vermont's proximity to over 38 million consumers within a 200 mile radius have been identified as factors which support the growth of agriculture as a driving force in the State's economic development plan.

When asked to help the Cabot Planning Commission prioritize planning issues, respondents to the 2010 Community Planning Survey ranked retention of farms as the number one issue. In keeping with Cabot's agricultural roots, many businesses have strong ties to the land. There are agriculture operations in Cabot, from dairy farms to horticultural operations. Maple syrup is also an agricultural staple, with approximately 12 sugaring operations in Town.

In February of 2011, surveys were sent to approximately 30 farm businesses in Town. Questions were asked regarding the amount of land the farmers owned or leased, what kinds of products they produced, and whether they perceived any obstacles in the form of land use regulations to their farming business. Of the 30 farmers sent surveys, 13 completed surveys were returned. Of those who responded, a majority (8) farmed on 100 acres or more, 6 producing dairy products. Other products included Maple syrup, poultry, beef, fruits, vegetables, animal feed and forest products. A majority (11) sold their products directly from the farm, and only one respondent sold goods at a farmers market. There were none which sold goods through community supported agriculture (CSA).

Tourism

Cabot's rural setting, working farms, historic sites, and recreational resources are attractions that have the potential to bring more tourists to the area to support the local economy. (See also Historic Resources section)

The Cabot Creamery, besides being a large employer in Town, is also an important four-season attraction.

Cabot has approximately 28 miles of snowmobile trails that are part of the Vermont Association of Snowmobile Travelers (VAST) statewide network. A main corridor or this network intersects

with Cabot's downtown Main Street. The 157 snowmobile clubs in Vermont have 27,000 members. Cabot Skylighters is the local snowmobile club.

Connection to the rail trail system, biking for ride ridges local events and Molly's Falls Farm State Park are new additions. There is also a winter trail system, maintained by Cabot's volunteer Recreation Department. Some of this network overlaps with the VAST trail system, providing access for non-motorized use. Portions of these trails are available for hiking all year. These trails, most of which are located on private property through access agreements with the property owners, have the potential to bring economic activity to the town as users of the trail system buy goods and services in their travels through Cabot.

Local activities, such as the 4th of July parade, the Apple Pie Festival, and the Cabot Maple Festival are important annual events that benefit the local economy, bringing people and economic activity to town.

Center for an Agricultural Economy

The Hardwick-based Center for an Agricultural Economy and its offshoot, the Vermont Food Venture Center (VFVC), are valuable nearby resources that are supportive of agricultural businesses. The VFVC is a shared-use kitchen incubator for value-added and specialty food producers who can rent the kitchen on an hourly basis or arrange for co-packing at the facility. The Center's staff provides food and agricultural business consulting services to aspiring entrepreneurs, existing food businesses and organizations looking to promote food businesses as an economic development tool. The mission of VFVC is "to provide professional food processing opportunities to regional agricultural producers in a way that increases the value of that agricultural production, adds living wage jobs, strengthens Vermont's local food network, and further integrates the agricultural economy into the life of the Hardwick community."

New Farmer Projects

Another valuable program is the New Farmer Project that is run by the University of Vermont Extension. The program offers many informational classes and resources for starting farmers, including how to start a business. It also provides a connection between land owners and farmers. The website for the project, http://www.uvm.edu/newfarmer/, has information on farming jobs, funding opportunities, and includes the comprehensive "Resource Guide for Vermont's New and Aspiring Farmers."

Programs and Resources

Below are a few key community resources for community economic planning and support in Cabot. There are also many non-profit organizations and foundations that provide grants for projects related to economic development, such as the Vermont Community Foundation. Sources of funding specifically for infrastructure improvements, such as bike and pedestrian paths, are discussed in the Transportation section of this Plan. Most funding sources will require that the proposed project is consistent with the adopted Town Plan.

Small Business Administration/ Vermont Small Business Development Center

The Vermont Small Business Development Center supports new business creation and existing small business growth and maintenance through no-cost confidential advisement, training, financial analysis tools, and strategic assessment. It also offers training for entrepreneurs to plan for sustainable, value-added agriculture businesses.

Village Center Designation

The goal of Village Center Designation by the State is to encourage local efforts to revitalize Vermont's traditional village centers. It is based on the recognition that economically strong downtowns are critical to the health and well-being of Vermont's communities. The program recognizes the need for reasonable access to them by workers, residents and visitors. The program also recognizes the need for assistance to municipalities for downtown transportation infrastructure, particularly parking facilities.

Benefits of program participation include various tax credits for owners of commercial and residential rental property to assist with rehabilitation and code improvements for older and historic buildings located within the designated center. Government and religious buildings, as well as single-family residences are not eligible for the credits. However, applicants who are otherwise eligible for the credit, but do not have the tax liability to use a tax credit can sell the credit to a bank in exchange for cash.

Cabot Community Investment Fund, - Urban Development Action Grant

Cabot's Urban Development Action Grant (UDAG) fund is an important source of funding that can be used to provide financial incentives to help realize the Town's economic development goals. UDAG provides both grants and loans, and can be used as a source of matching funds when outside grants are sought. As a locally-controlled source of funds, UDAG funding can be more flexible than outside funding sources. UDAG is overseen by the Cabot Community Investment Fund (CCIF).

The purpose of the Cabot UDAG Plan is to provide financial resources through fair and consistent processes to local individuals and groups for activities and projects that serve to strengthen the economic, cultural, educational, environmental, and social well-being of the Cabot community. UDAG achieves this purpose in two ways: through loans and grants.

- *Loans*. In 2006 the UDAG Plan was amended to create an Economic Development Loan (EDL) program, in partnership with the Union Bank. Under the EDL, Cabot residents who successfully apply to the Union Bank for loans to start or expand businesses in Cabot receive a discount on their interest of 2% for three to five years, the discount to be paid out of the earnings of the UDAG Trust. The subsidy is conditional upon the borrower's faithful monthly payments and terminates upon any default.
- *Grants*. A portion of each year's UDAG Trust earnings is made available for grants to community groups, including the municipal wastewater system, the Willey Building,

Cabot Commons Senior Residence, the Masonic Hall and Cabot School, as approved by the Town Meeting.

In 2010, voters approved changes to the UDAG Plan at Town Meeting. New provisions included expansion of the Scholarship Endowment to allow for more generous awards, the allowance of businesses in Cabot owned by non-residents to apply for subsidized loans under the Economic Development Loan Program, and the ability of voters at Town Meeting to appropriate funds for public purposes outside the limits of the Plan. In addition, the 2010 revised Plan requires recipients of UDAG grants to seek local suppliers of goods and services, and it creates a Development Fund to support local planning initiatives.

Municipal Planning Grants

Municipal Planning Grants (MPG) are a source of State funds available to Towns with a confirmed plan. These grants can fund projects such as downtown development plans, feasibility studies, and the development of design guidelines.

C. Planning Considerations

New Businesses

The Cabot Community Planning Survey conducted in June 2010 asked residents what new businesses were needed in town. Over 50 percent of respondents indicated that an eatery of some type was needed in Town. Several residents suggested that new local businesses market locally-sourced goods or products, and several pointed to the need for a bank in town. Other suggestions included a laundromat, chiropractor, drug store, book store, bed and breakfast, barber shop, and a bike repair shop.

Village Center Designation

Village Center designation by the State will help forward the goal of revitalizing Cabot's downtown commercial areas while preserving Cabot's historic fabric it provides financial incentives to owners of income-producing properties in Cabot to restore their buildings.

Downtown Parking

Multimodal forms of transportation will be encouraged and accommodated through design of infrastructure improvements and new construction in the proposed Village Center district. (See Land Use and Transportation sections of Plan.) One of the key infrastructure improvements needed that is directly related to the vitality of the business district is a public parking area that is linked to sidewalks and access points to public transportation. Since it is difficult for businesses seeking to expand to provide on-site parking, and since on-site parking can be disruptive to the safe flow of pedestrian traffic, the use of a "fee in lieu of parking" program should be investigated, whereby business owners provide a fee per space to a local public parking fund used for the maintenance of a public parking area. (See Transportation section for more details about the development of municipal parking)

The Local Agricultural Economy

In 2009, the *Vermont Sustainable Jobs Fund* (VSJF) identified ways to increase economic development in Vermont's food and farm sector. The resulting Farm-to-Plate (F2P) Strategic Plan identifies 33 goals associated with the task of strengthening local and regional food systems. The report highlights 51 objectives and 59 related strategies that are of highest priority in forwarding these goals. In addition to encouraging the establishment of farm-to-school programs, which Cabot has done, the following two strategies identified in the F2P Plan can be effected at the municipal level:

- More school farms and gardens: Promote and support the existence of working farms, or larger-scale production gardens, at high schools and career and technical education centers.

- Planning and zoning: Review and update zoning ordinances to ensure, to the greatest extent possible, that prime agricultural soils are conserved for agricultural use.

To access the complete F2P strategic plan, go to http:www.vsjf.org/project-details/5/farm-to-plate-initiative.

The Vermont Food Venture Center (VFVC) in Hardwick is a new resource to support, facilitate, and advance a sustainable agricultural economy in the region. The VFVC, operated by the Center for an Agricultural Economy is a "kitchen" incubator and food processing facility to support value added agricultural products. Three certified commercial kitchens are available for rent by the hour or day and include a bakery, a wet-pack room for jarring and canning, and a dry-pack room for packaging uncooked food items. Food start-up businesses can also take advantage of professional production assistance provided by on-site staff.

Community and Economic Development Coordination

In early 2011, the Cabot Coalition facilitated meetings of community organizations to explore ways to collaborate and share information. At these meetings, interest was expressed in forming a committee to formulate a community and economic development plan and identify strategies and initiatives to create a more vibrant, healthy, and sustainable community that fosters a strong local economy. The Cabot Coalition was identified as a key partner in this effort, since it is a long established organization in the community, has a centralized office, and publishes the Cabot Chronicle.

Since this time, a nascent community and economic development committee has continued to meet monthly to define its mission and organizational structure, while also pursuing some short-term projects like a business locator map for tourists visiting the Cabot Creamery and the Town. Grant applications for community development projects have also been submitted. It is anticipated that this committee will assume a leading role in economic development initiatives to carry out the goals of this Plan.

Growth and Its Impacts

By regulating residential growth in agricultural areas, population growth has a greater potential to benefit the local economy. Channeling growth to the village center areas and creating better

connections between residential, recreational, civic and commercial uses enables population growth while retaining farmland and open space. Living in the "downtown" village center will be more appealing if the Town invests in public spaces, including landscaping in public rights of way, safe routes for walking and biking, and well-situated parking areas (including bike parking) for those visiting the downtown areas.

D. Goals and Implementation Strategies

Goal	Implementation Strategy	Key implementer(s)	Future Measures of Progress
VII.1 Create and promote economic opportunities for businesses and other organizations to succeed.	**VII.1(a)** Develop a community and economic development plan with short-term and long-term strategies to achieve the vision and goals.	Cabot Community Association, Planning Commission, CCIF	Establishment of a standing group with active membership
VII.2 Encourage the development of new pedestrian-friendly and appropriately-scaled commercial establishments, in the village center.	**VII.2(a)** Create a Village Vitalization Plan that addresses pedestrian access, parking, and traffic calming infrastructure in the village center to provide for increased connectivity between residential uses, public parking areas and commercial, civic, and recreational uses. **VII.2(b)** Promote Village Center Designation through Vermont Downtown Program as a way to create economic incentives for commercial redevelopment and revitalization in the downtown areas.	Planning Commission Selectboard Cabot Community Association, Highway Planning Commission/ Selectboard/ Community and Economic Development Committee	Village Vitalization is developed Village Center designation discussions in progress
VII.3 Improve the physical attractiveness of the village center business district and preserve the Town green/common as the visual centerpiece of community life.	**VII.3(a)** To be addressed in Village Vitalization Plan.	Planning Commission	Village Vitalization Plan Developed

Goal	Implementation Strategy	Key implementer(s)	Future Measures of Progress
VII.4 Capitalize on Town's scenic, recreational, and historic resources to draw new customers to local businesses.	**VII.4(a)** Maintain and expand four-season trail system that connects to village center and public parking areas through the creation of a master plan and supported through grant funds.	Planning Commission/ Recreation Committee	Village Vitalization plan for trails created
	VII.4(b) Identify locations for bicycle routes throughout Town, undertake infrastructure improvements to improve safety, and create a bike parking area in village center.	Planning Commission/ Recreation Committee/ Consulting engineer/ Selectboard	Bicycle routes mapped Bike racks installed in village center
	VII.4(c) Create a printed, self-guided walking/biking tour of historic resources.	Recreation Committee/ Historical	Walking/biking tour of historic resources created.
VII.5 Retain working farms and agriculture-based businesses as a key component of the Town's economic base.	See Land Use section for multiple strategies designed to achieve this goal	Planning Commission	Inventory of farms remains stable Number of agri-based businesses grow
VII.6 Promote consumption of local food and other local products and services to reduce energy usage.	**VII.6(a)** Ensure that funding continues for existing Farm-to-School lunch program.	Cabot School/Selectboard	School continues to use local produce for lunch program
	VII.6(b) Use more locally-produced wood chips than oil in the heating plant at Cabot School.	Cabot School	Greater percentage of wood chips than fuel oil used
	VII.6(c) Investigate use of UDAG funds to incentivize consumption of local products.	CCIF Committee	Economic incentives in place

VIII. TRANSPORTATION

A. Introduction

The transportation infrastructure in Cabot is assessed in regard to the adequacy of the roadways for handling vehicle traffic, and for its ability to provide for other modes of travel, including pedestrian and bicycle routes. Well-maintained routes, serving motor vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians are important to establish connections between the rural areas of Town and the Village Center. Also important are connections of local roads to the principle arterial road, U.S. Route 2 and VT Route 15, which provides for interregional travel needs.

Good transportation routes have a bearing on the local economy. Local retail business owners depend on well-maintained routes, as well as adequate parking areas, to attract business. The local agricultural industry is also dependent on a good road system, since farmers depend on them to get their products to markets -- or allow customers access to their farm.

A well-planned multi-modal transportation infrastructure that provides connections to alternative transportation options, such as ride-share programs and public transportation, encourages a reduction in the number of single-occupant vehicle trips, having a positive impact on energy conservation and creating more bicycle- and pedestrian- friendly roadways.

Finally, a safe pedestrian infrastructure is particularly vital in the village area of Cabot, where it makes sense to walk rather than drive from home or place of business to schools, recreational facilities, stores, post office and Town Hall.

B. Existing Conditions

Existing Road System

Cabot has approximately 64.78 linear miles of public roadways, 18 miles paved and approximately 46.19 gravel surfaced roadway. The Town is responsible for the maintenance of approximately 58.22 miles of roadway.

The amount of road in each of four classifications is listed in Table VIII – 1 below. (See also Map 3 in Appendix B.)

