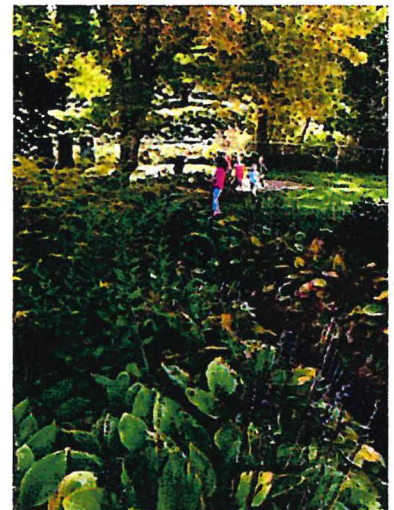
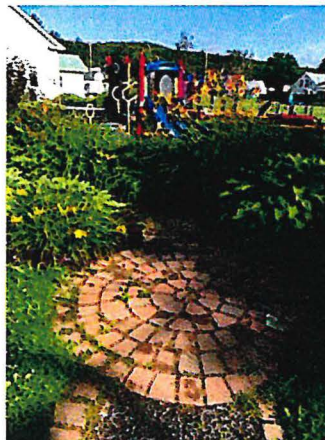
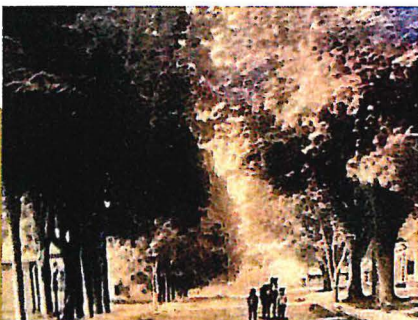


*The Geographic Center of Vermont*

## **2021 Municipal Plan Town of Roxbury, Vermont**





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## I. Purpose and Authority

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### 1. FOREWORD: PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE NEEDS OF ROXBURY

In an effort to define the scope of projects that Roxbury needs to develop, fund and undertake in the next eight years to ensure our town is healthy and productive, we must address a number of high priority areas. Pursuing the completion of these proposed goals will create many opportunities for the Village Center to develop and improve existing structures still in the character of the historical Village. Encouraging new business growth and development of multi-family housing clusters will enlarge the tax base as well as bring new families to locate in Roxbury. Given the prospect of climate migration continuing along with other motives and the desire to move from urban and affected rural areas, many families will seek new places to call home. A community with vision and resources could offer an attractive new home for relocation of their talents, small businesses and dreams. Our mix of forested slopes, hillside farms, scenic views and a restored historical Village Center as well as a Central Vermont location near major routes for car, truck and train, may be a similar dream to those who originally chose Roxbury as the site of the first railroad station in Vermont in 1848. From its founding in 1781, Roxbury has adjusted, grown and changed with the times and needs. A town-wide survey in 2019 showed much support for actively addressing current and future needs and for correcting long-standing problems. By defining these issues, our 2021 Town Plan will help us all understand where we need to begin and how to resource the people and programs to accomplish this.

#### Infrastructure:

It is important to develop a ***Village Center Community Septic system*** connecting all homes/ businesses in the Village, to make possible a clean water table, so that there will be no need for individual septic or cesspools that currently pollute available water sources. Property owners can then have ***clean wells*** which will ***meet health regulations for homes and food services***.

#### Transportation:

It is essential that ***safe raised sidewalks*** along the entire length of the village be improved or added, making an unobstructed, walkable pedestrian friendly downtown. These should extend to include the camp.

A ***transportation hub*** is necessary to connect carpooling, bus transportation and at some future point train service. Focus should be on limiting transportation emissions and prioritizing clean energy vehicles.

Appropriate (***flashing***) ***speed signage*** as well as crosswalks at critical sections of the village is highly recommended to slow traffic and make crossing safer. A 25-mph speed zone through the Village is also highly recommended.

#### **High Speed Internet for the entire town:**

For Roxbury to attract small businesses and for its students to utilize educational opportunities remotely, ***connectivity*** for the entire town is essential.

#### **Accessible Housing for Senior Citizens located in the village:**

As Roxbury's citizens age, proximity to the village, and ***safe affordable and accessible housing*** will become more critical. Multi-family units grouped together for efficiency avoids redundancy and reduces cost for vital infrastructure.

#### **Development of amenities like parks and recreational sites:**

Suggestions for these amenities could include: Ice rink for skating, Green space with bicycle racks and benches for tourists and residents to utilize. Expansion of the existing market to include a coffee shoppe and outdoor a terrace with tables for take-out meals is suggested.

#### **Improved Power Grid and Clean Energy options for property owners:**

This Plan encourages ***energy efficient heating options*** and possible tax considerations for solar power, forgoing fossil fuel-based development and moving directly to renewable energy sources and increased awareness of the health consequences of air, water and soil pollution inside and outside of commercial and residential structures.

#### **Consideration of ordinances which apply to all future development for design solutions which address the impact of climate change:**

A ***design review process*** or ordinances should be developed to guide future construction and development by seeking best solutions for careful siting to reduce flood destruction, to address solar efficiency orientation, and to consider best construction design and material choices.

Development should be managed to limit flood damage from wetlands and river corridors.

#### **Protections for our Woodlands and Wildlife and Productive Farmlands:**

Appointment of a ***Forestry Manager*** is important to supervise protections for wildlife corridors, pedestrian, snowmobile and approved ATV paths and provide maintenance recommendations. Maintaining large uninterrupted tracts of farmlands, and forest tracts to help limit air pollution and mitigate flooding is also important.



## 2. PURPOSE

The changing demands on the resources of Roxbury will make town decisions about planning of critical importance. This Town Plan has been written to guide the town in making those decisions. The Planning Commission is also concerned with what is happening in surrounding towns. Specifically, the Town Plan should be used to:

- A. Provide the framework for planning the future of the town.
- B. Guide local decision-making in subdivision, site development plans, conditional use reviews, if and when ordinances regulating such activities are enacted.
- C. Serve as a basis for local decision-making during any Act 250 review.
- D. Provide a framework for revising and enacting Town ordinances.
- E. Assist in development of the Town's capital budget.
- F. Assist with the formulation of local policies and programs.
- G. Serve as a primary resource document for private parties desiring to learn of the town, its goals and policies.
- H. Establish policies for the Town's interactions with neighboring towns and other levels of government.

## 3. AUTHORITY

Authority to adopt and implement the Town Plan is provided by the Vermont Planning and Development Act, 24 VSA, Chapter 117. The purpose of the Act is to "encourage the appropriate development of all lands . . . in a manner which will promote the public health, safety, morals, prosperity, comfort, convenience, efficiency, economy, and general welfare; and to provide a means and methods for the municipalities and regions of this state to plan . . . and to implement those plans." In 1988 the Vermont Legislature revised the state planning statute with the adoption of Act 200 which established a series of goals and objectives and added them to the Purpose of Chapter 117. Roxbury's first Town Plan was written in 1979 and revised in 1984 and 1989. A 1996 rewrite of the town plan was undertaken in order to conform to the twelve planning goals listed in 24 VSA, section 4302 and include the ten required elements listed in section 4382 as required components of a municipal plan. The most recently adopted plan was approved in 2014. Failure to develop and adopt a Town Plan will require the use of the Central Vermont Regional Plan as Roxbury's planning guide. In addition, the lack of a Town Plan will compromise Roxbury's ability to affect development within the town (i.e. will not be able to fully participate in Act 250 projects or apply for Village Center Designation) as well as development within nearby towns which will impact Roxbury.

#### 4. CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

The future of Roxbury will require thoughtful consideration as, according to our 2019 survey, 56% of residents would like Roxbury to grow the local tax base, while 5% would like to see the town population remain the same. It is imperative that the future of Roxbury progress in such a way that current residents and future residents can be pleased with the pattern of growth and yet maintain the rural lifestyle that many out of state residents relocate to find. It is clear however from previous surveys that if Roxbury is to grow the residents would prefer to see single family homes, cluster housing and elderly housing.

#### 5. FORMAT OF THE PLAN

The Roxbury Town Plan consists of four sections. The first section discusses the Town Plan itself: its authority, purpose and format, along with other relevant background information. The second section gives a brief history of the town. The third section provides a detailed analysis of present issues relating to natural resources, housing, transportation, community facilities, etc. The fourth section contains relevant maps useful for understanding the Plan and a table outlining the Goals, Objectives, and Actions for each area discussed in the third section.

#### 6. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This Town Plan includes public input gathered through the 2019 Town Survey and works off the structure of the 2014 Town Plan while integrating the new requirements. The Plan in its current form could not exist without the hard work of both the past and present planning commission members and the help of the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission (CVRPC).