Route 215 is the main north-south corridor in Town, extending from the Town of Walden in the north to the Town of Marshfield in the south. It is "Main Street" when it passes through the Cabot Village, and is also the main thoroughfare passing through Lower Cabot. The speed limit on Route 215 ranges from 25 M.P.H. in Cabot Village to 50 M.P.H. north and south of the main village area.

Much of U.S. Route 2 in Cabot is scenic, providing long views of forested areas, cultivated fields, and pastureland. The land adjacent to Route 2 in Cabot is sparsely developed, and all of the land is zoned either "Low Density Residential and Agricultural" or "Shoreland" (a small section along Route 2

currently zoned Medium Density Developed District is proposed to be eliminated – see Land Use section).

Plans for the widening and repaving of the stretch of Route 2 that lies in Cabot have been completed by VTrans and work has recently begun, the first phase is complete the final two sections are in process and a completion date has not been determined .

Table VIII - 1
Existing Road System

Road Class	Road names	Condition	Linear Miles
State/Federal Highways	U.S. Route 2	paved	6.2
	Route 232	paved	0.4
	TOTAL		**6.6**
Class 2 Highways	State Aid Hwy #1 (Route 215)	paved	6.8
	State Aid Hwy #2 (South Walden Rd)	paved	3.9
	State Aid Hwy #3 (West Hill Pond Rd/ Cabot Rd)	gravel	2.9
	State Aid Hwy #4 (Danville Hill Rd)	gravel	3.5
	TOTAL		**17.1**
Class 3 Highways	Various roads	gravel	
	TOTAL		**41.2**
Class 4 Highways and Trails	Various roads	varies	7.4
	Legal trails	varies	4.5
	TOTAL		**11.9**

Cabot is continuing work on culvert replacement throughout the town, various Hazard mitigation projects have been completed and others are in process with federal assistance for larger scale projects. These projects are at locations damaged during the storm events of 2011. Since the last Town Plan in 2012, an inventory of culverts was completed in 2013. Culverts are being inspected, upgraded, and added as necessary to ensure that erosion problems are minimized. Act 64 the states clean water act will provide a new range of challenges to the Town, implementation of new permit requirements, revisions in road standards and alterations in best practices from driveway connections to Town infrastructure to sizing of culverts to allow for stormwater passage. Changes at the local level in how stormwater should be managed, diversion and filtration rather than the traditional ditch and carry it, will impact how resilient our infrastructure can be. Best management practices are already altering how our infrastructure rebounds from more frequent storm situations,.

Classes of Town Highways

Class 2 Town highways are primarily the responsibility of the Town. The state is responsible for center line pavement markings if the Town notifies the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans) of the need to replace them. Any designation of a highway as a Class 2 must be approved by VTrans.

Class 3 Town highways are the responsibility of the Town. The minimum standard for class 3 highway is a roadway that is passable under normal conditions year-round, including maintenance of sufficient surface and base, adequate drainage and sufficient width to provide winter maintenance. If a class 3 highway is not maintained to this standard, it may be deemed "Not Up To Standard" and subject to removal of state aid for the affected road mileage.

Class 4 Town highways include pent roads (public roads that may be gated by permission of the governing body). The Town's responsibility for these roads is limited to maintenance of drainage structures (bridges and culverts). Legal trails, designated through legal proceedings, are not Class 4 town highways.

Residents can petition the Town to request that a road be reclassified. The Town's governing body may also act on its own motion without a petition. Before taking action on reclassification, a hearing must be held on the proposal, and a decision should be made by the governing body within 60 days after the hearing. The Town has developed a class four road policy for management and is developing new driveway standards.

Existing Pedestrian Facilities

In Cabot Village, a sidewalk extends on the northwest side of Main Street (Rt. 215 North) from the Masonic Hall to just before the intersection of Main Street with Elm Street. On the southeast side of Main Street a second sidewalk with crosswalk exists in front of the Willey Building extending to the rear accessible entryway. Two crosswalks are identified in the upper portion of Main Street by the school with signs and pavement markings, and a fourth crosswalk is marked in front of the Cabot Creamery. Extension of the walking trails thru a shared bicycle – walking trail to the lower recreation field south of Main Street is planned, as is replacement of the sidewalk from the Masonic Hall to the upper recreation field at the North end of the Village.

Public Transportation

The Green Mountain Transit (GMT) provide weekday commuter service along Route 2 from St. Johnsbury to Montpelier with regular stops in Danville, Marshfield, Plainfield, and East Montpelier. Busses will stop for passengers in other locations when it is safe to do so. There are currently no scheduled stops on Route 2 in Cabot, the two closest stops being the Danville Park & Ride and the Old Schoolhouse Common in Marshfield.

Air and Rail Travel

Cabot currently has no local access to air or rail travel within our community, residents need to travel to larger geographic centers to access these services.

Commuting

Cabot has developed a Park and Ride at the Masonic Hall on Main Street, usage by residents for carpooling is encouraged. This lot also provides additional parking in the village area of Town and overflow parking for community and school activities. Table VIII – 2 below shows recent five-year estimates for vehicle use, carpooling and use of public transportation by working Cabot residents, as compared to workers throughout Washington County. Possible exploration on a second Park and Ride location outside of the Village on Route 2 along the route 2 commuter route is being explored.

A significantly greater percentage of workers in Cabot worked from home as compared to workers throughout Washington County (18% vs. 7.9%). No workers in Cabot used public transportation to travel to work, although a slightly greater percentage carpooled in Cabot than county-wide (10.2% vs. 9.7%). The majority of Cabot workers (65%) drove alone to work. That figure county-wide was 74.8%.

The Census Bureau's 5-year estimates indicate that a sizable percentage of Cabot workers – about 25% - walk to work or work at home. County-wide, only about 15% of workers walked or used non-motorized means to get to work, or worked from home; statewide, this figure was only 14%.

Table VIII – 2

COMMUTING TO WORK

	Cabot		Washington County	
	Number	**Percent**	**Number**	**Percent**
Workers 16 years and over	665	100%	32,091	100%
Car, truck, or van -- drove alone	432	65.0%	23,989	74.8%
Car, truck, or van -- carpooled	68	10.2%	3,119	9.7%
Public transportation (excluding taxicab)	0	0.0%	247	0.8%
Walked	45	6.8%	1,999	6.2%
Other means	0	0.0%	197	0.6%
Worked at home	120	18.0%	2,540	7.9%
Mean travel time to work (minutes)	26.0	---	21.2	---

Source: 2005-2009 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Recreational trail system

The Cabot Recreation Committee maintains a winter trail system for use by non-motorized travel (e.g., snowshoers, cross country skiers) by agreement with private property owners. The trail system provides access to scenic resources and open space as well as a connection to the center of Town. Portions of the winter trail are also available for use other times of year. The "Old Center Loop" is a four-season trail which starts and ends behind the Willey building, and extends up to Old Center Road. A portion of this loop which extends along Glinka Road is also a VAST (Vermont Association of Snow Travelers) trail and permits snow machines. This loop connects to a trail system extending to Dubray Road. There is also a winter trail system located in the western section of Town extending from Beaver Brook Farm to Woodbury Road. The new Lamoille Rail Trail system now has several sections open. A portion of this trail network passes thru the northeastern portion of Cabot near Joes Pond. This trail system will provide expanded recreational activities. (See Recreation section of Plan for more information.) In addition to its recreational value, the trail system, particularly the section that provides connection to the center of Town, has the potential to increase local economic activity.

Signage

Cabot has participated in the High Risk Rural Roads program for new signage on Vermont 215 from the Marshfield Town line to Walden, new signage will be installed in 2017 under this program. A signage policy for development and placement of informational and highway signs is under consideration with recent revisions to the Towns Traffic ordinance and requirements for signage maintenance programs. Radar control speed signs have also been installed within the village along 215.

Existing Policy, Programs, Resources and Funding

Local Regulations.

The Town has adopted road and bridge standards pertaining to the construction of all new roads in Town, even if the road is not proposed to be conveyed to the Town. These standards specify the surface and drainage requirements and erosion control measures required during road construction. The standards do not currently specify road width or other design standards.

Existing local regulations pertaining to use of town highways include the requirement for loggers to pay a $500 refundable deposit for a log landing within the public right-of-way, to cover any road damage caused by truck and equipment traffic. In addition, permits are required for the construction of new driveways.

State Policies.

The State of Vermont in 2012 authorized "Complete Streets" legislation to ensure that the needs of all users of Vermont's transportation system—including motorists, bicyclists, public transportation users,

and pedestrians of all ages and abilities—are considered in all state and municipally managed transportation projects and project phases, including planning, development, construction, and maintenance, except in the case of projects or project components involving unpaved highways. These "complete streets" principles shall be integral to the transportation policy of Vermont. A wide variety of grant programs such as "the Bicycle and Pedestrian Program, Transportation alternatives and Safe routes to School" are funded to support these are funded to help fulfill these objectives.

The Clean Water Act, (Act 64) passed in 2014, will have a direct impact on transportation infrastructure. Towns will be required to develop erosion control and stormwater plans for their highway system. New State permits will be required for municipalities and phased in over the next 2-3 years. The state will be providing regional planning with funding to help support municipalities in development and implement these plans and provide required technical assistance.

Funding Sources.

A source of funding available specifically for trails systems is the Recreation Trails Program (RTP), a federal assistance program of the Federal Highway Administration that provides funding for the development and maintenance of recreation trails, trailside amenities, and trailhead facilities. Both motorized and non-motorized trail projects may qualify for assistance. The program is administered at the state level through the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation, in cooperation with the VTrans.

Municipal Planning Grants are also available to fund a variety of projects, including capital improvement plans for transportation. The Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission offers assistance to communities like Cabot seeking grant funds for transportation infrastructure improvements.

State Programs.

VTRANS administers and supports a wide range of Highway Grants and programs including planning grants for project development design and construction.

These programs include Better Roads Grants, Class 2 paving grants, Structures grants and others previously listed in this section

. State Aid for Town Highways

State aid to town highways is based on the mileage of Class 1, 2 and 3 Town highways. The state appropriation is apportioned among the different classes of roads, with 6% going to Class 1 roads, 44% going to Class 2 roads, and 50% going to Class 3 roads. The planned use of these funds, as well as local funds (which must be at least $300 per mile of roadway), must be detailed to the state in an

annual Town Plan for the maintenance and construction of all highways under the Town's control for the following year.

C. Planning Considerations

Safety

Traffic speed on class 2 highways and back roads are a safety concern, particularly on narrow roads with no shoulders. In the Village, signage, traffic calming infrastructure, and/or better enforcement of the speed limit would improve pedestrian safety. The extension of sidewalks on the southeast side of Main Street, in front of the Cabot School, would improve safety. Signs identify a school zone with a posted speed limit of 25 MPH.

A 2011 traffic study was conducted in Cabot village addressing traffic volume and speed. Northbound peak traffic occurred between 2:00 and 3:00 p.m.; 17.8% of vehicles travelled in excess of 30 MPH and highest recorded speed of 61-65 MPH. Southbound peak traffic occurred between 2:00 and 3:00 p.m.; 12.6% of vehicles travelled in excess of 30 MPH with highest recorded speed of 55-60 MPH. The highest volume of speeding traffic occurred in both directions in the mid-afternoon hours. In general traffic speeds thru the village have decreased over 32.4% northbound and 17.4% southbound.

Signage

Existing and new signage will need to meet current standards for retroreflectivity.

Access/connectivity

Bike and pedestrian access by children to the recreation fields in both upper and lower Cabot Village is not adequate, and poses a safety concern. In particular, the bridge near the intersection of Route 215 and South Walden Road that must be traversed to reach the recreational fields from the Cabot School is too narrow to provide for safe pedestrian or bicycle access.

Given that almost 50% of fossil fuel use in Vermont is attributed to transportation, non-motorized transportation such as walking and biking should be encouraged in town planning considerations.

Road Standards

With Act 64 (clean water act) new standards to control stormwater runoff and road maintenance standards will be implemented. Stormwater permitting at the town level will be put into place over the next 2 years. The lack of standards that specify road width and other design considerations in the construction of new roads and access driveways in Town are problematic. At issue are concerns regarding access by emergency vehicles, and minimizing impervious surfaces and clearing of natural vegetation to avoid excessive storm water runoff. Road standards that assure safe access, minimize impacts to the environment, and preserve the historic characteristic of the Town need to be developed and adopted by the Town.

Continued development of the class IV road policy and driveway guidelines to meet new act 64 requirements are important considerations for maintaining and protecting Town Infrastructure.

Scenic Roads

The State has a program for designation of scenic roads (19 V.S.A. Section 2502) that the Town may be able to take advantage of. Designation as a scenic road ensures that the scenic qualities of the road are preserved or enhanced. Currently Cabot does not have any roads waterways or views that have been identified as "scenic" by the Town.

Parking

Village parking for businesses, residential, and community functions is limited. The school also faces parking pressures. One of the land use goals identified in this Town Plan is to encourage additional residential and commercial development in the village centers. Additional parking facilities, in conjunction with pedestrian linkages and traffic calming measures, should be planned to accommodate such growth.

Since it is difficult for businesses seeking to expand in the Village center to provide on-site parking, and since on-site parking can often be disruptive to the safe flow of pedestrian traffic, the use of a "fee in lieu of parking" program should be investigated, whereby business owners provide a fee per space to a local public parking fund used for the development and maintenance of a public parking area. A public parking lot may also serve as a satellite "park and ride" lot for public transportation, and/or to facilitate carpooling.

Factors to be considered in the location, size and design of a public parking area include:

- Variations in parking need during different times of day
- Connection of parking lot with sidewalks
- Provision of accessible spaces
- Landscaping to protect streetscape and provide buffer to absorb storm water runoff
- Design that is conducive to maintenance, including snow removal
- Separation of bike parking area from car parking area by use of a buffer, for safety reasons.

Public Transportation

Expanded access to public transportation could benefit Cabot residents who commute to work, reducing the number of commuters driving alone. The feasibility of extending public transportation up Route 215 to Cabot Village should be explored or a location along route 2.

Training

The Town should take full advantage of training and assistance provided by State and regional agencies such as the Vermont Local Roads Program on issues such as erosion control, road drainage

improvements, tree and brush removal, and best practices for road maintenance, including roads adjacent to environmentally sensitive areas.

Capital Improvement Program

A long-range plan for the improvement and maintenance of the Town's transportation infrastructure, should be included in the development of a Capital Improvement Program and budget to implement the program. (See also "Community Utilities, Facilities and Services" section of Plan.)

Flood Resiliency

Storm water discharge from Town structures and highways cannot discharge into waters of the state. Disconnection of existing transportation infrastructure, stormwater systems and improvements to best management practices to improve the ability of the Towns transportation infrastructure to shed stormwater rapidly into filtration areas rather than into the watershed is a key goal for flood resiliency. Proper planning implementation and maintenance of existing structures, replacement of undersized structures and management of erosion prone areas will not only improve water quality but in the long run lessen the maintenance burden for Town infrastructure. Reconnection of rivers to floodplains along roadways when replacing infrastructure and properly coordinating and sizing infrastructure to handle flood conditions are key goals.

The Town has relocated the Town Garage facility out of the flood plain and reconnected the former garage site to the river as a stormwater filtration area to mitigate floodwaters thru the village. The Town has also completed two Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) projects, is working on two additional culvert replacement HMGP projects with a dam removal project also in process. The Better roads program has also provided funding for a Bank stabilization project and two culvert replacement projects where road washouts were the norm. Continued utilization of mitigation funding should be a tool to continue to maintain and improve municipal infrastructure. These items identified within the Town's Hazard Mitigation Plan provide access to a wide variety of grant and state funding.

The Cabot Hazard Mitigation Plan and Local Emergency Operations Plan are two documents the Town has committed to updating and implementing. Both are important resources that provide important resources, and that address concerns related to a wide variety of Hazards not just flooding.

C. Goals and Implementation Strategies

Goal	Implementation Strategy	Key implementer(s)	Future Measures of Progress
VIII.1 Establish safe routes between residential and commercial/ civic/recreational uses in the village area, thereby making it more	**VIII.1 (a)** Create a Village Vitalization Plan that addresses pedestrian access, parking, and traffic calming infrastructure in the village area to provide for increased connectivity between residential and commercial/ civic	Planning Commission/ Selectboard/Ad hoc Committee appointed by Selectboard	Creation of Master Plan

Goal	Implementation Strategy	Key implementer(s)	Future Measures of Progress
pedestrian and business-friendly.	uses/recreational uses.		
	VIII.1 (b) Maintain a capital improvement plan (CIP) and budget with estimated costs, based on the above master plan.	Planning Commission/ Selectboard	CIP maintained
	VIII.1 (c) Seek grant funds to accomplish infrastructure improvements.	Planning Commission/ Selectboard	Applications made, Update and maintain Hazard Mitigation Plan
VIII.2 Improve non-motorized access from rural areas of Town to the village areas.	**VIII.2 (a)** Maintain and expand four-season trail system supported through grant funds.	Planning Commission/ Recreation Committee	Master plan for trails created
	VIII.2 (b) Identify locations for bicycle routes throughout Town and undertake infrastructure improvements to improve safety.	Planning Commission/ Consulting engineer/ Selectboard	Improvements planned
	VIII.2 (c) Create and implement plans for the improvement of the bridge on Main Street at the intersection of Rt. 215 and Walden Road in order to make it safe for bicycle and pedestrian use.	Planning Commission/ Consulting engineer/ Selectboard	Improvements planned
VIII.3 Maintain Town road system, and provide for adequate maintenance facilities (i.e., Town Garage), and retain scenic qualities.	**VIII.3 (a)** Investigate and adopt comprehensive standards applicable to the construction of new roads and access driveways..	Town Selectboard/ Planning Commission/ Fire Department	Standards adopted
	VIII.3 (b) Develop a capital improvement program that provides for the routine maintenance of the town road system and transportation infrastructure and equipment.	Planning Commission/ Selectboard	CIP developed
	VIII.3 (c) Explore designation of scenic roads or byways	Planning Commission/ VTrans	Inventory completed of scenic roads with potential for designation
VIII.4 Improve safety on existing roadways.	**VIII.4 (a)** Evaluate adequacy of existing road signage throughout Town and improve as necessary to comply with MUTCD.	Selectboard/Road Commissioner/Ad hoc committee appointed by Select Board	School zone posted; additional signage added as necessary

Goal	Implementation Strategy	Key implementer(s)	Future Measures of Progress
		Selectboard	
	VIII.4 (b) Evaluate and enforce speed limits. Evaluate and replace thru realignment the bridge at the lower end of the Village of Cabot on VT 215 South Evaluate and improve intersections in the village based on recommendations by VTRANS and the village scoping study completed in 2012		Speeding is reduced
VIII.5 Retain the traffic flow efficiency of Route 2 as a valuable interregional travel route, while maintaining its scenic qualities.	**VIII.5 (a)** Review land use regulations, including zoning and new subdivision regulations, for opportunities to incorporate best practices for access management as recommended by VTrans.	Planning Commission	Regulations reviewed and revised if needed
VIII.6 Better utilize existing public transportation system and reduce the distance and number of single-occupant vehicle trips.	**VIII.6 (a)** Explore the feasibility of establishing a park & ride lot in an appropriate location. **VIII.6 (b)** Follow up with GMT on possibility of extending service up Route 215.	Planning Commission/ Selectboard Planning Commission/ Selectboard	Park and Ride lot explored Number of commuting workers utilizing public transportation is > 0
VIII.7 Expand parking in the Village to improve downtown accessibility.	**VIII.7 (a)** Investigate off site public parking locations. **VIII.7 (b)** Investigate financing options such as fee in lieu of parking programs.	Planning Commission /Selectboard/ local businesses Planning Commission/ Selectboard/local businesses	Off-site options identified. Funding mechanisms defined

IX. COMMUNITY FACILITIES, UTILITIES, AND SERVICES

A. Introduction

Cabot's government offices, facilities, services, and utilities play an important role in the health and well-being of Cabot residents. All residents depend, to some extent, on solid waste disposal, police and fire protection, health services, schools, parks, electric power, and the public water supply system. The location and capacity of such systems and services can significantly influence quality of life and where and to what extent growth occurs in the Town. The thoughtful placement, development, and maintenance of infrastructure may guide residential and commercial growth to the most suitable locations in Town, and away from areas where such development may have undesirable impacts.

The following section identifies existing resources and needs.

B. Existing Conditions

1. Town Buildings

The primary Town-owned buildings that directly serve Cabot residents are:
(From north to south)

- Town Garage, the new facility is located at 2691 South Walden Road, the old grader shed will be used for equipment storage and some equipment will remain at the sawmill road facility.
- Town Recreation Building, located on the recreation fields on the west side of South Walden Road at its intersection with Main Street (Rte. 215)
- Masonic Hall, located on the northwest side of Main Street (Rte. 215) a few hundred feet south of its intersection with South Walden Road
- Cabot School Buildings (seven) , located on the southwest side of Main Street just north of the Town Common
- Willey Building , located on the southeast side of Main Street (Rte. 215) between Danville Hill and Glinka Roads
- Firehouse, located on the northwest side of Main Street (Rte. 215) just southwest of its intersection with Elm Street
- Wastewater Treatment Building, located on the north side of Saw Mill Road

- Sawmill Rd storage facility, includes solid Waste Collection and storage, located on the north side of Saw Mill Road

- Old Mill House on Saw Mill Road, currently not in use

2. Town Government

Cabot's Town government offices are located in the Willey Building on Main Street.
The Town of Cabot conducts much of its business at Town Meeting in March. The Town Clerk and Treasurer, Selectpersons, Justices of the Peace, and School Directors are elected by Australian Ballot: all other town officers are nominated and elected at the meeting.

Selectboard.
Cabot has a five-member Selectboard, which is responsible for the general supervision of Town affairs. Among its duties are the enactment of local ordinances, the preparation of an annual budget, the maintenance of Town Roads, real estate and equipment; the appointment of all non-elected positions, and the hiring of all Town employees except the Assistant Town Clerk and the Librarian. The Selectboard also operates the Town wastewater and water systems are operated by a single contractor.

Town Clerk/Treasurer. The offices of Town Clerk and Treasurer are held by a single individual in Cabot, with the help of an assistant. Among the duties of the Town Clerk/Treasurer are recording proceedings of Selectboard meetings, issuing various licenses, recording land records, and keeping account of monies received and paid out by the Town.

Planning Commission. The Planning Commission is a five-member board. Its responsibilities include preparation of the Town Plan and its update every eight years, the preparation and presentation to the Selectboard of bylaws based on the Town Plan, and the review of site plans. The Planning Commission also has a duty to review and approve Planned Residential Developments (see Land Use section for a description of this type of development). The Planning Commission may also prepare and present to the Selectboard a recommended capital budget and program for a period of ten years.

Since the time of the last adopted Town Plan in 2012, the Planning Commission developed a revised zoning bylaws for the Town which were defeated in a town vote in 2016. The Planning Commission will look at reviewing and revising the zoning bylaws in sections based on community input. The Town plan and Hazard mitigation plan will also be reviewed and amended as necessary.

Zoning Board of Adjustment. The Zoning Board of Adjustment consists of seven members and its duties include the review of applications for conditional uses and variances.

Members on both the Planning Commission and the Zoning Board of Adjustment are appointed by the Selectboard.

Zoning Administrator. The position of Zoning Administrator is nominated by the Planning Commission and appointed by the Selectboard. The Zoning Administrator's duties are to approve or deny applications for zoning permits, literally administer the municipal bylaws and enforce the zoning regulations.

Road Commission. Town roads are maintained by a Road Commissioner, appointed by the Selectboard, and a Road Foreman who supervises three employees. The duties of the road crew are to maintain the roads and the road equipment. The Highway Fund budget includes an equipment replacement schedule and a sinking fund which is intended to minimize fluctuations in tax revenue caused by the occasional replacement of plow trucks. The Highway Budget also includes a paving reserve fund that serves as a matching fund for state highway grants.

There are various additional committees and commissions in town that take on particular tasks, including the Conservation Committee (see Natural Resources section) the Recreation Committee (see Recreation subsection below), the Senior Citizens Committee, the Cabot Community Investment Fund (see Economic Development section), the Willey Building Committee, and the Cemetery Commission.

Challenges/Needs Related to Town Government

The Highway Fund budget contains an equipment replacement schedule through 2026. The Town has created written plans for the long term maintenance, replacement, or improvement of its municipal infrastructure. A long-range plan for the improvement and maintenance of the Town's transportation infrastructure, a Capital Improvement Program (CIP) and budget to implement the program. The required content of a capital budget and program is spelled out in 24 V.S.A. Chapter 117. The capital budget and program is a ten-year document: year one is the capital budget for the upcoming fiscal year, and years two through ten are the capital program, or schedule of investments, for the following nine years. The Planning Commission should review and submit annual project recommendations for inclusion in the CIP.

In order to efficiently manage the Town's facilities and departments, undertake the preparation of a CIP, and secure grants to aid in the implementation of a CIP, it is recommended that the Town should explore a Town Manager form of government, and conduct a vote at a future Town Meeting. State statute 24 V.S.A., sections 1235 through 1238 specify the duties of a Town Manager, which include performing most Selectperson's duties, serve as the general purchasing agent, maintain Town buildings and facilities, and act as Road Commissioner, among other duties. It is expected that the efficiencies realized in the management of Town facilities and the

grants that could be secured by such an individual would pay for the cost of establishing and maintaining this position.

While Cabot benefits from a privately-maintained website at http://cabotvt.us/, the Town's key information services would be best served through a dedicated, up-to-date and user-friendly site. With that is a need for a system to assure that scheduled meetings of the Selectboard and various town committees are accurately noticed, and that the most recent versions of important Town documents are posted. This will aid in the transparency of, and participation in, local government.

The Town is considering the feasibility and advantages of creating a Development Review Board (DRB) to replace the existing Zoning Board of Adjustment.

3. Ambulance Services, Fire Protection, and Emergency Planning

Cabot Emergency Ambulance Service, Inc. is an independent non-profit ambulance service that serves Cabot, Marshfield, and Peacham Pond. The Ambulance Service is housed with the Cabot Fire Department in the firehouse on Main Street. In 2015 Cabot responded to 168 calls for service. Most patients are transferred to the Central Vermont Medical Center. The Ambulance Service is supported with donations, appropriations from the towns of Cabot and Marshfield, and insurance reimbursements for services. There is currently one ambulance in service.

The Ambulance Service depends on volunteers. As of August, 2015, the active roster comprised 4 Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT) basic level, 4 Advanced Emergency Medical Technicians (AEMT) at the advanced level, 1 Emergency Medical Responder (EMR) at the first responder level, 2 EMR students that are CPR certified, 1 third rider at the CPR level and 2 administrative staff. There are 2 AEMTs that are auxiliary members whose primary service is Plainfield FAST. A third AEMT who has family in Cabot and lives in Barre remains on the roster so he may respond when he is in the area from time to time. They occasionally will assist with transport when AEMT level care is needed, however they are seldom available. Paramedic Intercept Service contracts are set up with Barre Town EMS, Barre City Fire & Ambulance, and Calex Ambulance who will respond to our calls if paramedic level care is needed.

The Cabot Ambulance has identified the following challenges:

1. When the Cabot Ambulance is unable to respond to emergency calls because of personnel shortages, the Barre Town Ambulance is dispatched, adding fifteen to thirty minutes of travel time to the hospital. Cabot Ambulance has a contract with Barre and pays per use. Weekdays, when many people work out of town, are a critical time of volunteer shortage. The Cabot Ambulance has discussed this concern with the Select board and has discussed other options if volunteers cannot be found: (1) Pay up to two

trained persons to be on-call with the Cabot Ambulance for at least 8 hours per day, or (2) contract out ambulance services with Cabot Ambulance downgrading to a First Response level service only (no transport capability). These options are both significantly more expensive than the current system. An ambulance working group has been formed and working to find a solution to the low volunteerism and talking about the preceding options.

2. Legislation passed in 2010 requires a significant increase in training hours for all EMS providers. The result is that it is considerably harder to find local volunteers that can commit to this service.

The Cabot Fire Department is overseen by a Fire Chief, who manages 18 volunteer firefighters, who are on call at all times to respond to fire emergencies. Cabot is a member of the Capitol Fire Mutual Aid System, which includes all of the towns in Washington County and some surrounding communities. Cabot has automatic response agreements with Marshfield, Plainfield and Walden. Currently ten members of the department are certified in State of Vermont Fire Training. In a typical year, the Fire Department responds to around eighty calls, less than half of which are for Cabot emergencies, with the remainder being mutual aid calls. Generally, more than half of the calls are fire-related, with the rest related to traffic accidents.

In addition to responding to emergencies, the Fire Chief provides guidance to the Selectboard, the Planning Commission, and other Town committees on fire safety matters. This includes site review for new residential and commercial developments.

The Cabot Fire Station was constructed in 1962 with two bays; a lean-to section was added in 1970. Two additional bays were added in 1992, making a total of four bays. The Cabot Ambulance is housed in one of the four bays. The Fire department is actively searching for a new site to allow for expansion of the facility to meet current needs.

The Department is I.S.O. certified (at the present time "8," with "1" being the best and "10" the worst.) The fire department's goal is to get the rating down to a "3" which would result in structures within a three-mile radius of the qualifying for reduced fire insurance rates. One of the Strategies to lower this rating is to install more dry hydrants in Cabot. New hydrants have been installed at the new Town garage on South Walden RD with additional locations being sought on Danville Hill Road and VT Route 215 North.

The Town revised the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan in 2016 with the assistance of the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission to assure that the Town is capable of responding and protecting the public in the event of a natural disaster.

Challenges /Needs:

The Cabot Fire Department has identified several issues relating to the Fire Department building, water availability, membership, radio equipment, road access and other issues which are noted below.