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## II. A Brief History of Roxbury

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The area now known as Roxbury may have once been a permanent home for a Native American tribe; or, it may have been part of a buffer zone between the Iroquois nation to the west (New York) and the Abenaki tribe to the east (Maine). In either case, the early pioneers of European descent and Revolutionary War veterans settled the hillsides first, perhaps because the lower valley lands afforded little natural protection against Native American raids. Despite the difficulties of travel, many Vermont communities, including Roxbury, tended to be organized on a trans-mountain rather than an intra-valley basis.

The following are some highlights of Roxbury history:

- Roxbury was chartered on August 6, 1781 to Benjamin Edwards and sixty-four others, only 20 of which ever lived in the town.
- The first settlers of European descent came to Roxbury in 1789. The first child born here to these settlers was a daughter, Lydia, to Jedediah Huntington.
- The first town meeting was in 1797. At that time, the town was primarily a farming community with sawmills and grist mills being the main industries. After the Civil War, there was a watch manufacturing company that made parts for the Waltham Company.
- Between 1800 and 1860, the town grew from 113 residents to a population of 1060. The school district was founded in 1801 with a total of 64 pupils in 1802.
- The first mail delivery was made in 1826 by four or six horse stages. John Spaulding was the Postmaster, and Guy Edson the carrier.
- In 1838 the Union Congregational Church was organized.
- In 1848, the railroad was built and Roxbury became a major shipping center. The town expanded in both population and industry and included stockyards in village areas.
- The opening of the quarries in 1857 after the discovery of Verde Antique marble was a great influence in the changing character of the town. The town continued to be a thriving community.
- Ninety-four Roxbury men were called to serve in the Civil War, and twenty-nine were killed.

- Zed Stanton, a life-long Roxbury resident, became Lieutenant Governor in 1902, then Chief Justice of the Vermont Superior Court in 1908. His house, built in 1900, still stands between the school and the post office.
- In 1913 Teelawooket Camp was started by Claude and Florence Roys. The camp was an exclusive girls' camp, and the daughters of many prominent people from all over the country attended. In 1989 the camp was sold and it became a tennis and soccer camp, operating as Windridge Camp at Teelawooket. It is still an important part of the town.
- The Roxbury Fish Hatchery, located at the south end of town, was built in 1891. It still attracts many visitors.
- With the coming of World War II in 1940, and with the closing of the quarries in 1957, the exodus of young people from Roxbury changed the composition of the town. By 1970, the population had dropped to a low of 354, and the town had lost most of its industry and farming. It had become a community of commuters, as it remains today.
- There has been an influx of new people to Roxbury in recent years. By 2018 the population had grown to 744. These new residents have brought with them diversified educational, social and economic backgrounds

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### III. Inventory, Analysis and Recommendations

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#### 1. PHYSICAL FEATURES, NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

##### 1.0 PHYSICAL FEATURES

###### A. SETTING

Roxbury is the southernmost town in Washington County, and lies in the geographical center of Vermont. It is bordered by the Towns of Northfield, Warren, Granville, Braintree and Brookfield, and contains 25,984 acres (40.6 square miles) of land. The town is unusual in that it contributes to the watersheds of both the St. Lawrence River (via the Dog River), and the Connecticut River (via the Third Branch of the White River).

###### B. TOPOGRAPHY

With elevations ranging from about 880 feet along the Third Branch of the White River to 3,060 feet at the peak of Rice Mountain, Roxbury ranks among the most rugged areas in the region. Steep terrain poses limitations for many types of development due to problems including sewage disposal and soil erosion. With over 20 peaks exceeding 2,000 feet in elevation, the physical characteristics of the town will continue to have a profound effect on its future development.

##### 1.1 NATURAL RESOURCES

###### A. WATER RESOURCES:

Maintaining or improving surface and groundwater resources is a major concern expressed by Roxbury residents.

###### Surface Water:

The vast majority of the town's surface waters are composed of small, high gradient upland streams serving as headwaters or tributaries of the north-flowing Dog River and the south-flowing Third Branch of the White River. In addition to providing aesthetic and recreational qualities for the community, these streams sustain wild (naturally reproducing) populations of brook, brown and rainbow trout which support recreational fishing opportunities, as well as various non-game fish species. In addition, the Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife annually stocks Atlantic salmon into the Third Branch of the White River as part of the Connecticut River Atlantic Salmon Restoration Program. Half of Vermont's trout species reside in Roxbury streams. The hatchery is known for being disease free. In the document "How to Include Fish and Wildlife Resources in Town and Regional Planning", the Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife identifies potential development impacts to aquatic resources such as:

- A. excessive encroachment into shoreline areas
- B. road crossing of streams
- C. pond construction

Maintaining undisturbed naturally vegetated buffer strips along streams provides many functions, including: stabilizing stream banks (by reducing erosion), providing food and shelter for fish and wildlife, filtering and absorbing pollutants (such as silt, fertilizers and livestock wastes) prior to reaching surface waters, maintaining cool water temperatures required to support aquatic life, reduce flood and ice damage to stream banks and adjacent structures, as well as preserving the natural character of the water.

Road crossings of streams with culverts may block fish migration and eliminate viable stream habitat. Roads in close proximity to streams can increase the supply of fine sediments in the streams, thereby reducing habitat quality. Construction of in-stream ponds often have similar impacts and may degrade water quality downstream by increasing water temperatures.

#### Flood Resilience:

Flooding is Roxbury's most common form of natural disaster and the most costly and dangerous to public health and safety according to the Town's Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (2018). Floodplains are important in retaining runoff during high flow periods, thereby reducing floodwater heights and stream velocities. Encroachment by development within floodplains will diminish these functions, increasing the potential for damage to downstream areas. The Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) National Flood Insurance Program (NIFP) has adopted the 100 year flood (i.e. a flood of a size expected to occur statistically once every 100 years) as the basis for floodplain management. Roxbury has, however, experienced floods of greater magnitude. In 1927, a 250 year flood inundated the entire village, flooded a freight train stranded at the Roxbury landing, and damaged or destroyed thirty-five bridges in the town. As recently as 2006/2007, there have been floods that have washed out roads and damaged culverts. The December 2006 event included major flooding of the fish hatchery, home and driveway damage, a cemetery under water and a large section of 12A destroyed.

August 2011 brought Tropical Storm Irene to our Town as well as all of Vermont. Roxbury experienced destruction not only to roads and houses but also to our Town Hall and other Town buildings. While we had massive destruction to deal with, we also experienced a 'will not quit' attitude all around town. Where there were detours people found ways through the forest on ATVs to get to those who needed help. Again in 2013, just before our July 4<sup>th</sup> celebration, Roxbury was hit again; more localized this time but causing severe damage to our roads. Our festival spirits weren't dampened though, those who could get to Town came down to celebrate in true Roxbury form.

While floods are inevitable, there are many different approaches that can help reduce flood losses in compact historic village centers that are located adjacent to the river and along the



smaller tributaries in the upper reaches of a watershed; typical of many communities in Vermont. More sustainable approaches to development can help Roxbury become more resilient to future flooding by protecting vulnerable undeveloped lands, locating development in safer locations, and designing development so it is less likely to be damaged during flooding.

#### *Roxbury's Flood Hazard (Inundation) Areas*

Local flood hazard areas, including those areas along the Dog River and its tributaries, which have a one percent chance of flooding, are defined on Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM). The Town of Roxbury participates in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), which provides flood damage relief to property owners in communities which enact ordinances regulating floodplain land use. The Town also has an approved Hazard Mitigation Plan (2018) in place, a document intended to assist the Town in recognizing hazards facing the community and identifying strategies to begin reducing risks from acknowledged hazards, including floods and flash flooding.

([https://centralvtplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Roxbury-2018-Local-Hazard-Mitigation-Plan\\_FEMA-APA\\_04-09-2018.pdf](https://centralvtplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Roxbury-2018-Local-Hazard-Mitigation-Plan_FEMA-APA_04-09-2018.pdf))

According to the National Flood Insurance Program, there are five properties within the Town that are located within the designated 100-year floodplain.

As previous events have made clear, even areas beyond the NFIP designated 100-year floodplain may be vulnerable to these types of hazards. Channel adjustments with devastating consequences have frequently been documented wherein such adjustments are linked to historical channel management activities, floodplain encroachments, adjacent land use practices and/or changes in watershed hydrology associated with conversion of land cover and drainage activities, within and beyond the NFIP floodplain. The Town Garage, for example, is located on the edge of the floodplain and was almost flooded during the March 2011 flood event. In the wake of Tropical Storm Irene, FEMA administered \$1,990,715 in Irene Relief and Recovery Funds to the residents and the Town of Roxbury.

#### *Roxbury's Fluvial Erosion Hazard Areas and River Corridor Protection*

Flooding, including flash flooding after major storms, may also occur on land outside of mapped flood plains, including upland streams. Fluvial erosion is erosion caused by rivers and streams and can range from gradual bank erosion to catastrophic changes in river channel location and dimension during flood events. Stream setbacks, buffers, and storm-water management requirements under local regulations can help reduce flood hazards in both FIRM floodplains and Fluvial Erosion Hazard (FEH) areas.