- The Fire department is actively exploring alternative locations for a new facility. The current location cannot be updated in a way that allows the department to increase space for training and equipment.
- In regard to water, the Fire Department is currently looking for additional locations for dry hydrants on Bothfeld Hill Road, and West Hill Road, and will utilize state funding when available.
- Additional volunteers are needed to insure adequate response, especially during the day. E-911 numbers should be displayed where they are easily seen from the public road.
- Road access on private drives is a major concern. Adequate road width and turnaround areas are needed to permit tanker trucks and other apparatus to reach fires.

The Cabot Ambulance has identified the following challenges:

- When the Cabot Ambulance is unable to respond to emergency calls because of personnel shortages, the Barre Town Ambulance is dispatched, adding fifteen to thirty minutes of travel time to the hospital. Cabot Ambulance has a contract with Barre and pays per use. Weekdays, when many people work out of town, are a critical time of volunteer shortage. The Cabot Ambulance has discussed this concern with the Selectboard and has offered other options if volunteers cannot be found: (1) Pay up to two trained persons to be on-call with the Cabot Ambulance for at least 8 hours per day, or (2) contract out ambulance services. These options are both significantly more expensive than the current system.
- Legislation passed in 2010 requires a significant increase in training hours for all EMS providers. The expected result is that it will be considerably harder to find local volunteers that can commit to this service.

4. Cabot School

The Cabot School is comprised of the High School and Middle School classroom building (constructed in 1938), the gymnasium and four satellite elementary/integrated arts classroom buildings (constructed in 1971), all located on a single campus site in the center of Cabot Village. In 1997, the High School and Middle School building was thoroughly upgraded, and a dining room was added to the gymnasium. Satellite renovations included heating system upgrades, expanded space in kindergarten and pre-school and the addition of mudrooms in each elementary building. In 2009, the school's performing art center (CSPAC) and a wood chip heating plant were completed.

During the 2010-2011 school year, groundwater seepage and flooding in the elementary and high school buildings necessitated foundation, waterproofing, and excavation work as well as interior renovations. In 2011, the Cabot School Directors received a thorough report on the condition of the school's various buildings, and the report was updated in 2014. The report concluded that the high school building was in good condition structurally, but that the school gymnasium was in need of extensive renovation as a result of roof leaks and resulting decay. In addition, the report recommended that the buildings comprising the elementary campus be extensively renovated or rebuilt.

During early 2015 a facilities committee comprised of Cabot School staff, school board and community members met for several months to develop a plan to renovate the school's elementary campus. During May and June of 2015 the committee shared the layout and potential costs of two different plans with the public in two separate community forums. Although a good deal of valuable feedback and discussion resulted from these events, the Cabot School Board of Directors decided to shelve these plans until discussions concerning potential consolidation with neighboring school districts are completed. If Cabot chooses to join into a larger, merged school district with other school districts, the size of the educational campus needed in Cabot may change. It seemed reasonable to hold off on further planning for renovations to Cabot's present campus until a firm idea of the number of grades and students that will in the future need to be educated in Cabot is determined.

Cabot School buses transport students to and from school and to various co-curricular activities and events, including the Barre Vocational Technical Program. Buses are replaced on a planned cycle, anticipating about ten years of service per bus.

Enrollment and Staffing

There were 13 students in the graduating class of 2016, and total student enrollment (Pre-K through 12) in the 2015 -2016 school year was 180: 9 in Pre-K, 90 in K-6, 21 in the middle school, and 57 in grades 9-12. Of the total students enrolled in 2015-16 year, seven came from outside the district. Enrollment over the past five years has declined from a high of 223 in 2011-2012 to a low of 180 in 2015-2016.

Based on information available from the State Department of Education for fiscal year 2015, Cabot had the following faculty and staff (paraprofessional) full time teaching equivalents (FTE):

Direct Instruction:	20.9
Teacher Aides:	7
Student Support	2
Instructional Staff Support	1

Expenditures

Total expenditures for Cabot School operational costs for fiscal years 2015, 2016, and 2017, as reported in annual report for 2015 was as follows:

FY15 Actual: $3,682,717
FY16 Budget: $3,702,958
FY17 Budget: $3,708,161

Of these totals, approximately 10% were used for operations and maintenance, and 2-3% were used for student transportation.

Cabot School as a Community Resource

There is a very strong link between the Cabot community and the Cabot School. Many activities primarily presented for the School are open to the public and are often attended by community members. The completion of the Performing Arts Center in 2009 has helped to accommodate community functions, including concerts and lectures by guest authors.

The School is frequently used by various community groups for recreational and organizational functions. The gym is used after school and on weekends both by adults and students for sports activities and other events such as auctions and craft shows. Cabot residents are able to take part in early-morning fitness programs in the gym throughout the year. The school kitchen is used throughout the year by many organizations for fund raising dinners, community celebrations, and food sales. Community groups utilize school facilities for activities and events. Organizations such as Girl Scouts, Vermont Rural Partnership, the Athletic Committee, and the Parent-Teacher-Student Organization (PTSO) make frequent use of the meeting spaces after school hours. In addition, the art teacher has offered instructional courses for community members.

Educational Opportunities Available to Cabot Residents

The Cabot School arranges learning opportunities with other educational institutions in Vocational and Continuing Education. Besides the Central Vermont Career Center (formerly known as the Barre Technical Center or BTC) in Barre , there are several post-secondary schools in the region. Vermont Student Assistance Corporation (VSAC), Adult Basic Education, and Cabot's Wellness Director work closely with community individuals and families to inform them about academic and skills-based program application processes, costs, and scholarship opportunities and the availability of financial aid. On average, 70-80% of Cabot graduates go on to post-secondary education following graduation.

Challenges/Needs

As noted above in this report, major parts of the Cabot School campus (including the gymnasium and elementary campus) are in need of extensive renovation. Clearly, a major goal for the school in the near future is to address this issue: the cost of school building projects increase every year. However, the size of the investment needed in Cabot School's facilities will depend on whether

or not the school continues to operate as it has in the past: educating Cabot students from pre-kindergarten through high school here in Cabot.

To that end, members of the Cabot School Board joined with representatives from Danville and Twinfield in the late summer of 2016 to form a "706" study committee to research the potential benefits of together forming a consolidated school district. If this committee develops a plan for a new, consolidated school district, voters in the districts involved will be asked to approve or reject the merger plan before July 31, 2017. Planning for needed renovations to the Cabot School campus will resume only after the results of these discussions (and potential vote) serve to clarify how many students will need to be educated on our school campus in the future.

Progress on meeting challenges identified in the previous Town Plan:
The Washington Northeast Supervisory Union (composed of Cabot School and Twinfield Union School) conducted a Collaboration Study in 2011 to investigate ways that increased collaboration among these two schools could improve student learning and use resources more efficiently. In the years since, the schools have collaborated on professional development activities for teachers, and now have a single maintenance supervisor coordinating facilities work at both campuses. In addition, special education services for students at Cabot and Twinfield are coordinated at the supervisory union level. During the 2015-16 school year, high school students at Cabot and Twinfield began sharing in elective course opportunities one day a week at both campuses.

Cabot Public Library
The library facility occupies two rooms on the second floor of the Willey Building, with approximately 1,300 square feet and is ADA accessible. The library is open 25 hours each week and is staffed by one Library Director and several substitutes. The Library Board of Trustees consists of five members.

The library provides high speed internet access with four computer stations in the Reading Room. Materials may be requested from other libraries within Vermont as well as outside of Vermont through the interlibrary system provided by the Vermont Automated Library System (VALS). The Cabot Public Library also participates in "Listen Up! Vermont" where Library patrons are able to download free audio and e-books, the Vermont Online Library where patrons are able to read research articles from publications through the Gale Databases, Universal Class which offers over 500 online non-credit continuing education classes and several other online resources – Vermont Music Library, Heritage Quest, Vermont Digital Newspaper Project – all accessible from the library's website: www.cabotlibrary.org

Regular ongoing Library programs include Preschool Story Time, Meditation Group, Yoga, Tai Chi, Contra Dances, Pokemon, Community Book Group/Discussion, Summer Reading Program and special monthly programs totaling 137 individual program offerings for 2015.

Challenges/Needs

There is always an ongoing need for volunteer help with shelving books, discarding books from the collection, processing new items, and programming. There is a constant challenge to maintain an adequate budget for new items in order to meet library standards set by the Vermont Department of Libraries and to provide quality programs at low or no cost.

6. Cabot Masonic Hall

In 2006 the Masonic Hall was purchased by the Town from the Masons, and it now is available for public and private use most evenings and weekends. Faith in Action Northern Communities Partnership rents the space for its day to day operations.

7. Recreation

A variety of recreational programs and activities are available in Cabot. Many are offered by the recreational committee.

Public lands in Cabot are available for hiking, swimming and boating access for fishing and hunting, and other low-impact recreation. These include our 40 acre town forest, town rights-of-way, and class IV roads, which may be used for skiing, biking, jogging, horseback riding, and walking. (See Transportation section for issues relating to maintenance of Class IV roads.) Cabot owns the recreation field at the north end of village, with its two ball fields, basketball court, storage buildings, and picnic area and leases additional land at the south end of Town.

A new state park has been established at what was formerly land owned by Green Mountain Power. This 625.4 acre parcel of land accesses a 402 acre reservoir. The state is currently developing a long term management plan for operations and activities that will be available, community input is being sought during this process. This has long been an active boating and fishing site in the community.

The Lamoille Rail Trail has opened sections up thru Danville at Joes pond, establishing and developing connections to this trail network will provide a year round recreational experience. The trail system will eventually extend 93 miles long from Swanton to St Johnsbury.

The Recreation Committee actively promotes, maintains, and raises funds for recreational improvements and equipment purchases. These efforts have contributed significantly to improvements at the recreation field.

A privately owned facility, Larry and Son Field, is leased by the town and is used for soccer, baseball & softball.

Public boating access for fishing is available at West Hill Pond, Joe's Pond, Coits Pond and the Molly's Falls Reservoir. All access points are on State land. Recreational activities at Joe's Pond include boating, fishing, and swimming. There is one state park in Cabot: Molly's Falls Pond State Park. The Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation purchased the 1064 acres, including the 411-acre reservoir in 2015 guaranteeing continued recreational access to the reservoir and surrounding lands for Cabot residents, Vermonters and visitors to Vermont. Currently, recreational activities include boating, paddling, fishing, picnicking, swimming, and limited camping.

Public access to the Winooski River is limited in areas work to improve access to this resource should be developed.

The Skylighter's Snowmobile Club maintains trails in Cabot. Approximately fifty miles of trails, primarily on privately owned land, interconnect with the Vermont Association of Snowmobile Travelers (V.A.S.T.) system and is enjoyed by snowmobile operators and cross country skiers.

The Recreation Committee has been instrumental in obtaining permission from property owners to maintain both a winter trail system and a four-season trail for hikers, skiers, joggers, snowshoers and, in some cases, horseback riders and cyclists. The Cabot Recreation Committee maintains maps of the trails, and updates them periodically. Current work is underway to expand the trail system and keep the maps up to date with changes.

Challenges/Needs

It is clear that the network of trails and town rights-of-way are currently used extensively by the residents of Cabot. The preservation of these rights-of-way and continued cooperation between users and landowners is critical if we are to maintain the privilege of the safe and respectful use of these resources.

There is significant interest in bicycling in town. Several town rights-of-way and class IV roads might be considered as bike trails. Speeding and narrow shoulders on Cabot roads can be problems for bikers and pedestrians. A significant need can be demonstrated for trails that are independent of the main thoroughfares and for safe wide shoulders/sidewalks/bike lanes for safe recreational bike use along town roads. This is especially important between Lower Cabot and Cabot Village.

The Recreation Committee has traditionally requested funds at Town Meeting to supplement its own fund raising activities. Maintenance of the recreation field facilities is currently accomplished through the efforts of the Town maintenance personnel with some assistance from Recreation Committee volunteers.

8. Solid Waste

Cabot is a member of the Northeast Kingdom Waste Management District (NEKWMD). Each of the member towns in the NEKWMD is represented by at least one Supervisor, appointed by the Selectboard for a term of one year. The Board of Supervisors is the primary authority over the NEKWMD.

Solid waste collection and disposal is not provided to residents as a municipal service. Residents have several options for trash disposal: self-haul to a transfer station; private hauler pick-up; or bag drop off to a private trash hauler. A private trash hauling service is available at the town recycling center where recycling can be dropped off free of charge. The recycling center is located on Saw Mill Road adjacent to the Town Wastewater Treatment Facility.

Challenges / Needs

New state recycling laws and increasing volume of recycling require the incremental expansion of recycling available at the current recycling center, staffing requirements will need to be reviewed and modified to meet expanded need.

9. Water Supply

Ground water resources and their protection are of extreme importance to the town. The Cabot community is completely dependent upon groundwater for domestic water supply and industrial uses.

Wellhead source protection areas have been delineated for the two well sites that serve as sources for the Town Water system that provides public water. The source protection areas serve to directly "recharge" or replenish the groundwater aquifer. Both source protection areas are characterized by low-density agricultural/residential development in proximity to town and state highways.

The Danville Hill Well provides the primary source of public water for those within the water service area of Cabot, it was drilled in 1968. It is located about a half mile east of the village center before the intersection with Menard/Old Center Road and is drilled to a depth of 295 feet. The step flow tested yield of this well is 259.5 gallons per minute (GPM).

The Walden Road Well, also known as the Bond Hill Well, provides a secondary source of water for Cabot, and is located on Route 215 north of its intersection with Main Street, and less than half a mile from the intersection with Garney Road. The well was drilled in 1949 at a depth of 225 feet. The step flow tested yield of this well is 21.9 gallons per minute GPM.

Utility Partners currently manages both the water supply and wastewater systems. There are currently 104 water users.

Challenges/Needs

The primary water supply for the Town of Cabot comes from the Danville Hill Well. This water supply connects to the main system with a 3" pvc line. Several breaks and leaks over the years have impacted the service to the Town, replacement of this line is an important system need. Maintaining capital budgeting to improve and replace system components is a long term need.

A water line replacement for Danville Hill Road is being explored. Asset management work for the water system is a priority to help minimize large short term expenses.

10. Sewage and Municipal Wastewater

The Cabot Wastewater Treatment Facility, located on Sawmill Road in Cabot, was completed in fall of 2001. Refer to map in Appendix B for service area. The facility is managed by Utility Partners, and is under the direct authority of the Selectboard. All daily operations and plant management decisions are made by the Selectboard or its designee, the wastewater Superintendent including but not limited to: budgeting , rate-setting and capacity allocation .

Cabot's sewage treatment facility has a design capacity of 50,000 gallons per day (GPD), with a daily flow of 20,000 to 25,000 GPD. There are currently 114 connections and 174.5 Equivalent Residential Units (ERU) on the system.

All residences in Cabot outside of the wastewater treatment facility service area have individual on-site wastewater systems. The construction or replacement of on-site systems requires a permit from the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation.