According to a 2009 analysis by CVRPC, there are 28 properties wholly or partially located in the fluvial hazard zone. Fluvial Erosion Hazard or River Corridor overlay districts are one of the best avoidance strategies for fluvial erosion hazard mitigation. An overlay district is an additional

zoning requirement placed on a specific geographic area (in this case the FEH zone) without changing the underlying zoning.

The Dog River starts in Roxbury and flows north to converge with the Winooski River in Montpelier. The Dog River provides the greatest threat of flooding in Roxbury as it flows through the center of town and along the railroad tracks. A corridor plan of the Dog River was developed in 2008 and identified problem areas, assessed river conditions and provided ideas for future restoration and mitigation projects. A map of project locations and table of descriptions are attached at the end of the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan, along with a map of current fluvial erosion conditions. The fluvial erosion map indicates areas where the river banks in Roxbury have “high” to “extreme” rates of movement and are likely to change in shape and size. Development in areas of high fluvial erosion can lead to increased and more extreme flooding events, along with greater and more costly damages.

Overall, the corridor plan identified the stretches of the Dog River in Roxbury as in “fair” condition. The “fair” rating was assigned due to several factors which degrade the River’s health:

- Railroad beds and banks along the River cut off access to natural floodplain
- Inadequate riparian buffers (<25 ft)
- Higher rates of erosion in residential areas due to increased stormwater runoff
- Channelization
- Floodplain encroachment
- Bridge span inadequate and too constricting
- Fluvial erosion

The report also identified bridges which are constricting the river at bends. Structures over bends are more likely to cause flooding due to the fact that the velocity of the water is higher and banks are more susceptible to erosion. The corridor plan recommends a widening project of moderate priority for one rail bridge on river segment M21 in Roxbury, in addition to the projects listed at the end of the plan. Additional bridges which are of lower priority are located on Roxbury Rd and Warren Mtn. Rd. The Town should consider prioritizing and pursuing funding to implement these projects.

### *The Whole Watershed*

Communities that wish to become more resilient to future floods can also implement policies to more effectively manage stormwater throughout the entire watershed. Adopting these policies can help slow stormwater, spread it out over a larger area, and allow it to sink into the ground rather than running off into nearby streams and rivers. Policies that support this goal include adopting stormwater management regulations that include green infrastructure techniques, adopting tree protection measures, adopting steep slope development regulations and adoption of riparian and wetland buffer requirements. Riparian buffers are an integral part of



river corridors. In addition to reducing flood hazards and stabilizing stream banks, naturally vegetated riparian buffers provide a number of important environmental functions and values including flood attenuation, aquatic and terrestrial habitat, creating wildlife corridors, filtering runoff and absorbing nutrients, shading streams to keep them cool, and more.

### *Emergency Response Planning*

Currently Roxbury has a Basic Emergency Operations Plan that identifies responsibilities during a local emergency. In preparation for and in response to flood events, The Town of Roxbury, as noted above, participates in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and has a Hazard Mitigation Plan (2018) in place. These documents help the Town in recognizing hazards facing the community and identifying strategies to begin reducing risks from acknowledged hazards, including floods and flash flooding.

### Groundwater:

Groundwater is largely derived from precipitation which has infiltrated and percolated through the soil. Roxbury is presently and will likely continue to be totally dependent upon groundwater sources (e.g. springs, shallow and deep wells) for its domestic water supply. Therefore, the protection of both the quality and quantity of these resources is critical to the future of the town and its residents. Groundwater quality may be impacted directly from development activities which contribute various pollutants, e.g. landfill leachate, gas/oil leaks, sewage and industrial wastes. The quantity of water that recharges groundwater sources can also be diminished by increases in impervious lands such as parking lots, roads and buildings.

As of July 1, 2007, the state criteria for septic design is the standard used by the town.

In addition to private residences, the Roxbury Village School is served by a groundwater source. A "Wellhead Protection Area" has been designated by the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation to assist with the protection of this community water source. Future consideration of additional public water sources will also have to include such protection measures.

### Wetlands:

Wetlands, commonly thought of as bogs, swamps and marshes, are defined in 10 V.S.A. section 902 as "those areas of the state that are inundated by surface or groundwater with a frequency sufficient to support significant vegetation or aquatic life that depend on saturated or seasonally saturated soil conditions for growth and reproduction." See our Natural Resources Map. Wetlands provide many functions including: storage for flood waters and storm runoff; surface and groundwater protection; erosion control; fish and wildlife habitat; threatened and endangered species habitat; as well as serving as educational, aesthetic and recreational resources. Wetlands deemed "significant" are protected by state and federal regulations.

In addition, the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation provides the town and adjoining landowners a 30 day comment period prior to issuing a permit for development in or near a wetland. Wetlands in Roxbury are identified on the [Natural Resources map](#).

Roxbury has been the victim of a growing wetland, ([see Natural Resources Map](#)), in the village/north of the village area. The impact has been serious and the state has stepped in to affect a solution. The State spent about \$200,000 to remediate the problem; the Town is required to maintain the improved wetland situation. Much of the standing water in Roxbury is in the form of shallow wetlands. Some of these wetlands are maintained and expanded by resident beaver populations. Beaver have contributed to raising water levels in wetlands surrounding Roxbury village. Water has risen to the point of flooding some basements. This situation has prompted intervention by town and state to manage the beaver population, thereby reducing impacts to homes and other structures.

## B. LAND RESOURCES:

### Soils:

Soil characteristics, including permeability and depth to seasonal high water and bedrock, will greatly influence its ability to support agriculture or development. The majority of Roxbury's soils are shallow, acidic, and with hardpan or bedrock within three feet of the surface. These characteristics are more suited for forest production than development or agriculture. While the soils along the town's rivers and streams are generally more suited for agriculture or development, drainage and/or flooding problems may limit these activities.

### Forests:

Over 85% of Roxbury's land surface is presently forested. This includes two large tracts of state forest totaling about 5,500 acres ([Land Use map](#)), and over 11,800 acres of private and corporate land enrolled in Vermont's Use Value program for timber management (Current Use). Besides providing important natural resources (e.g. wildlife habitat, surface and groundwater protection) and aesthetic and recreational opportunities (hiking, hunting, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling), Roxbury's forests provide important sources of lumber and cordwood. Several Roxbury residents earn their living in forestry or related fields, while approximately 25% of Roxbury residents heat their homes with wood. In the 2019 community survey, residents expressed support for appropriate timber management within Roxbury's forests. Forest Fragmentation is the breaking of large contiguous forested areas into smaller pieces of forest. Typically, these pieces are separated by roads, agriculture, utility corridors, subdivisions or other development. It usually occurs incrementally. Fragmentation leads to loss of biodiversity, increases in invasive plants, pests and pathogens and reduction in water quality. This also leads to loss of native plants and animal species and increased soil erosion. Forest Fragmentation also results in a decline in public access to private lands for forest-based recreations including hunting, fishing, hiking, biking and skiing.



Healthy forests play a vital role in absorbing water and moderating its movement across the landscape. Although forests cannot prevent large floods outright, they do temper their frequency, intensity and extent which in turn significantly reduces the loss of life and damage to property that serious flooding causes. Many of the same conditions that contribute to flood protection also function to keep water supply.

#### Mineral Resources:

While the mining of Verde Antique marble and talc were historically important in Roxbury, more recent activities have focused on sand and gravel resources. At present, one commercial sand and gravel extraction is operated in Roxbury. It is important to carefully consider both environmental and social consequences of future mining activities.

### C. WILDLIFE:

#### Habitat Fragmentation:

Wildlife Corridors are lands and water that connect larger patches of habitat together within a landscape and allow for the movement and migration and dispersal of animals and plants. Maintaining functional landscape connectivity as development continues to fragment habitats is a critical conservation tool. Many wildlife species, including moose, deer, black bear, coyote, bobcat and various songbirds, require large wooded habitats. These large habitat areas are further enhanced when interconnected by wooded stream corridors. At the present time, Roxbury is fortunate to maintain large tracts of forest which support these and other wildlife species. Poorly planned development may, however, unnecessarily dissect these habitats, diminishing their wildlife value.

#### Deer Wintering Areas:

Deer annually migrate to areas which provide protection from harsh winter conditions. These areas are generally found in moderate elevations and are characterized by a southern or western exposure containing stands of softwoods and are subject to minimal human disturbance during the winter. These wintering areas or "deer yards" may provide shelter for deer from large areas and are often used for generations. Development within or adjacent to these wintering areas ultimately decreases the ability of the land to support deer. Deer wintering areas which have been identified in Roxbury are generally located along stream corridors as shown on the Natural Resources map.

#### Rare and Endangered Species:

The Vermont Nongame and Natural Heritage Program (NNHP) of the Department of Fish and Wildlife maintains a database of rare, threatened and endangered plants and animals, and significant natural communities for the state. The general location of those resources most recently identified is presented on the Natural Resources map.

## 1.2 CULTURAL RESOURCES

### Agricultural Resources

Although the rugged topography of the town is not commonly associated with agriculture, Roxbury does contain some good farm soils, particularly in stream and river valleys. Vegetable farming is the most common crop for personal use but there are a small number of CSA's (Community Supported Agricultural Ventures). Private sales of honey, chicken and eggs, and maple syrup occur but there is no organized outlet for market opportunities. There are no community gardens with the exception of the school garden and no community composting.

Food access includes senior meals weekly at the community center, monthly dinners at the church, school lunches and a weekly Food Shelf held at the church.

The availability of food through retail distribution is limited to the Roxbury Country Store, which is at least 10 miles away for the population that lives in East Roxbury, and a larger market in Northfield which is 7 miles from the center of Roxbury. Roxbury currently does not have a farmer's market but there is one held weekly during the summer months in nearby Northfield.

According to the Food Access Map ([map.ccrpcvt.org/foodretailaccess](http://map.ccrpcvt.org/foodretailaccess)) recently developed by the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission 36 Roxbury households are enrolled in the SNAP program which provides for assisted food access and the poverty level in Roxbury is estimated at 11.7% with 8 households that do not have vehicles.

### Historic Resources

Roxbury contains numerous historic sites and structures including many private residences, several schoolhouses, the Town Hall, two churches (one acting as a church and the other converted to a woodworking shop), and several historic cemeteries (including First Settlers, Orcutt, West Hill, Village, East Roxbury and Roxbury Flats). Roxbury has a Community Center (old Grange Hall), that currently hosts Senior Meals and other services and events. The porch of the Hall was rebuilt in 2020. Roxbury also claims the first state fish hatchery, which was established in 1891 and rebuilt after near total destruction from Tropical Storm Irene in 2011.

### Scenic Resources

Due to its rural nature and rugged topography, Roxbury offers many scenic vistas and ridgelines, and the town contains many backcountry ponds, small mountain streams and waterfalls. In addition to many scenic back roads, primary roads of special note are Routes 12 and 12A and the Warren Mountain Road which are included in the region's fall foliage and bicycle tours.



### Public Outdoor Recreation Areas

The rural nature of Roxbury lends itself to many types of outdoor activity. The Roxbury State Forest provides many recreational opportunities for the public including hiking, picnicking, primitive camping, hunting, fishing, and cross-country skiing. In addition to those found on state owned lands, many outdoor recreational opportunities exist in town. Roxbury's back roads provide excellent biking, hiking and horseback riding opportunities. The small streams in town offer fishing opportunities as well as a place to cool off in the summer. In winter, the Vermont Association of Snow Travelers (VAST) maintains a network of non- highway trails which is used for snowmobiling as well as cross-country skiing. In 1999, the Roxbury Land Conservation Association established Roxbury's first park, the Third Branch Conservation Park on the banks of Third Branch of the White River across from the Roxbury State Forest. Its geographic location is three miles south of the village on Route 12A. A community ice skating rink is established annually on the green between the Town Office and the fire station.

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## 2. DEMOGRAPHICS

### 2.0 OVERVIEW

As discussed in the Town History section of this Plan, the all-time high population level of Roxbury was 1,060 in the year 1860. When the boom years were over, the number of residents steadily declined until it reached a low of 354 in 1970. Since then, however, the population has been rising with an ebb and flow. Based upon 2018 census estimates was 744 and dropped slightly to 736 in 2019. Since 1980, on average, Roxbury population growth has increased at a rate higher than that of the county and of the State. Surprisingly, while the overall population of Vermont decreased, Roxbury's has increased.

TABLE 2.1 POPULATION DENSITY (PERSONS/SQUARE MILE)

	1990	2000	% change	2010	% change	2019	% change
Roxbury	13.9	13.8	- 0.7%	17.0	+ 23.2%	17.6	+ 3.5%
Wash. Co	77.6	84.2	+ 8.5%	85.6	+ 1.66%	-	-
Vermont	60.9	65.9	+ 8.2%	67.6	+ 2.57%	-	-

Source: Extrapolated from 1990, 2000, 2010 U.S. Census, 2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

### 2.1 POPULATION PROFILE:

Much of Roxbury's recent population growth has occurred in the 45–65-year-old categories. As Table 2.2 indicates, the one area of population decline in Roxbury is among its youngest age categories (0 - 14 years). This often comes up for conversation; what will Roxbury do as its population ages? Perhaps the requirement of commuting to work daily, in sometimes severe conditions, is enough of a deterrent that prevents younger people from settling in Roxbury. Whatever the cause is, Roxbury and Vermont as a whole, are experiencing a drought of young people. While Roxbury cannot “solve” this population, we continue to be a fun and energetic community and hope that our positive attitude and ample scenery, outdoor activities and close access to 2 major ski areas will appeal to others as it has to us. We are also aware of the difficulty of aging in place. We are lucky to have such willing and able caregivers in the area who travel from home to home on a case-by-case basis; Meals on Wheels also provides delivery of warm meals to seniors in need. There is a senior/community center which provides weekly lunch for those who aren't home bound and want to check in with their neighbors.



Over 40% of Roxbury residents have attended college and median household incomes have risen over recent years. The median home value has also risen. Census data also shows that the percentage of persons living below the poverty level has fallen and is lower than the state average (Table 2.6). This indicates on average an educated, older, and financially stable population.

TABLE 2.2 AGE DISTRIBUTION (PERCENT OF TOTAL PERSONS)

	1990	2000	2010	2019
0-14 Years	25%	19.1%	15%	12.6%
15-24 Years	8%	10.9%	9%	9.9%
25-44 Years	24%	29.5%	25%	22.3%
45-64 Years	29%	31.1%	38%	34.9%
65 Years & Over	11%	9.3%	13%	20.3%

Source: 1990, 2000, 2010 U.S. Census, 2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

TABLE 2.3 EDUCATION LEVEL ACHIEVED FOR PERSONS 25 + YEARS OR OLDER (PERCENT OF TOTAL PERSONS)

	K-8 Grade	9-11 Grade	H.S. Graduate	1-3 Years College	4 + Years College
2019	3.3%	6.3%	32.3%	28.2%	29.8%
2010	1.0%	16.1%	35.2%	30.6%	17.1%
2000	4.9%	11.7%	33.5%	22.1%	27.8%

Source: 2000 U.S. Census, 2010, 2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Roxbury is socially and economically diverse. Census statistics show that the town has unusually high percentages of both highly educated and minimally educated people (see Table 2.3), as well as a mixture of occupation categories among its employed work-force. Despite low median income levels, Roxbury has at least a smattering of households in almost all of the U.S. Census household income categories (ranging from under \$5,000 to over \$150,000 per year). The Town's recent diversification is further illustrated by the fact that in 1980, native born Vermonters comprised 68% of Roxbury's population and by 1990 this figure had dropped to 60%, 62.5% in 2000 to a modern low in 2010 at 41%. Roxbury's statistics are changing in part because of a population that is mobile.

TABLE 2.4 MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

	2000	2010	2018
Roxbury	\$44,000	\$38,594	\$62,083
Washington County	\$51,075	\$55,313	\$62,108

Source: 2000, 2010 U.S. Census; 2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates



TABLE 2.5 MEDIAN HOME VALUE

	2000	2010	2018
Roxbury	\$64,000	\$136,500	\$256,500
Washington County	\$86,522	\$205,410	\$221,500

Source: 2010 U.S. Census, 2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

TABLE 2.6 PERSONS BELOW POVERTY LEVEL (PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL POPULATION)

	1990		2000		2010		2019	
Roxbury	66	11%	52	9.1%	82	11.9%	39	5.3%
Vermont	53,369	9%	57,779	9.4%	56,316	9.0%	65,652	10.9%

Source: 2000, 2010 U.S. Census; 2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

The picture painted by the above statistics is brightened by the relatively low cost of housing in town: an average single-family home in Roxbury costs about 10% less than the average Washington County home. The average cost of renting a home is also less than in the rest of the region.

### 3. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Economic development supports the stability and growth of a community. It is important that the growth of development in a community supports the quality of life, a viable economy, while maintaining the natural resources of the community.

In earlier times, Roxbury's economy was based largely on its natural resources. Until the latter half of this century, mining, forestry, and farming were the economic mainstays and most people earned their living in town. Now, with only 22% of Roxbury's employed residents working in town, Roxbury has evolved into a "bedroom community".