Challenges/Needs

A careful prioritization of the allocation of reserve capacity will necessarily define the scope of potential development within the wastewater service area. The Wastewater Ordinance sets forth mechanisms for the distribution of capacity for different user classifications. The Selectboard is charged with setting annual limits for each user classification. The Selectboard should determine, with input from the Planning Commission, School Board, the local business community, whether uses such as elderly housing, restaurants, or other commercial uses should be favored over increased residential development, and if some capacity should be reserved for future expansion of the school. Maintaining capital budgeting to improve and replace system components is a long term need.

11. Electric Service

Cabot residents along Route 2 and Route 215 receive electricity from Green Mountain Power Corporation (GMP). Others along back roads are served primarily by the Washington Electric Cooperative.

12. Communications

Telephone service for the 563 and 426 telephone exchanges are provided by Fairpoint Communications. Wireless, satellite, DSL and cable internet access and cable television service is provided in most areas of the town by many companies. Two ATT cell antennae are located in Town providing cell service to portions of the Town. The town adopted an ordinance governing telecommunication facilities and towers (Article V) in 1998.

The Cabot Library provides free wireless Internet access. In addition, a privately managed town website (http://cabotvt.us) – with the support of the Selectboard and Town Clerk – provides useful information about key activities in the civic life of the town, from election results to upcoming events and public meeting minutes. At the same time, a free but private email list Front Porch Forum (http://frontporchforum.com/) serves to share important announcements and provides a community calendar for events and requests among Cabot residents. Finally, a growing town paper, the Cabot Chronicle (http://cabotchronicle.org), provides a useful point of reference for town news and local perspective.
At the same time, many Cabot residents and associations are taking to social networking resources such as Facebook and Twitter, where social chatter along with news and information for upcoming events are shared regularly. The Town of Cabot maintains a Facebook page at http://www.facebook.com/pages/Town-of-Cabot.

Internet access can help Cabot residents' meet needs in the areas of local government transparency and accountability; information sharing and coordination support for voluntary action; economic development support through promotion in the areas of tourism as well as access to information about grants, loans, and awards that can benefit Cabot business owners, entrepreneurs, and artists.

Challenges/Needs
The town's telecommunications zoning regulations need to be reviewed and updated on a regular basis to ensure they keep pace with changes in the industry.

The general public and businesses depend on adequate telecommunications services. Cell phone service and high-speed internet access is available in most parts of Town, and, as noted previously, wireless/communications for emergency services are not adequate in some locations in town. Additional exploration for cell service expansion along route 2 is a need for the community and public safety.

13. Law Enforcement

The County Sheriff is engaged periodically to monitor and ticket speeders on town and village roads. Currently, enforcement of the dog ordinance is being accomplished through a contract with a certified enforcement officer in Danville. None of Cabot's recent constables have been certified law enforcement officers, but they work closely with the State Police on local calls.

Challenges/Needs

Speeding through the village has been identified as a major issue. See Transportation section further discussion of speed limit issues and concerns.

14. Health and Human Services

Health Care services within the Town of Cabot are limited to Cabot Health Services, a branch of The Health Center in Plainfield. The Health Center and Hardwick Area Health Center are the closest available healthcare facilities. Central Vermont Hospital in Berlin, Copley Hospital in Morrisville, and Northeast Vermont Regional Hospital in St. Johnsbury are the nearest hospitals. Most patients in need of emergency services are transported to Central Vermont Hospital.

The United Church of Cabot plays a valuable supportive role in the community. Various organizations, meet at the church and other community facilities , and provides social events for its members. The Church is also home to a weekly Alcoholics Anonymous meeting.

Faith In Action Northern Communities Partnership, Inc., a non-profit established in 2004, currently leases space in the Masonic Hall and also maintains an office in Lyndonville. The organization provides free services to the elderly and disabled through a network of local volunteers. Programs include a twice monthly Food Share program, community dinners and a monthly Senior's Adventure Morning.

Cabot Community Association

The Cabot Community Association is a 501(c)3 not for profit organization with a mission to enhance the quality of community life for those residing, doing business, and visiting Cabot, VT. In partnership with its citizens, businesses and service organizations, the Cabot Community Association will work to:

1. Maintain and enhance our inviting, healthy and safe community;
2. Empower Cabot residents to participate in the governance and management of our town;
3. Provide a forum for individuals and organizations to network and share resources;
4. Promote community service;

5. Foster community pride;
6. Enhance educational and recreational opportunities;
7. Develop a vibrant, diversified economy;
8. Represent Cabot's interests in local and regional partnerships;
9. Monitor data and trends to plan for the future health and wellbeing of residents of all ages;
10. Preserve and enhance the working landscape and the natural beauty of our environment; and
11. Support such other charitable and educational activities, consistent with the above-stated purposes and with the provisions of Sections 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code or corresponding provisions of subsequently enacted Federal Law, as the Board of Directors may from time to time determine.

Current Activities

Cabot Community Association - Website to provide local residents with quick access to various resources, to provide a gateway for local businesses, and provide information for tourists and other visitors to the Cabot area.

The Cabot Chronicle - The CCA has created a task force to develop a business plan that might secure the future of the paper.

Cabot Community Fund allows the CCA to support community based projects and events that further the mission of the CCA. The CCF is funded by the generous support of the Cabot Creamery and other donations.

Working Landscape Network (formerly Agricultural Network) that invites everyone who works with or cares about the land in Cabot – farmers, homesteaders, surveyors, loggers, conservationists, trail groomers, sugar makers, landscapers, hunters, nurseries, food processors, crafters who use natural materials- to meet and discuss common interests and challenges and organize activities.

Cabot Arts which brings artists and crafts people together on a regular basis, and has an on-going concert series.

Child Care

The availability of safe and affordable child care services is critical to Cabot. Quality child care benefits families by preparing children for schooling and social interaction while enabling parents to work and provide income. It benefits businesses by expanding the workforce and creating more reliable, productive employees. Furthermore, child care facilities are businesses themselves and their existence expands local and regional economies directly through the hiring of workers and purchase of goods and services.

In 2016, Cabot had four registered child care providers. The Cabot Preschool is a licensed child care facility, providing a pre-kindergarten program for 4-year-olds. In addition, there is a summer camp for school-aged children in Cabot that is a licensed child care facility.

It is likely that many Cabot residents use providers located in proximity to their places of employment. In Central Vermont, there are approximately 90 registered home care providers and 20 licensed care providers, with the majority located in the Region's employment and population centers (i.e., Barre, Montpelier, and Waterbury.)

15. Civic and Cultural Activities

A. Introduction

Cabot can boast significant civic, cultural and artistic richness. The broad array of public and private institutions and resources that support the civic and cultural life of Cabot reflect an important tradition of investment, participation, and patronage. From a town meeting tradition that persists today, to numerous festivities throughout the year, Cabot is a vibrant community that nourishes its residents and its visitors. And we cannot take these opportunities for granted. Rooted in traditions and passed-along knowledge, these resources require ongoing investment of time, attention, and money by Cabot residents – from volunteer time to visitor attendance to private contributions and budget appropriations. To manage these resources well, and accommodate the growth of new opportunities in a dynamic cultural environment, requires generous stewardship and diligent management.

B. Existing Conditions

Civic Life

Civic life in Cabot is defined by the voluntary associations, organizations, and institutions along with social networks that comprise society outside government and private life. There are many dimensions to Cabot's civic life; we'll focus on a few here: town meeting, voluntary associations, and Internet resources.

1. Town Meeting

Like roughly 31 percent of Vermont towns and cities where the town meeting tradition continues, Cabot's civic life reaches its climax on the first Tuesday of March each year. During Town meeting, roughly 20% of Cabot's eligible voters gather to discuss the Town's business and pass important decisions – some (such as the election of town officials) by Australian Ballot and many others through discussion and voice, hand, or paper ballot. In a sense, this is our single greatest opportunity to learn where our shared and individual priorities and interests in the town lie and to plan our investments in the future.

Town meeting is an important opportunity to hear how our preferences stack up against those of others, and to hear the voices in favor or opposed to various discussion items.

The Arts and Culture

Cabot is served by both the Vermont Council for the Arts and the Catamount Center for the Arts, Cabot is well positioned to leverage its store of cultural and creative capital.

Cultural and artistic life in Cabot is punctuated by a few important events throughout the year:

- Maple Fest occurs in March as spring begins – breakfast, artisans and maple syrup

-The Fireman's pancake breakfast Memorial Day weekend in May

-Fourth of July parade attracts thousands of spectators who pack Main Street, coming to see the train of floats, dancers, antique and farm equipment.

-Ride the ridges in September is a series of adventure bike rides thru the town of Cabot ranging from 10K to 100K with a barbecue lunch on the common after the ride event. Hosted by the Mentoring program and CCA.

Fall foliage festival in Cabot is either the end of September or beginning of October yearly as the leaves begin to change. A series of events thru local communities includes tours and breakfast lunch and dinner events highlighting local scenery and driving tours.

- Apple Pie Festival in October, hosted annually by the Historical Society since 1999. It is held in the Cabot school gymnasium where dozens of apple pies baked by community members are tasted and judged for their baking accomplishment.

Community Arts Facilities
Cabot School Performing Arts Center, Masonic Hall, Cabot United Church and Willey Building provide space for community gatherings. For school music rehearsals and performances as well as community events such as the Cabot Community Theater, talent shows, and film screenings.

Historical Society
The Cabot Historical Society was formally founded in 1965 and currently maintains two historic properties in Town, the Main Street Museum (acquired in 1978) and the West Hill School (acquired in 1970). The Main Street Museum also houses an intact and well-preserved second story theater. The Historical Society has also published collections of oral histories, a local family history, and a collection of early Cabot photographs. The Historical Society has a website, cabothistory.com.

Cabot United Church
The Cabot United Church makes an important contribution to the social and cultural life in Cabot. In addition to hosting numerous community dinners and occasional public concerts throughout the year, the Church enables community members to exercise their love for music through song, a choral group, and weekly worship services.

The Willey Building
Long a venue for theater, dance, puppet shows, and other forms of public gathering such as weddings and meetings, the Willey Building houses an entire theater on its third floor, complete with a balcony level. In addition to a theater the Willey Building hosts a community kitchen and meeting room that is available for public use at a nominal fee.

Challenges, Needs
There are a number of opportunities to expand and strengthen artistic and cultural life in Cabot.

Increase visibility
As it stands, too many Cabot residents and visitors are unaware of existing civic and cultural opportunities. Connecting the public to community and exploring ways to increase visibility of these assets.

Broaden participation
Many of the boards, committees, and planning groups that enable a thriving civic and cultural life in Cabot require a frequent replenishment rate of rank and file volunteers as well as leadership. Town offices and resources can be leveraged to expand the visibility of these positions and play an active part in helping to fill them.

At the same time, expanded arts marketing and promotion efforts will bring in larger numbers of participants, supporting everything from donations and sales to word-of-mouth advertising to business traffic in town. Key partners in this effort could include Cabot Community Investment Fund and the Community and Economic Development Task Force of the Cabot Coalition.

Invest in Facilities
While Cabot boasts a plethora of venues for live performances, there is no venue to bring the visual arts and crafts into downtown Cabot. Not only could such a resource entertain visitors, it could provide local artists with a centralized, shared space in the heart of the village where they can exhibit and sell their work.

Support Youth
Through increased coordination, fundraising, and resource-sharing, Cabot could significantly improve the out-of-school resources available to students interested in exploring the arts, technology, and culture.

At a minimum, the Town should consider the creation of a youth/teen center where young people can gather. From there, needs and interests can be identified and an agenda of activities developed.

16 . Cabot Cemeteries

The Town of Cabot owns 28.47 acres of land in 7 community cemeteries around Cabot. The Cemetery Commission who manages these assets is facing a variety of challenges, developing owned land for additional plots, consolidating and managing storage facilities, recording and transferring institutional knowledge. The cemetery properties are also facing challenges with respect to maintaining older headstones and managing older trees established along boundaries and within the border of the cemetery. These old growth trees are unstable and nearing the end of their life expectancy, damage from falling branches and the roots from these massive trees.

Progress on Goals:
The Town has completed a variety of town projects over the past 5 years:

- Town garage was relocated outside of Flood Hazard Zone
- A variety of culvert upgrades have also been completed.
- capital budgets for water wastewater have been established with a reserve fund
- System allocations have been reviewed and established for the wastewater system
- Highway capital equipment schedule and maintenance purchases was created

17. Goals and Implementation Strategies

Goal	Implementation Strategy	Key Implementer(s)	Future Measures of Progress
IX.1 Continue to provide Cabot with excellent ambulance services and fire protection with trained volunteers and well-maintained equipment. Protect residents and businesses to the extent feasible from natural disasters.	**IX.1(a)** Use available opportunities (Cabot Chronicle, Front Porch Forum (FPF)) to publicize/advertise the need for volunteers.	Cabot Ambulance/Fire Dept.	Volunteers increase
	IX.1(b) Explore options for meeting requirements for training/ costs/mutual aid.	Cabot Ambulance	Options reviewed
	IX.1(c) Develop public information campaign with the goal of having all residents ensure their house numbers are visible from the road to aid in quick response during an emergency.	Cabot Ambulance/Fire Department	House numbering improved
	IX.1(d) Continue to maintain and implement a Local Hazard Mitigation Plan .	Selectboard, Fire Department, Planning Commission	Mitigation Plan updated every 5 years and after any natural disaster

Goal	Implementation Strategy	Key Implementer(s)	Future Measures of Progress
	IX. 1(e) Implement public awareness campaign to improve equipment access to properties by providing adequate turn-off and pull off areas on private roads and driveways	Fire department	Improved access
IX.2 Maintain the Cabot public library as an important community resource.	**IX.2(a)** Library directors will develop and implement a detailed plan to forward this goal, supported by a yearly Town appropriation and supplemented by private donations.	Cabot Library Trustees	Plan developed
IX.3 The Town facilities and Cabot School will continue to be a source of vitality to the Cabot community and a resource for the community as a whole.	**IX.3(a)** The School and Town will explore opportunities to engage the community as a whole in town and educational enrichment programs and encourage community participation..	School Board/Selectboard/ Planning Commission	events publicized
	IX.3(b) The School and Town will continue to explore and implement methods to publicize events and activities to all town residents and other methods to improve communication with the community as a whole.	School Board/Selectboard/ Planning Commission	Educational enrichment programs developed
	IX.3(c) The School and Town will encouraged and explore methods to engage residents in meaningful community service and involvement in town government.	School Board/Selectboard	Town Events involving residents organized
IX.4 Ensure effective town governance and ensure that all Town facilities, and infrastructure, including water supply and wastewater facilities, are properly maintained and appropriately located.	**IX.4(a)** The Planning Commission and Selectboard will review Capital Improvement Plan and budget for maintaining the Town's infrastructure.	Planning Commission/ Selectboard	CIP discussions occur
	IX.4(b) Identify and secure an appropriate site for the relocation of the Town Fire Department.	Selectboard	Sites for relocation assessed
	IX.4(c) Evaluate the benefits of establishing the position of Town Administrator.	Selectboard	Decision on Town Administrator made
	IX.4(d) Explore the feasibility and advantages of creating a	Select Board/Board of Adjustment/Planning	Decision made on whether to propose the