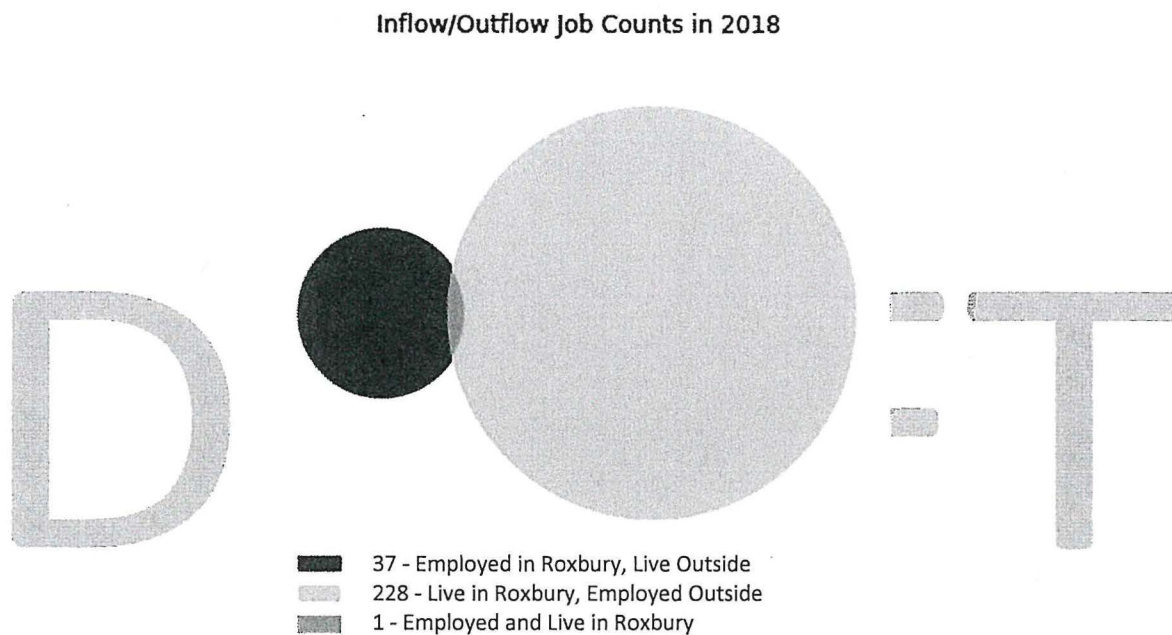


FIGURE 3.1 INFLOW/OUTFLOW JOB COUNTS FOR ROXBURY TOWN (ON THE MAP)

The local workforce has grown about 10% over the last decade, as has the number of jobs available locally. Yet the majority of residents of Roxbury work outside of the town as shown in the above diagram (Figure 3.1 and Table 2.1Table 3.1). The data represented here does not represent those who work from home, around 10% of employed residents (US Census Bureau ACS 5 year estimates, 2019).



TABLE 3.1 PLACE OF WORK

	Roxbury 2010	Roxbury 2018	% change
Resident Workforce	207	229	10%
Jobs Within Community	24	38	58%
% Local Jobs Held by Non-Residents	100%	97%	3%
% Residents Working Outside Community	100%	99.6%	0.4%

Source: 2010 and 2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, On the Map

According to 2019 American Community Survey Data, the majority of Roxbury residents work in management and service occupations. It should be noted that this employment data does not necessarily include the occupations and industries available in Roxbury, but rather the occupations held by individuals who live in Roxbury and the industries in which they work.

TABLE 3.2 OCCUPATIONAL FIELDS OF ROXBURY RESIDENTS

	2010	2019		
	Roxbury	Roxbury	Washington County	Vermont
Civilian employed population 16 years and over	236	392	31,131	329,028
Management, business, science, and arts occupations	29%	34%	46%	42%
Service occupations	23%	16%	16%	17%
Sales and office occupations	14%	17%	20%	20%
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	15%	14%	9%	10%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	19%	19%	9%	11%

2010 and 2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates



The residents who are not self-employed but work in the community of Roxbury tend to work in service occupations rather than in industrial settings. The few industrial opportunities include the State Fish Hatchery, auto repair and seasonal gardening.

Home-based employment continues to grow as a significant portion of the economy. Roxbury is home to a variety of small businesses, including craftspeople, artists, mechanics, contractors, camps, inns, and more. Based upon the listing maintained by the Vermont Secretary of State Office, as of December 2020 there are 71 registered and active businesses operating in Roxbury; indicating many who work in town are likely to be self-employed, and work from home.

The 2019 town plan survey showed that 25% of the respondents are self-employed. The survey did not address individuals who work by telecommuting. Although this work type has increased significantly statewide as a result of the 2020 pandemic, the lack of sufficient internet access in Roxbury is a deterrent.

Local unemployment trends have mirrored those at the County and State level in recent years and have remained low. And while the onset of the coronavirus pandemic did result in a spike in unemployment levels, recent data indicates local rates are returning to similar to those pre-pandemic.

Roxbury is in close proximity to other municipalities with more significant economic activity and opportunities. The Mad River Valley towns to the west of Roxbury offer a ski-resort focused economy and Northfield, to the north of Roxbury, is home to Norwich University. The regional employment centers of Montpelier and Barre are also within 20 miles commuting distance. All providing more employment opportunities.

The Village has the highest concentration of economic activity and serves as the historic center of civic and commercial life in Roxbury. The municipal offices, the town garage, the Roxbury Village School along with the Roxbury General Store, Tim Martin's Auto Sales and Service, Frazier's Greenhouse and Windridge at Teelawooket Camp are all located in the Village.

Windridge Summer Camp is the largest employer in town and attracts the most visitors to town, particularly during the summer months. Originally founded in 1913 as an exclusive girls' camp, it was sold in 1989 and became Windridge. Today the camp is co-ed, and conducts tennis, soccer, and horseback-riding camps throughout the summer. In addition to the extensive recreational facilities the camp campus includes dormitory buildings, a dining hall, and a pro-shop. Counselors and campers come from all over the country and the world to attend the 10–20-day sleepaway camp sessions. In 2011 the camp opened the Inn at Windridge at Teelawooket, to provide bed and breakfast-style lodging for adults who wish to also attend camp sessions. Windridge at Teelawooket's facilities are also available for rental; weddings, conferences, sports events, and family reunions.

Roxbury has reasonably decent internet service, but the majority of residents do not have access to high-speed internet, a critical component in business operations today. According to the Public Service Department, an internet speed of 25 Megabits per second (Mbps) download, and 3 Mbps upload is considered “high speed internet,” and this is reported as “25/3”. A speed of 100/100 is considered “very high-speed internet.” The Level of service provided to Roxbury residents can be seen in the table below:

TABLE 3.3 ROXBURY INTERNET SPEEDS

Roxbury Internet Speeds	
Total Buildings	505
Percent served 100/100 or better	14.50%
Percent served 25/3 or better	14.50%
Percent served 4/1 or better	99.20%
Percent Underserved	0.80%

Source: VT Public Service Department, 2019

Most Roxbury residents have internet speeds of 4/1, and only 29% have internet speeds of 25/3 or greater, which has been reported as a minimum speed required for video conferencing and working from home. Businesses in the village center Roxbury report that the internet speed is often unreliable for business purposes.

Roxbury is blessed with extensive scenic natural beauty and expansive forestlands. Natural resources provide opportunities for forest and agricultural- based businesses and economic development such as the management and harvest of lumber and biomass, maple syrup production, and creation of value-added products such as furniture and cabinetry. Farming operations have declined yet small operations continue to operate. These industries play a



critical role in conserving land and prevent fragmentation of the landscape, and they also allow residents to earn a living locally. Roxbury's natural environment also supports outdoor recreational activities such as hiking, hunting, fishing, horseback riding, off road ATV use and snowmobiling. These provide opportunities for residents to enjoy the outdoors but also attracts visitors to town.

Population growth in Roxbury continues at a slow pace currently but pandemic relocation and anticipated climate migration could have a significant effect on both the population and economy of Roxbury. The location of Roxbury in the center of the state, close to the capital of Montpelier, close to 2 large ski areas, close to the interstate highway and its rural character in an area of scenic beauty provides significant opportunity for marketing Roxbury as a town to live in.

The 2019 town plan survey showed support for the growth of new business in Roxbury, 75% in favor. Many also indicated a need for more locally produced agriculture, 70% in favor.

Business development and expansion is limited in Roxbury due to the lack of wastewater infrastructure and environmental constraints. Properties must rely on private systems for water source and wastewater disposal. The presence of high-water tables, wetlands and floodplains in many locations adjacent to the Village center complicate new development.

Lack of 3-phase power may also be another obstacle for future economic development in the Village area.