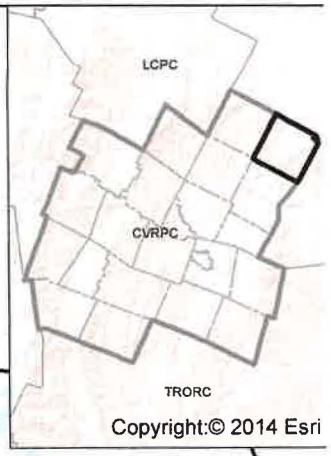
Goal	Implementation Strategy	Key Implementer(s)	Future Measures of Progress
	Development Review Board (DRB) to replace the existing Zoning Board of Adjustment IX 4 (e) Explore opportunities for rehabilitating the old saw mill buildings and completion of expansion at the recycling center IX 4 (f) Continue development of plans to purchase and remove the Saw mill dam.	Commission Selectboard/ Town Planner Selectboard/ Town Planner	creation of a DRB Develop a plan for rehabilitation Acquire funding and develop plan for removal of dam
IX.5 Cabot's ground water quality is maintained and citizens are aware of preventative measures to protect water quality.	**IX.5(a)** Maintain the Source Protection Plan for the Cabot Water System and update every three years as required. **IX.5(b)** Evaluate these source protection plans for implications to the zoning regulations and propose any amendments to protect the public water supply, including the establishment of a source protection overlay district.	Selectboard/contract operator Planning Commission	Report up to date Zoning regulations reviewed and revised as necessary
IX.6 Upgrade and maintain water system as necessary, plan for replacement of Danville Hill water service main.	**IX.6(a)** The Selectboard and Water superintendent will complete a system management plan which will include identification of a location for a new water line. .	Selectboard, Water superintendent	CIP updated
IX.7 Regulate future development within the wastewater service area.	**IX.7(a)** The Selectboard, in cooperation with the Planning Commission, shall maintain reserve capacity consistent with the objectives of the Town Plan and other ordinances or regulations of the Town.	Selectboard/Planning Commission / Wastewater Superintendent	Allocation schedule adopted on a yearly basis
IX.8 Identify and ensure access to resources for various recreational activities.	**IX.8 (a)** Continue to develop and maintain a trail system in town for recreational use. **IX.8 (b)** Identify through signs, maps, and other means, Cabot's trail facilities, land trust lands, town forests, historical resources, and other desirable areas warranting public access. **IX.8 (c)** Study the compatibility	Conservation and Recreation Committees Community and Economic Development Committee/ Recreation Committee Planning Commission/	Permissions secured, trails cut, provide updated trail maps for town web page, provide yearly changes of improvements Signs created, GPS identifiers collected , maps available at Town Hall/ kiosks/ web pages Development of

Goal	Implementation Strategy	Key Implementer(s)	Future Measures of Progress
	of motorized and non-motorized recreational use of trails, identify trails which might be safely used by both and, where appropriate, make recommendations for the separation of uses.	Recreation Committee	recommendations
	IX.8 (d) Improve Public Access to the Winooski River for recreational access. Utilize grant funds to assist with development and purchase of resources.	Recreation Committee and Conservation Committee	Development of additional public access location
IX.9 Minimize the impact of telecommunications facilities on the scenic, historic, environmental, natural, and human resources of Cabot, and on property values, while allowing adequate telecommunications services to be developed.	**IX.9 (a)** The town should periodically update its telecommunications zoning regulations to keep abreast of technological changes and advancements in the industry.	Planning Commission/ Selectboard	Ongoing
	IX.9 (b) Encourage co-location of antennae on existing structures to the extent practicable.	Planning Commission	Revise zoning regulations as needed
IX.10 Maintain and increase availability of public facilities to support civic and cultural events	**IX.10(a)** Develop long term facility management plans for available town facilities to improve access and allow for expanded community use.	Planning Commission/ Selectboard / Community and Economic Development Committee	Complete CIP for facilities Acquire funding to support and maintain facility improvements and needs.
IX.11 Explore options for updating the Town Web site to facilitate ease of use and access of information	**IX.11 (a)** Explore options other Towns have utilized as a model, explore local talent as a way to improve community access and flexibility.	Selectboard, CCA, Regional Planning	Updated site with improved access and flexibility

Appendix A

Cabot, VT

Agricultural Lands, Mineral Resources, and Earth Extracation



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CABOT

Agricultural Value Groups consist of soil map units that have similar characteristic, limitations, management requirements, and potential for crop production. Soil map units in Group 1 have the most potential for crop production and soil map units in Group 11 and 12 have the least potential for crop production.

Agricultural Value

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7

Mineral Resources

- Gravel (Probable)
- Sand (Probable)
- Quarries

N

0 2 Miles

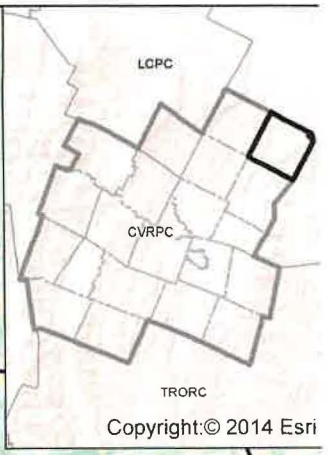
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Cabot, VT

Biophysical Regions with Land Cover



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CABOT

Northern Vermont Piedmont

MARSHFIELD

15

2

Land Cover

- Interstate
- US Highway
- Vermont State Highway
- Town Class 1-3
- Open Water
- Developed, Open Space
- Developed, Low Intensity
- Developed, Medium Intensity
- Developed, High Intensity
- Barren Land
- Decidious Forest
- Evergreen Forest
- Mixed Forest
- Shrub/Scrub
- Grassland/Herbaceous
- Pasture Hay
- Cultivated Crops
- Woody Wetlands
- Emergent Herbaceous Wetlands
- Biophysical Region

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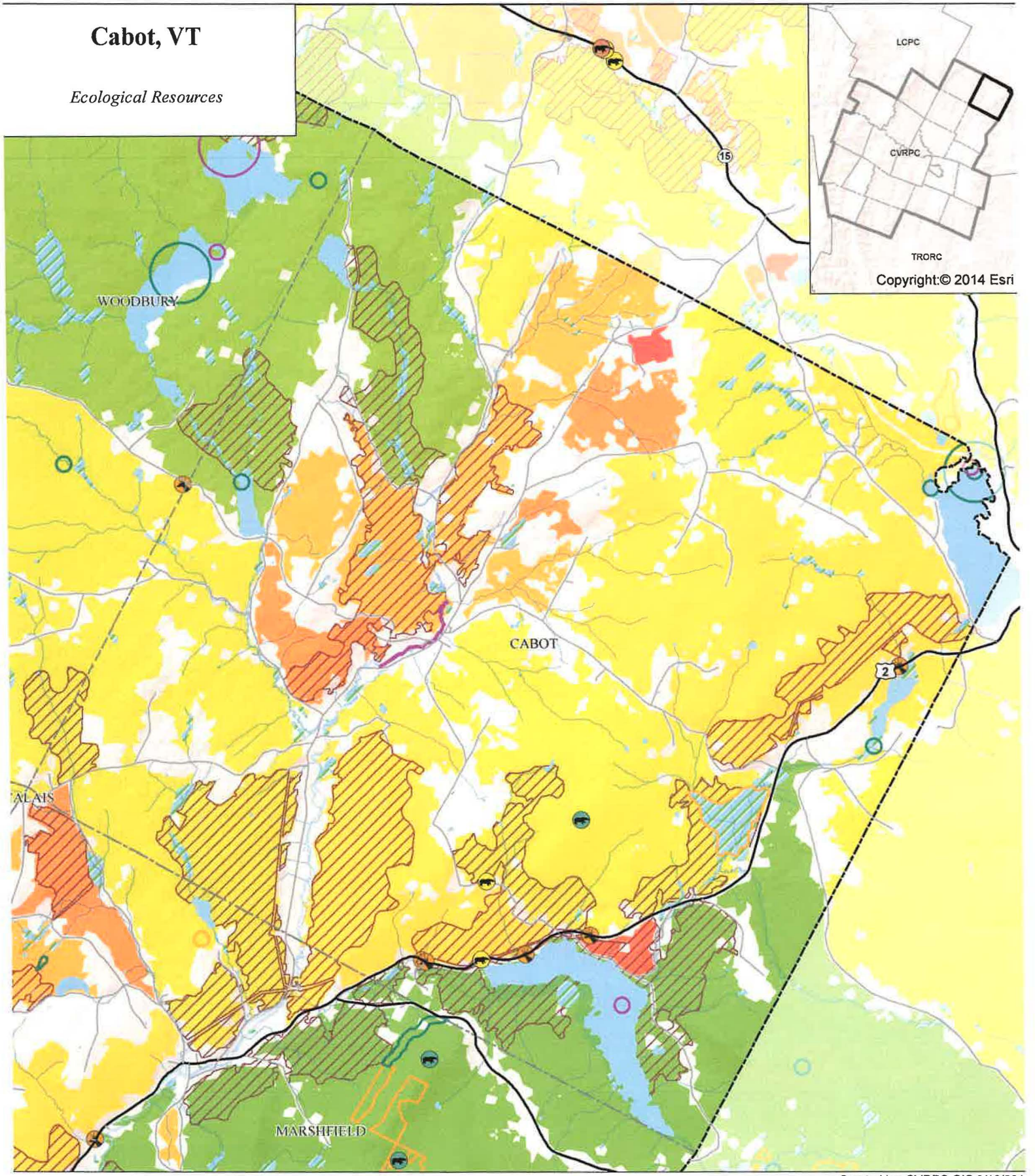
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Cabot, VT

Ecological Resources



Legend

- Bear Mast Area
- Bear Wetland Feeding Area
- Bear Collision
- Bear Crossing
- Interstate
- US Highway
- Vermont State Highway
- Town Class 1-3
- Moose Collision

Rare Species and Communities

- Animal
- Plant
- Natural Community
- Wetlands
- Deer Wintering Area

Priority Forest Blocks

- Low Rank
- High Rank

N

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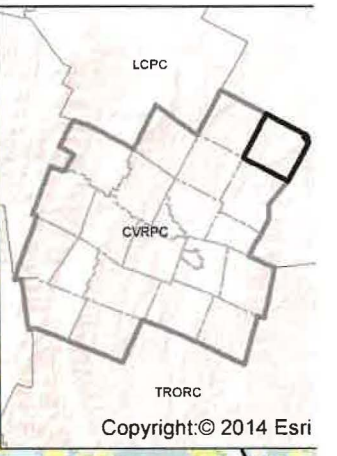
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Cabot, VT

Energy Resources



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WOODBURY

CABOT

MARSHFIELD

15

2

Energy Resources

- Interstate
- US Highway
- Vermont State Highway
- Town Class 1-3
- Substations
- 3 Phase Power Lines
- Distribution Lines
- Solar Potential
- Wind Potential
- Woody Biomass

Potential Hydroelectric Facilities

- < 50 kW Capacity
- > 50 kW Capacity
- High Hazard with < 50 kW Capacity
- High Hazard with > 50 kW Capacity

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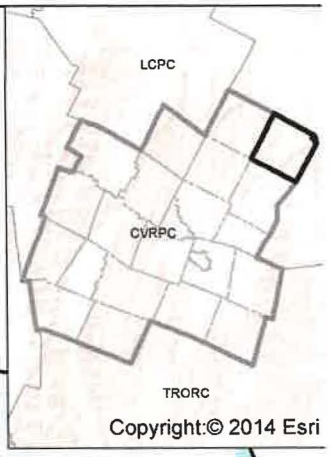
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Cabot, VT

Flood Resiliency



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CABOT

MARSHFIELD

'ALAIS

15

2

- Dams
- Bridges in the SFHA
- Culverts in the SFHA
- Structures in the Special Flood Hazard Area (A and AE)
- Structures in the Dam Inundation Zone
- Interstate
- US Highway
- Vermont State Highway
- Town Class 1-3
- NFIP Special Flood Hazard Area Zones (A and AE)
- River Corridors
- Dam Inundation Areas

Flood Frequency as Indicated by Soils Data

- Frequent (Floods greater than 50 times in 100 years)
- Occasional (Floods 5 to 50 times in 100 years)

N

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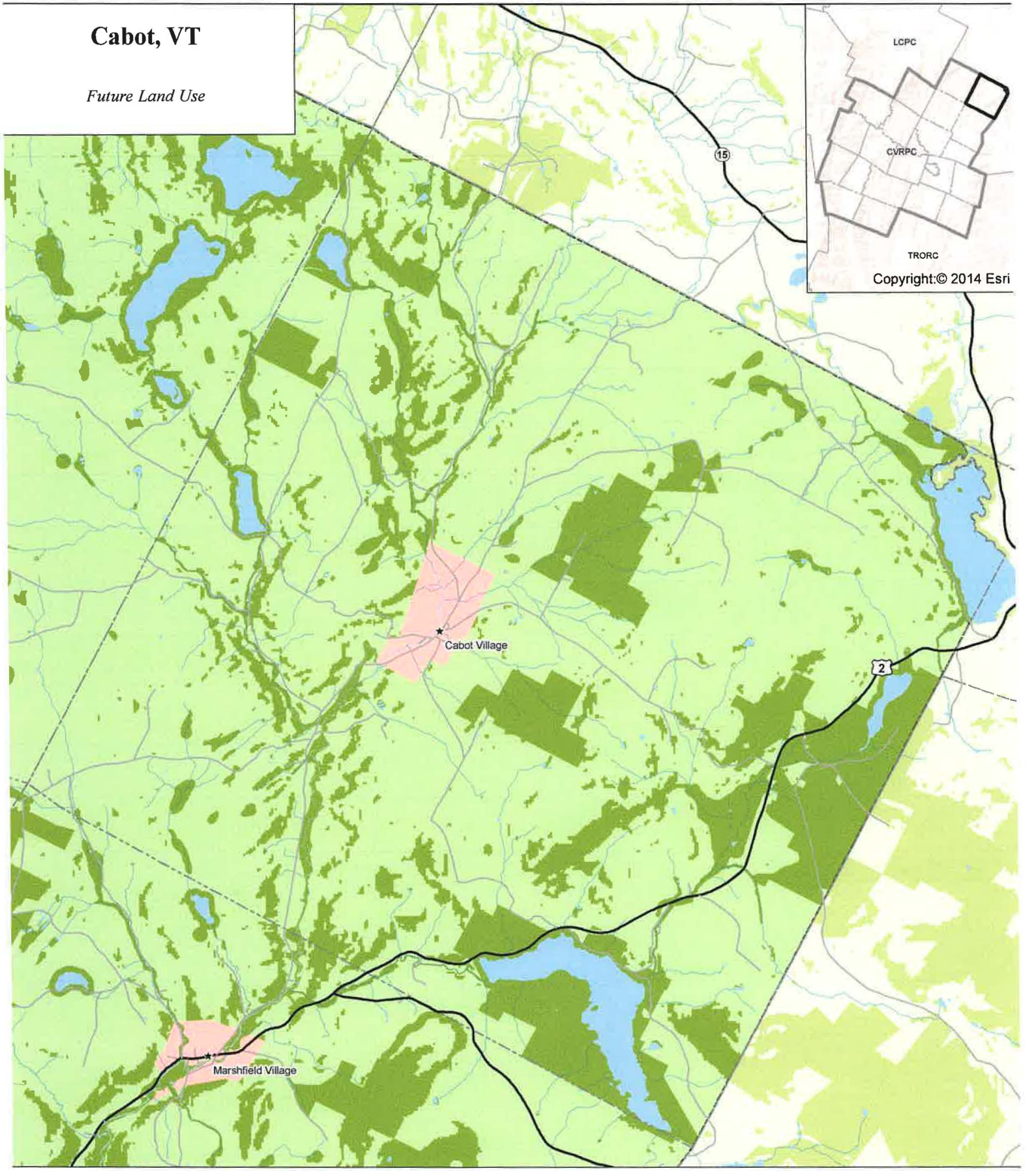
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Cabot, VT