## 4. HOUSING:

The availability, cost and location of housing within our community affects land use, land value, employment and transportation as well as the social and economic mix and vitality in our community. Roxbury's homes come in a large variety of sizes, shapes, conditions and ages. Roxbury does recognize that a full range of housing alternatives must be available to ensure that it remains a socially diverse and economically viable community. It is also recognized that it is a difficult challenge for the town to ensure an adequate supply of decent and affordable housing. Development should not put undue strain on the Town, however it is important to note that development should be localized to already built-up areas as illustrated on our Future Land Use map. It makes sense for the Town to plan for growth as the housing market is subject to change and such growth is likely to come eventually.

### 4.0 STOCK AND TREND:

Historically, the greatest density of housing in Roxbury was largely confined to the village area, with a church, school, town hall, general store, library and post office providing the town center. However, the trend is now toward development in the more rural landscape along our maintained road system. The number of housing units has greatly increased during the past twenty years. In 1970, there were 188 units; by 1990, that figure had jumped to 338 units and jumped again in 2010 to 441. However, the 2018 census estimates indicate the number has dropped to 430, a decrease of -9.6% from 2010.

Roxbury's housing stock consists mainly of owner occupied, (63%), single family detached (85%) homes. There is a limited supply of duplexes and units in multi-family buildings which are generally more affordable options for young persons and families and those seeking to downsize. The number of households continues to grow and in general the size of households is shrinking, a trend mirrored at the county level. The average size of a home based on the number of bedrooms also mirrors the county wide averages.

Based upon the age of Roxbury's population, 20% of the population is over 65 years old. However, there are no elderly housing or assisted living facilities in Roxbury. Indicating that if residents need or desire particular services or assistance in daily routines, they will need to either require in-home care or move out of town. There are a number of agencies that provide these services in Central Vermont and quite a few people/families use these services.

A few housing units are served by the water system constructed in conjunction with the expansion of the Roxbury Village School.

The following tables illustrate the growth of housing and household size in Roxbury as compared to the surrounding region:



TABLE 4.1 HOUSING UNITS - VACANT AND OCCUPIED

	1990	2000	2010	2018
Roxbury	207	227	441	430
Wash. Co.	22,948	23,659	29,941	35,325

Source: 2010 census, 2018 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates

TABLE 4.2 HOUSEHOLDS &amp; HOUSEHOLD SIZE (OCCUPANTS)

	2000		2010		2018	
	#	Household Size	#	Household Size	#	Household Size
Roxbury	227	2.54	300	2.30	314	2.37
Wash. Co	23,659	2.36	25,027	2.28	24,865	2.26

Source: 2010 census, 2018 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates

TABLE 4.3 HOUSING UNIT CATEGORIES BY OCCUPANCY OR USE

	2000	2010		2018	
	# of Units	# of Units	% Change	# of Units	% Change
Owner Occupied	222	300	+35%	271	-9.6%
Renter Occupied	-				
Vacation/Seasonal	151	118	-28%	90	-23%
Vacant, For Sale or Lease, Other	28	23	-22%	26	+13%
<b>Total Units</b>	<b>401</b>	<b>441</b>	<b>+15%</b>	<b>430</b>	<b>-2.5%</b>

Source: 2000, 2010 U.S. Census, 2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

TABLE 4.4 AVERAGE NUMBER OF BEDROOMS (AS PERCENT OF TOTAL)

	0	1	2	3	4	5+
Roxbury	3%	12%	30%	39%	13%	3%
Wash Co.	3%	13%	25%	39%	15%	4%

Source: 2018 American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates



TABLE 4.5 HOUSING BUILDING TYPES

	# of Units	% of Units
Single family, detached	366	85%
Single family, attached	10	2.3%
Multifamily Building (2 units)	6	1.4%
Multifamily Building (3-4 units)	4	0.9%
Multifamily Building (5-9 units)	2	0.6%
Mobile Home	39	9.1%
Boat, RV, van, etc	3	0.7%

Source: 2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

#### 4.1 COST AND AFFORDABILITY

Home values in Roxbury have increased 88% over the past 8 years and income has increased almost 61%. Roxbury is no longer less expensive than its neighbors; home values and rental costs now exceed those of surrounding towns. Using the standard definition of "affordability" (total housing costs consuming no more than 30% of household income), it appears that the average homeowner in Roxbury can afford the median priced house or rent in Roxbury. However, it is a different story for households which rent.

Households paying more than 30% of their income on housing costs are considered to be a cost burden, and those paying more than 50% are severely cost burdened. At least 54% of households which rent are cost burdened and 31% are paying more than 50% for housing.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines low-income households as those with income between 30%-50%, (\$18,632- \$31,054) and moderate-income households as those with between 50-80% (\$31,054- \$49,686.) These households would struggle to find housing which is affordable in Roxbury.

TABLE 4.6 COMPARISON OF MEDIAN INCOME AND MEDIAN HOME VALUE

	2000 Home Value	2000 Income	2010 Home Value	2010 Income	2018 Home Value	2018 Income
Roxbury	\$64,000	\$44,000	\$136,500	\$38,594	\$256,500	\$62,083
Washington County	\$86,522	\$51,075	\$205,410	\$55,313	\$221,500	\$62,108

Source: 2010 U.S. Census, 2018 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates

TABLE 4.7 COMPARISON OF MEDIAN HOME VALUE AND MEDIAN RENTAL COST FOR REGION

	2010 Home Value	2010 Rental Cost	2018 Home Value	2018 Rental Cost
Roxbury	\$136,500	\$928	\$256,500	\$1,161
Northfield	\$173,600	\$1080	\$192,650	\$845
Warren	\$255,300	\$1141	\$200,000	\$732

Source: 2010 U.S. Census, American Community Survey 5 year Estimates

TABLE 4.8 COST BURDEN

	Roxbury		Washington County	
	Paying 30% or more	Paying more than 50%	Paying 30% or more	Paying more than 50%
All	27%	13%	33%	14%
Owner	23%	10%	29%	12%
Renter	54%	31%	44%	19%

Source: American Community Survey 5 year Estimates



Many of the factors that affect the affordability of housing are beyond the control of the town government however there are some that can be addressed. The main issues of concern to Roxbury's residents are that quality housing should be available to people of all incomes and all age groups and family types. This includes affordable housing for both homeowners and renters, the existence and the lack of housing for the elderly.

Roxbury's geographic limitations of many steep slopes and historic flood hazards along its rivers and wetlands affect the areas of the town which are best suited for additional housing units. Accessibility to main roadways where future links to transportation may be possible, should be prioritized, as well as design and construction techniques which could mitigate possible flood damage. Future planning for water supply and sewer linkages should consolidate best housing growth into limited Village locations.

The Town should allow the development of accessory dwelling units within the town limits to encourage affordable housing growth while preserving undeveloped land. An accessory dwelling unit can be defined as an additional small dwelling on the same property or attached to a single-family home. Examples of an ADU include, but are not limited to, a garage apartment, a backyard cottage or a tiny house. Accessory dwelling units may be built for various reasons that include housing family members who are unable to live independently or producing extra income if rented to help with mortgage and tax payments. Requirements that must be met are as follows: The homeowner's property must have capacity to handle the additional demand for septic (wastewater) disposal required by the ADU. Accessory dwelling units should be constructed outside flood and fluvial erosion hazard areas. If the ADU is to be rented, Vermont Landlord-Tenant laws will apply, as well as Vermont Lead Paint Laws, Race discrimination Laws and Rental Housing Health Codes.

## 5. TRANSPORTATION

### 5.0 OVERVIEW

With today's highly mobile society, a working and up-to-date transportation network is needed to accommodate the increased population and travel patterns of its community. Unlike many of Vermont's towns, Roxbury has the potential for interfacing three modes of travel: bus, car/truck and rail. The GMTA bus route has pickups as close as Northfield Monday – Friday, it is even timed appropriately to connect with transfers to points North and south. The train is another great option, with boarding opportunities in Montpelier and Randolph.

Ultimately, expanding and creating transportation links to the three regional airports offering passenger service within an hour of Roxbury, would increase access to Roxbury for residents and visitors. The three airports are Rutland Regional Airport, 60 miles, Lebanon Municipal Airport, 57 miles, and Burlington International Airport, 57 miles, which serves both passenger and military planes.

### 5.1 RAIL

At the present time, the New England Central Railroad is active with freight service passing through Roxbury. Amtrak passenger service to St. Albans and points south passes twice a day. Neither service makes a stop in Roxbury. A rail siding currently exists in the Village. The potential exists for additional rail sidings elsewhere in town.

In years past, there had been passenger service to Roxbury. Today, Amtrak passenger stations are located 15 miles north at Montpelier Junction and 15 miles south at Randolph. Although future Amtrak service to Roxbury is very doubtful, it is conceivable that a passenger car commuter or other service to central Vermont could stop at Roxbury at some point in the future.