Future Land Use



Future Land Use

- Resource
- Rural
- Regional Center
- Town Centers
- Industrial
- Rural Commercial
- ★ Villages
- Hamlets
- Ⓡ Resort Centers

N

0 2 Miles

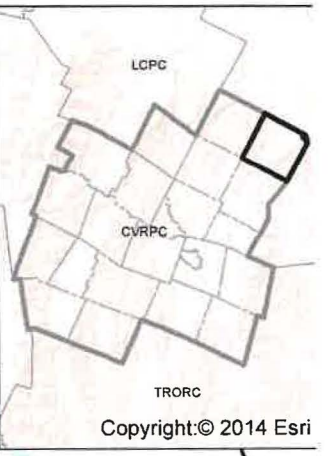
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Cabot, VT

Transportation



WOODBURY
COITS POND RD
S WALDEN RD
WALBRIDGE RD
TETREAULT RD
CHURCHILL RD
CABOT PLAINS RD
CABOT RD
ROUTE 215 N
MENARD RD
DUBRAY RD
TAYLOR RD
BOLTON RD
WEST SHORE RD
WEST SHORE RD
W HILL POND RD
ELM ST
CABOT
MAIN ST
DANVILLE HILL RD
URBAN RD
LAST RD
SAW MILL RD
SMITH RD
DUCHARME RD
TH 57
WHITTIER HILL RD
WHITE RD
MACK MTN RD
ROUTE 215 S
HOUGHTON RD
HOOKERVILLE RD
PORTER RD
LOVELY RD
MARSHFIELD

Legend

Roads
- US Highway
- Vermont State Highway
- Town Class 1 and 2
- Town Class 3
- Town Class 4

- Public Transit Route
- Park and Ride Lots

Bridge Deficiency
- Structurally Deficient
- Functionally Deficient
- Not Deficient

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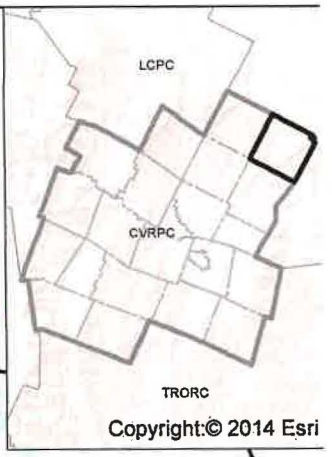
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Cabot, VT

Utilities and Facilities



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WOODBURY
COITS POND RD
S WALDEN RD
WALBRIDGE RD
TETREAULT RD
CABOT PLAINS RD
CHURCHILL RD
CABOT RD
ROUTE 215 N
MENARD RD
DUBRAY RD
TAYLOR RD
BOLTON RD
WEST SHORE RD
WEST SHORE RD
CABOT
W HILL POND RD
MAIN ST
DANVILLE HILL RD
URBAN RD
LAST RD
2
DUCHARME RD
SAW MILL RD
SMITH RD
WHITTIER HILL RD
TH 57
TH 2
ALAIS
WHITE RD
MACK MTN RD
ROUTE 215 S
HOUGHTON RD
HOOKERVILLE RD
PORTER RD
LOVELY RD
MARSHFIELD
MAIN ST
DANVILLE HILL RD
ELM ST
GLINKA RD

Legend

Utilities and Facilities

- Cemeteries
- Government
- Fire Station
- House of Worship
- School
- Cell Tower
- Hydrants
- Electric Transmition Lines
- Town Forests

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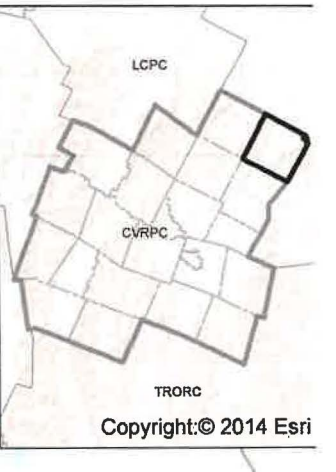
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Cabot, VT

Water and Wastewater Systems



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WOODBURY

CABOT

MARSHFIELD

15

2

Public Wastewater Treatment Plants
Interstate
US Highway
Vermont State Highway
Town Class 1-3
Municipal Water Systems
Municipal Sewer Areas
Surface Waters
Lakes and Ponds
Rivers and Streams

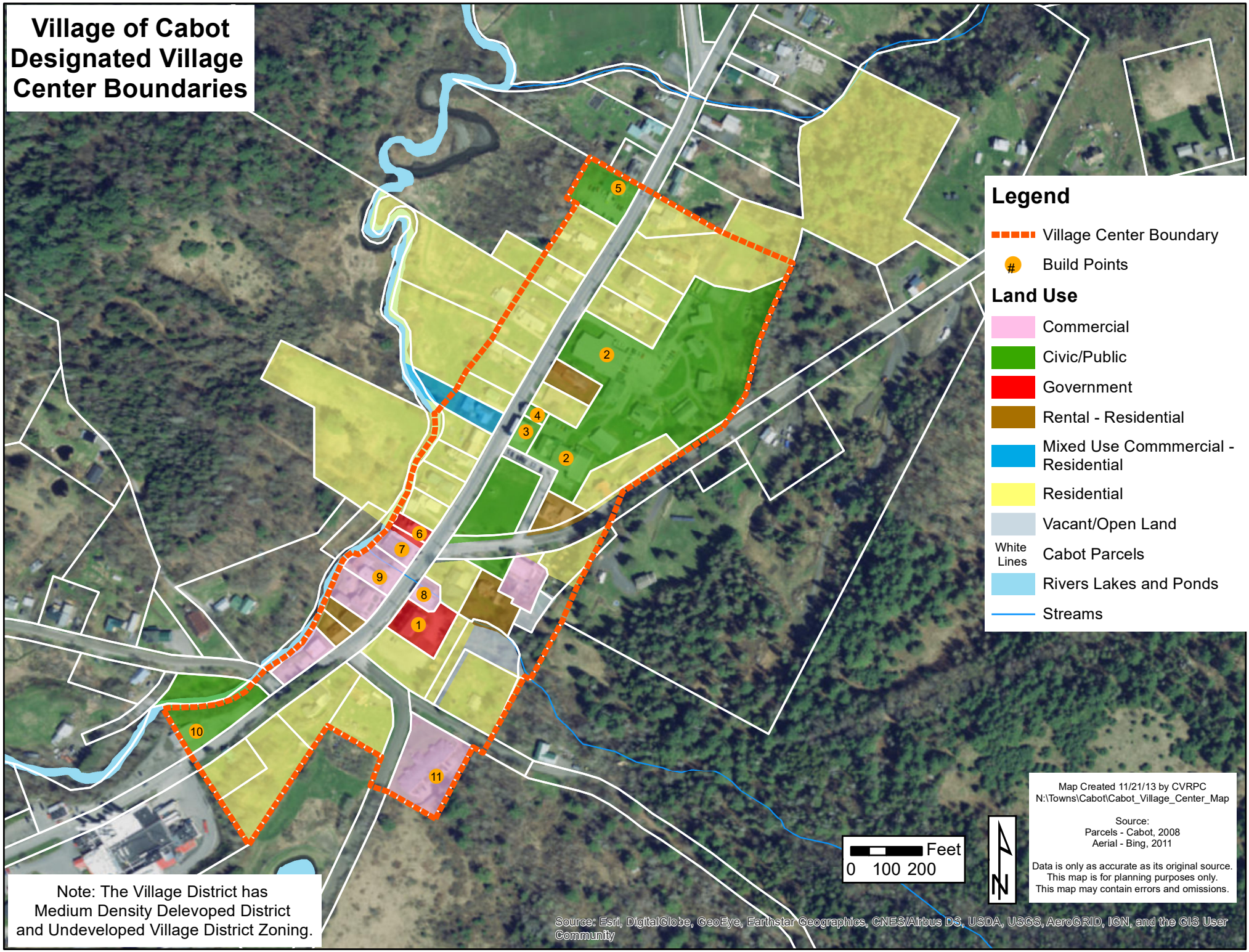
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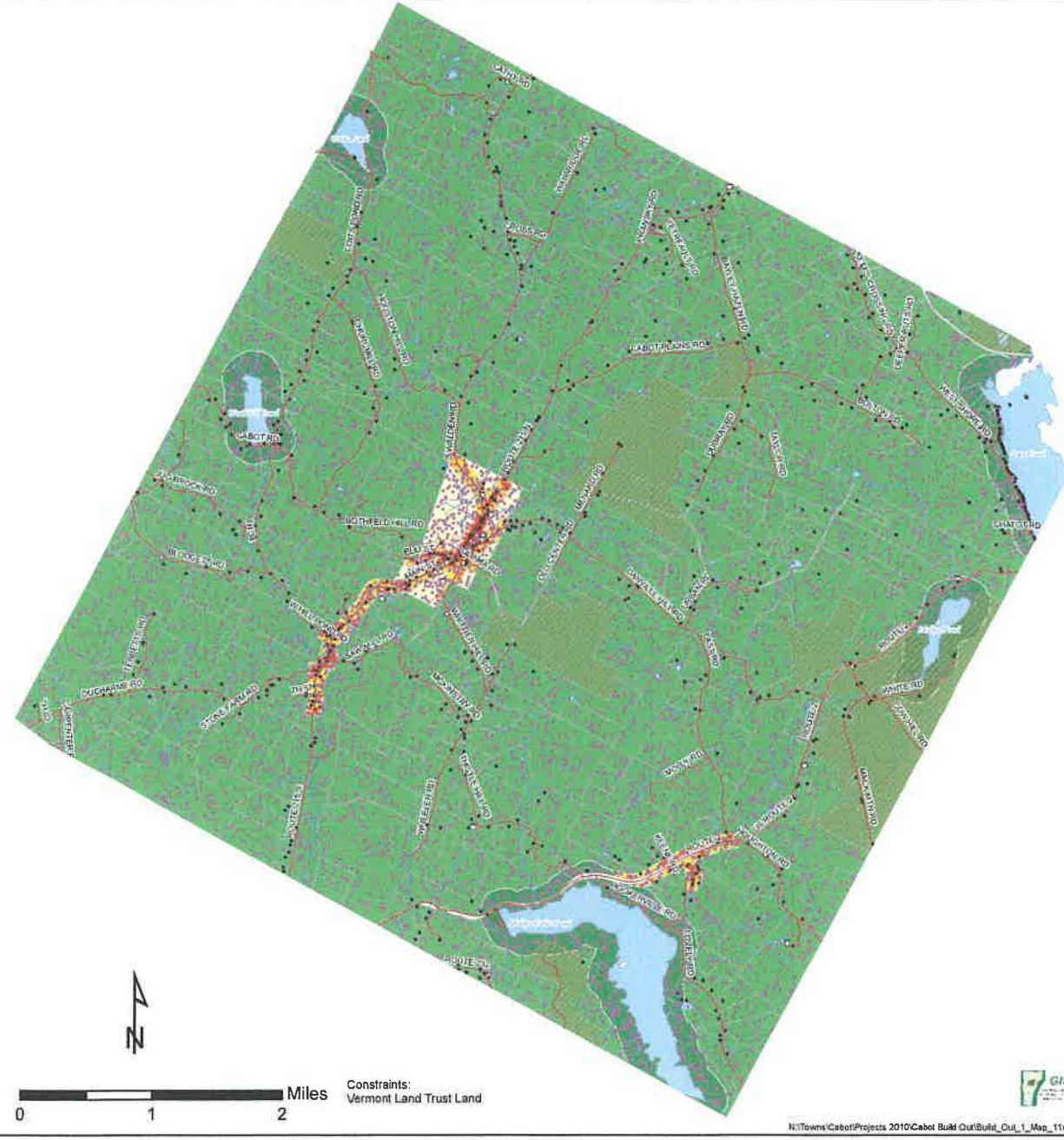
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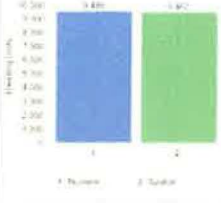

Village of Cabot
Designated Village
Center Boundaries
Legend
Village Center Boundary
Build Points
Land Use
Commercial
Civic/Public
Government
Rental - Residential
Mixed Use Commmercial - Residential
Residential
Vacant/Open Land
White Lines
Cabot Parcels
Rivers Lakes and Ponds
Streams
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
Feet
0 100 200
N
Map Created 11/21/13 by CVRPC
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Source:
Parcels - Cabot, 2008
Aerial - Bing, 2011
Data is only as accurate as its original source.
This map is for planning purposes only.
This map may contain errors and omissions.
Note: The Village District has
Medium Density Delevoped District
and Undeveloped Village District Zoning.
Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AeroGRID, IGN, and the GIS User Community

Appendix B

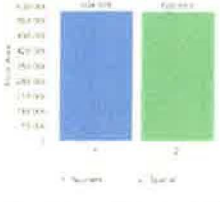
Cabot Build Out 1



Build-Out Dwelling Units



Commercial
Build-Out Floor Area



Legend

- Roads

Buildings

- Potential Residential
- Potential Non-Residential
- Existing Residential
- Existing Commercial and Institutional
- Parcels
- VT Land Trust
- Lakes and Ponds
- Rivers and Streams

Zoning

- Low Density Residential and Agriculture District
- Medium Density Developed District
- Shoreland District
- Undeveloped Village District