### 5.2 TRANSPORTATION SERVICES:

Through their Community Wheels program, Central Vermont Transportation Association (CVTA) and the Central Vermont Council on Aging (CVCOA) provide door-to-door services to banks, drugstores, medical offices, etc., by van, bus, taxi and volunteer driver. CVTA also provides bus service one day per week from Roxbury to the Montpelier/Barre area. Human service organizations provide or arrange transportation for their clients. In addition, CVTA Wheels is the Roxbury connection for the Vermont Ride-Share Program, a statewide network providing free carpool matching. Roxbury provides a park and ride area but as many service-industry jobs don't always overlap for ride sharing the lot does not get as much use as we would like. It is utilized though, and those who use it do appreciate it.

### 5.3 HIGHWAYS:

Although rail and bus transportation are part of Roxbury's transportation network, its highway network demands the majority of attention and funding. The primary attention needed year-



round for Roxbury roads, is to deal with water run-off. Efforts to deal with this include ditching the swales along the sides of the road with stone or grass liners. Roxbury's steep slopes accelerate water run-off significantly. Ditching helps to reduce accumulations of silt reaching water sources in the Village areas.

With the passage of the Clean Water Act, municipalities now carry responsibility to lessen these impacts and adhere to the requirements of the State's Municipal Road General Permit (MRGP). The MRGP's requirements include conducting an inventory of current road and culvert outfall conditions and summarizing the findings. Having completed this Road Erosion Inventory, the Town will have until December 31, 2036 to implement upgrades to meet the MRGP standards. Managing the Permit requires additional local administrative capacity.

In response to statewide flood damages caused by tropical storm Irene in 2011, the State of Vermont is in the process of developing the Transportation Resiliency Planning Tool (TRPT). Utilizing a watershed-level, spatial analysis this mapping tool will identify the flood-risk vulnerability of the road system caused by river processes and identify specific road segments, embankments, and structures susceptible to such risks. Once data for Roxbury is uploaded this will provide a resource toward building flood resilience in the transportation system.

The Vermont Agency of Transportation lists a total of 50.198 miles for state and town roadways in Roxbury.

### **Classification of Town Highways (Title 19 V.S.A, 302)**

*For the purpose of receiving state aid, all town highways shall be categorized into one or another section. Class 1, Class 2 Class 3 Class 4, Legal Trails, and State Highway.*

### **Roxbury's Highway classifications**

Class 1. 0.00 miles. These are extensions of state highways and carry a state highway number.

Class 2. 3.080 miles. These are Town highways selected as the main highways in each town and have more than the normal traffic. These roadways connect with neighboring towns. Warren Mountain Road is Roxbury's only class 2 road.

Class 3. 31.720 miles. These are all traveled highways other than Class 1 and 2. Most roads in Roxbury fall into class 3 category

3A. Traveled town highways other than class one or 2

3B. Maintained and negotiable in all seasons

3C. Provisional to be reclassified if it will meet Class 3 Highway regulations in future.

Class 4. 10.080 miles All other non-class 3 roads or trails.

State Highways. 7.600 Miles. Route 12 and 12 A state numbered route.

#### **5.4 BIKE PATHS AND PEDESTRIAN WAYS**

Cycling and Walking should be encouraged as much as possible as a climate change friendly mode of transportation. Roxbury currently has no formal bike paths or walking paths like other neighboring towns in the region such as Waitsfield, Barre, Montpelier, Waterbury, or Stowe, etc. Bike Paths/Routes can be a good resource for local transportation. Every season one can observe many large charity rides traveling through Roxbury. The Warren Mountain Road is part of the very popular 5 gaps route taken by cycling enthusiasts with the passion and stamina to do so.

With the upgrade to Route 12A, the road was widened to allow for more room for biking. Sidewalks need to be upgraded in the Village for better pedestrian access. There may, however, be justification for these expenditures as a means of providing for some of the recreation needs for the town. Existing class 4 roads make great hiking and mountain biking trails. Some consideration should be given to providing maps and other information as may be required to promote this use.

DRAFT



## 6. COMMUNITY UTILITIES, FACILITIES AND SERVICES

### 6.0 EDUCATION:

In 2020, the Roxbury Village School, located in the center of Roxbury, educates students in kindergarten through grade 4. Students in Middle and High School travel by bus to Montpelier.

In 2017, the town of Roxbury's School Board chose to merge with Montpelier Public Schools to meet the requirements of Act 46. Previously, Roxbury had been part of the Washington South Supervisory District. This action prevented them having to make future mergers with other communities. It allowed Roxbury to end the practice of paying tuition for high school students in the future to attend other high schools and reduce their operating costs. It allowed Montpelier to increase its student population which helped their tax base.

MRPS, the Montpelier Roxbury Public School District is made up of four schools serving Montpelier and Roxbury. MRPS schools are caring, creative, and equitable communities that ensure all children grow into engaged citizens and become lifelong learners.

RVS is proud to have established a vibrant outdoor activity program. Students actively participate in planting and harvesting food from the beautiful on-site gardens. They also regularly visit a local farm to learn about various plants and animals.

Vocational education is available for students from Roxbury by several options. They can attend classes at either the Barre Technical Center or the Technical Center in Randolph whichever provides the classes in their area of interest. They can also set up their own plan with a counselor which could include arranging opportunities to intern in specific fields.

Vermont Technical College in Randolph provides numerous post-high school educational opportunities, including advanced vocational studies. Norwich University, 6 miles away, accepts non-residential students and transfer credits. Both institutions provide Roxbury students opportunities for a broad selection of post high school education at reduced cost.

#### A. ENROLLMENT AND SCHOOL CAPACITY

##### Past Trends:

Due to increasing school population and overcrowding, the Roxbury Village School was renovated and expanded in 1980, providing three classrooms connected to the Town Hall. A new artesian well was also drilled that year. In 1990, Roxbury citizens voted for the construction of a second school addition with an updated sewage disposal system. The playground was expanded, re-graded and re-seeded. In 1999, a new playground was constructed by town volunteers, with money raised by the parents and other town citizens.

With two new classrooms, the Town Hall was again available for other uses. The addition also provided office space, a library and a resource room for students to receive remedial help.

#### Current Trends and Future Projections:

Currently the Roxbury Village School provides adequate space for its students. However, accurate projections for future enrollment are difficult to determine. There is some fluctuation in the school population each year. One factor affecting the population of the town has been the health of the local and regional economies and the resulting job opportunities.

At the point a desired upgrade of internet connectivity to the Roxbury community happens, increasing the possibility of businesses and employees working fully from home online, the desirability of moving to Roxbury will increase making for a more robust community and tax base. This would result in a growth of school enrollment as well.

TABLE 6.1: ROXBURY VILLAGE SCHOOL DATA

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
STUDENTS	60	51	44	49	26
FREE/REDUCED MEALS	27	22	17	23	-
LOW INCOME	45%	43.1%	38.64%	46.94%	-

During the 2020 school year, Roxbury's enrollment was affected by the Covid 19 Pandemic as students went to remote learning in March 2020. Numbers for the current 2020/2021 school year were estimated from prior registrations and were expected to include remote and in person students. Since that time, a number of children have left the school to do home schooling apart from the public schools. This number is likely to increase due to shortened days and limited staffing.

The dilemma for parents of balancing work, in person school hours, child-care and remote learning will continue to affect families and school enrollment in the near future.

Longer term goals should include policies which encourage group child-care options in safe, modern structures staffed by trained educators.

### **6.1 ROXBURY FREE LIBRARY**

The Roxbury Free Library strives to provide quality reading and reference materials and scheduled educational programs for children and adults. The library provides Internet access as well as connection to the Vermont Automated Library System (VALS), which affords access to



inter-library loan programs. The library provides public access computers as well as electronic tablets for in-library use and loan. There is free Wi-Fi in and around the library 24/7. No password required.

Services and programs include Preschool Story Time, monthly adult book discussions, Summer Reading programs and special educational programs and classes. The library is run by part-time librarians and volunteers and is funded by the Town and by community donations. Grant money from the Vermont Council on the Humanities has enabled special programs to be presented. Through the Reading Is Fundamental grant, all preschoolers through sixth graders receive a book at no cost three times a year. The number of volumes is approximately 9000. The town residents expressed (through town meeting day and donations) support and were pleased with recent renovations and technological resources. The community will continue to have improved access to the library and its services. Library users will enjoy a varied collection of formats (books, books on tape/CD, videos and magazines, digital books) for borrowing. The Library also encourages the use of Universal class, a database of over 500 free online classes, available free of charge to patrons. The staff of the Library provides assistance with on-line searches.

## **6.2 HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

The Historical Society is housed in a small building that was for many years the Town Clerk's Office. This building is characteristic of the period when the Village center was settled. The building contains many items of historical significance to the town along with other memorabilia of years past.