N

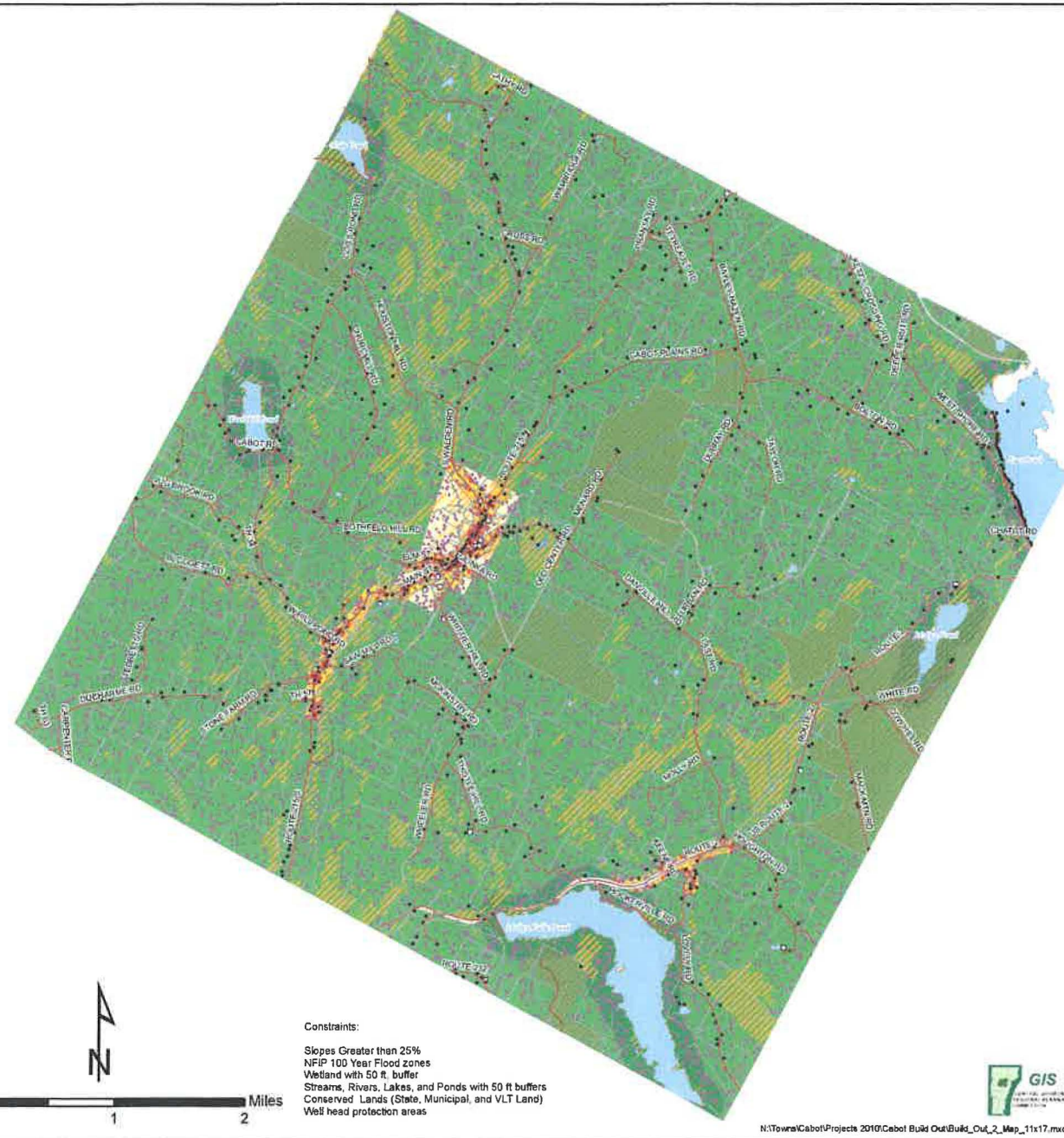
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Constraints:
Vermont Land Trust Land

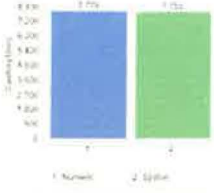
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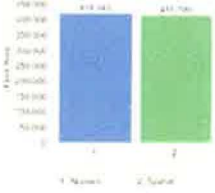
Cabot Build Out 2



Build-Out Dwelling Units



Commercial Build-Out Floor Area



Legend

- Roads

Buildings

- Potential Residential
- Potential Non-Residential
- Existing Residential
- Existing Commercial and Institutional
- Parcels
- Lakes and Ponds
- Rivers and Streams
- VT Land Trust
- Constraints (See List)

Zoning

- Low Density Residential and Agriculture District
- Medium Density Developed District
- Shoreland District
- Undeveloped Village District

N

0 1 2 Miles

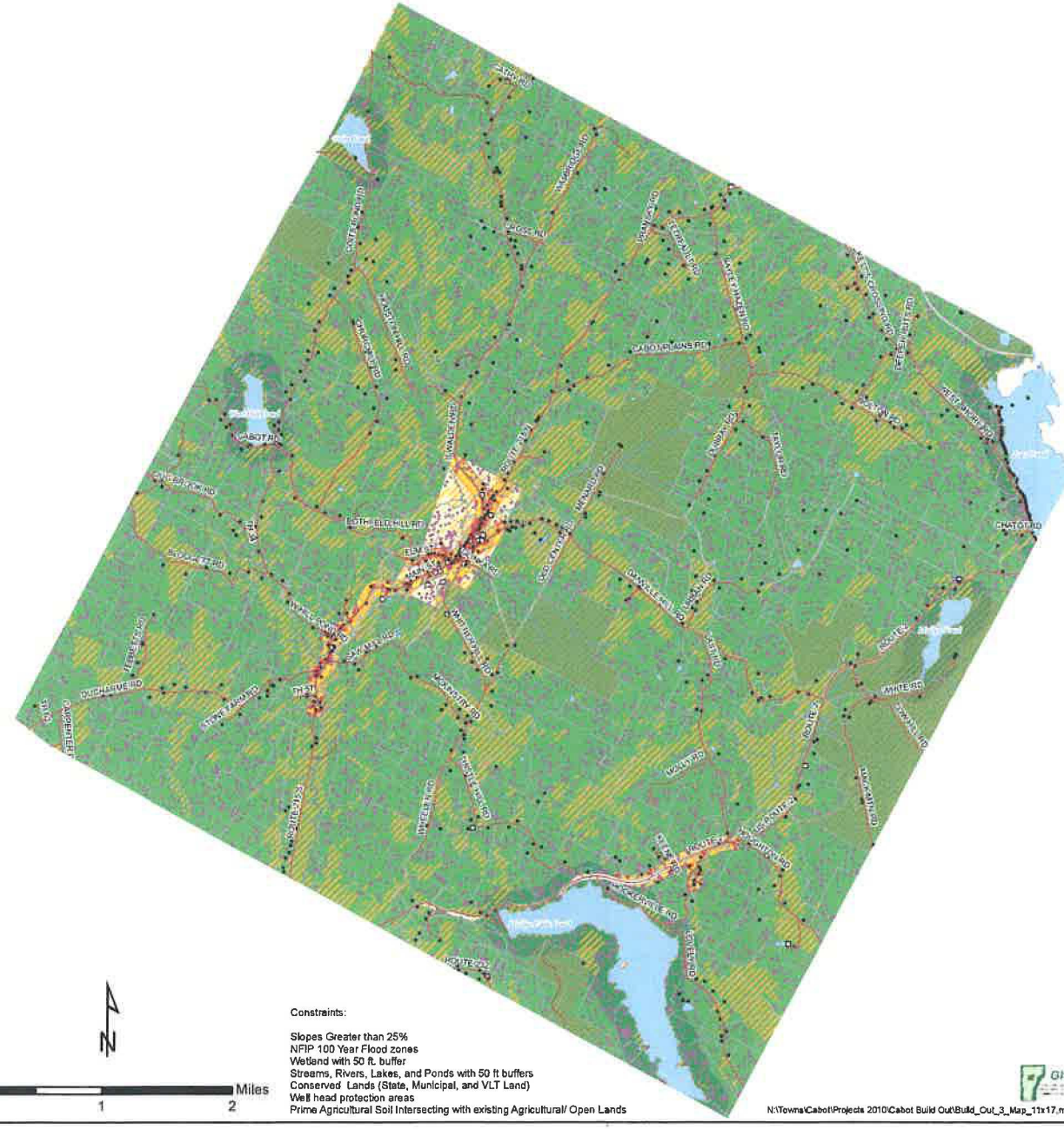
Constraints:

Slopes Greater than 25%
NFIP 100 Year Flood zones
Wetland with 50 ft. buffer
Streams, Rivers, Lakes, and Ponds with 50 ft buffers
Conserved Lands (State, Municipal, and VLT Land)
Well head protection areas

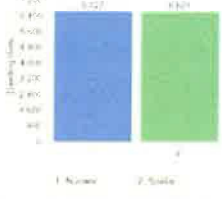
GIS

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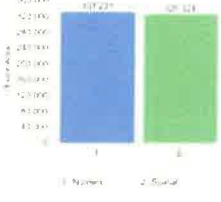
Cabot Build Out 3



Build-Out Dwelling Units



Commercial Build-Out Floor Area



Legend

- Roads

Buildings

- Potential Residential
- Potential Non-Residential
- Existing Residential
- Existing Commercial and Institutional Parcels
- Lakes and Ponds
- Rivers and Streams
- VT Land Trust
- Constraints (See List)

Zoning

- Low Density Residential and Agriculture District
- Medium Density Developed District
- Shorland District
- Undeveloped Village District

N

0 1 2 Miles

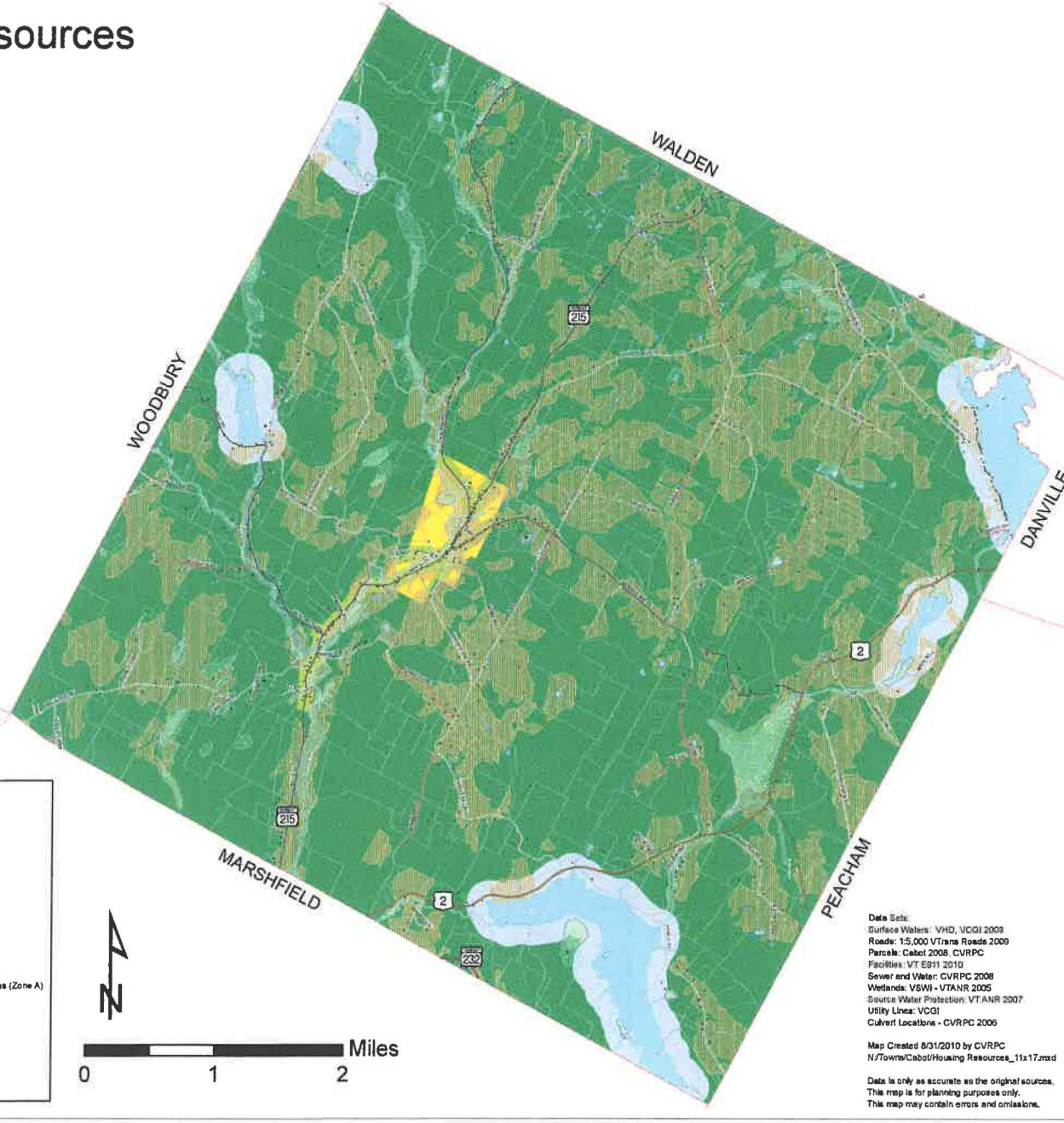
Constraints:

Slopes Greater than 25%
NFIP 100 Year Flood zones
Wetland with 50 ft. buffer
Streams, Rivers, Lakes, and Ponds with 50 ft buffers
Conserved Lands (State, Municipal, and VLT Land)
Well head protection areas
Prime Agricultural Soil Intersecting with existing Agricultural/ Open Lands

GIS

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Map 4: Housing Resources



Cabot's projected future housing demand to the year 2020 is 64 units. Cabot has a goal of incorporating 65% (42 units) of the future housing demand into the Village Center District and 35% (22 units) in the Low Density Residential and Agricultural District.

Legend

Residentail Housing by Year and Number of Units
- 2003 - 10 Units
- 2004 - 16 Units
- 2005 - 15 Units
- 2006 - 6 Units
- 2007 - 10 Units
- 2008 - 11 Units
- 2009 - 7 Units

Future Land Use ZONE
- Low Density Residential and Agricultural District
- Medium Density Developed District
- Shoreland District
- Village Center District (Approximant Boundary)
- Residential Housing Units
- Prime Agricultural Soils

Roads
- Parcels
- Class 2
- Class 3
- Class 4
- Private Rds
- Vermont State Highways
- US Highways
- Legal Trail

Preliminary NFIP 2009
- Special Flood Hazard Areas (Zone A)
- Wetlands
- Lakes/Ponds
- Stream/River
- Perennial Stream
- Intermittent Stream

Data Sets:
Surface Waters: VHD, VCGI 2008
Roads: 1:5,000 VTrans Roads 2009
Parcels: Cabot 2008, CVRPC
Facilities: VT E911 2010
Sewer and Water: CVRPC 2008
Wetlands: VSWI - VTANR 2005
Source Water Protection: VT ANR 2007
Utility Lines: VCGI
Culvert Locations - CVRPC 2006

Map Created 8/31/2010 by CVRPC
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Data is only as accurate as the original sources.
This map is for planning purposes only.
This map may contain errors and omissions.

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