## **6.3 RECREATION**

Roxbury Village is limited in terms of the availability of open space for recreational purposes and facilities. Due to the narrowness of its valley and the flooding potential that exists in the village. The Roxbury School Yard hosts a large grassy area, playground equipment, and basketball hoops which local children and families can be seen enjoying throughout the summer. Camp Windridge at Teelawooket, the town's most well-known recreational resource, is located at the north end of the village, and is renowned for its tennis, soccer and horseback riding programs, drawing campers from throughout the northeast and even other countries. The camp has a program to share some of its facilities with residents of the town.

Roxbury's most valuable recreational assets include its forest and conservation land which afford bountiful opportunities for hunting, fishing, hiking, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, camping, horseback riding, bird watching, non-highway ATV use and mountain biking. One of the most popular and scenic road cycling loops in the state runs right through Roxbury on Rt. 12A with recently widened improved shoulders for cycling.



The Third Branch Conservation Park, located on Roxbury Flat (just south of the village) was established by a group of residents in 1999, and contains a small picnic area and recreation space. It has been suggested that the Planning Commission keep apprised of further opportunities for residents to pool resources and rescue scenic areas from development. About a half-mile south of the park is the Roxbury State Fish Hatchery, which is a favorite destination of residents, tourists, and great blue herons.

The Community/Senior Center has seen a considerable increase in use in the past few years. The seniors meet there for lunch weekly and on special occasions, and there's always a good community turnout for the monthly potluck suppers. The building is also used regularly by the Girl Scouts, and has been the hub of special events, including Green-up Day and July 4th festivities. Also in recent years, the Roxbury Free Library has widened the scope of its impact on the town, featuring diversified programs; when it expects a large crowd at an event, it, too, will make use of the center. The town is fortunate to have a group of dedicated volunteers who have worked tirelessly, with success, to obtain grants to restore the building. Due in large part to the library and the Community Center, there has been a significant rise in the vitality of the town and in community spirit since our last town plan was written.

A survey conducted by the Planning Commission on Town Meeting Day posed the question, "Should the town establish other types of areas for recreational purposes?" An overwhelming majority of residents responded negatively or were unsure. Many felt the town should make maximum use of its approximately 20 miles of woodland trails and improve upon the sections that warrant it. Additionally, a group of residents are meeting regularly to rediscover and map ancient roads, both for their historical significance and as an added recreational asset to the town.

#### **6.4 LAW ENFORCEMENT**

The Town of Roxbury has no police department. The Vermont State Police are available when needed, but do not provide comprehensive police services. The town does have a Constable, but that officer has no law enforcement authority. The Town Constable makes occasional checks on seasonal homes and hunting camps, assists the State Police in case of accidents and other emergencies, serves subpoenas and restraining orders, and receives occasional calls regarding nuisance situations.

The Selectboard has the responsibility of enforcing Town ordinances.

## 6.5 FIRE DEPARTMENT

Fire protection services are provided by the Roxbury Volunteer Fire Department. It currently has 9 active volunteers that are on call to respond to fire emergencies and ambulance assists. Roxbury is a member of the Capitol Fire Mutual Aid System, consisting of 27 towns in Central Vermont. Roxbury also has automatic response with Northfield fire for fire only. Currently 6 members are certified in State of Vermont Fire Training.

In a typical year, the fire department responds to approximately 20 calls per year, half are Roxbury emergencies, 2 mutual aid calls. Generally, more than half of the calls are fire-related, with the rest related to traffic accidents and EMS calls. The Roxbury Fire Department facility was originally the town garage building and became a fire department building in 1968 with 2 bays. An addition was made 1975 to add a third bay. Currently there are five dry hydrant installations in Roxbury. Equipment owned by the Fire Department includes:

- 1250 gallon pumper (purchased in 2002)
- 1800 gallon tanker (purchased in 2011)
- self contained breathing apparatus
- 1500 feet of hose
- forest fire equipment
- 2016 International Tarastar first responder
- 1990 Mac tanker pumper

The department is I.S.O certified (at present time has a 9/10 rating. Dry hydrants to supplement firefighting have been installed at the following locations:

- Tracey Hill Road
- Ordway Road
- Youngs Pond
- Northfield Road
- Premo Road

State funding is available for hydrant installation. Additional membership is needed to insure adequate coverage, especially for daytime fires. As a greater number of residents find employment outside of town, the challenge of adequate fire coverage by volunteer squads becomes a greater concern that needs to be addressed.

Current budgetary needs are being met. A fund is established for eventual purchase of vehicle needs, likely to cost over \$400,000.



## 6.6 HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Many elements of a town impact the health and wellness of its residents. While Roxbury is a community largely of green space, there remains a need for greater access to healthy homes, healthy food, outdoor resources and other aspects of healthy community living.

Roxbury has a Town Health Officer and a FAST squad of local volunteers that provides a first response system for the Northfield Ambulance Service. The Green Mountain Family Practice in Northfield is the closest medical facility for outpatient services. Central Vermont Home Health and Hospice, Inc. serves Roxbury citizens in their homes. Gifford in Randolph and Central Vermont Hospital in Berlin provide nearby hospital services.

There are many older homes in Roxbury which may present problems such as lead paint, asbestos and radon exposure in addition to the structural hazards of uneven floors and narrow stairways.

The village center of Roxbury is located in a valley and because wood burning is a source of heat for a significant number of homes, air quality can be diminished at times.

Outdoor recreation opportunities abound in the rural setting of Roxbury. In addition, the tennis courts of the Windridge at Teelawooket Camp, located in the village center, are available for resident use. A community park is also currently being established in the village center. A community fund-raising effort was completed with the resulting purchased parcel of land in the village center just across the street from our village school. This will be developed into a village park, creating a meeting place for young and old citizens and visitors to enjoy. It will be ADA accessible with paved paths and gardens, making it an ideal destination. Community input for other functions and design ideas are presently being sought. Development of the site will begin this summer and continue into 2022.

Substance misuse is a problem in most communities. The availability of tobacco and alcohol exists in two local stores. At the present time the availability of legal drugs does not exist, but this will change regionally with the passage of laws to legalize the sale of marijuana. Regulation of alcohol, tobacco and drug use should be addressed to prevent hazards to health in the community, and prohibited with signage, in all defined public indoor and outdoor venues.



## 6.7 SOLID WASTE

Currently, Roxbury is a member of the Mad River Waste District and complies with recycling and composting laws.

The Town of Roxbury and its citizens have participated actively in Green-Up Day on the first Saturday each May to help combat this problem as well as continued general littering. Green Up Vermont is a nonprofit organization, first established in 1970, and it's been an integral part of Roxbury's community agenda nearly every spring ever since. Green Up's mission is to promote the stewardship of our state's natural landscape and waterways, and the livability of our communities, while raising public awareness about the benefits of a litter-free environment. We are gratified that Roxbury's eager participation in this endeavor grows every year, and we are committed to seeing that it continues to flourish, as our highways and byways become more pristine.

## 6.8 SEWAGE DISPOSAL AND WATER SUPPLY

The sewage and water systems for the Roxbury Village School also serve the Union Congregational Church and a few residences. All other sewage systems and water supplies, with the exception of systems serving the Town Offices and Town garage, are private. The septic system rules changed on July 1, 2007. Local jurisdiction over septic system permitting ceased to exist on that date. All permits are issued by the State of Vermont. The Town of Roxbury no longer has the authority to issue septic permits for new systems, replacement systems, or repairs.

## 6.9 TOWN ADMINISTRATION

The small town of Roxbury has very little business revenue and relies primarily on property taxes to run the Town. Roxbury is served by a Town Clerk, part-time assistant town clerk and a part-time Town Treasurer.

The three members of the Select board are elected by the voters to three-year terms. The duties of the Select board are many and varied. They must warn Town Meetings, propose the town's budget and set the tax rate as well as enact and enforce ordinances and regulations. They appoint citizens to various town boards and fill office vacancies until the next election. They are also responsible for hiring, directing and firing non-elected town employees. The Select board authorizes town expenditures. The members of the Select board, along with the Justices of the Peace, are also members of the Board of Civil Authority.

The three Listers are elected officials whose terms expire in consecutive years. The Listers determine individual property assessments and create the Grand List on which the tax rate is based.

Additional elected Town Officers include the Town Moderator, three Auditors who, as part of their auditing functions, prepare the annual Town Report and one School Director elected to

manage the educational services of the Montpelier Roxbury School District. The members of the Planning Commission are appointed by the Board of Selectmen.

#### **6.10 TOWN FACILITIES**

The municipal buildings in Roxbury include the Town Office Building, the Community Center, the Town Garage, the Fire Station, the Roxbury Free Library, and the Historical Society. The Town Garage is a priority for significant building upgrades with an estimated budget of \$1.2 million. Funding for this will be determined by a bond vote. The Community Center has undergone significant improvements over the past several years. The current need for this building is for interior work including kitchen and bathroom improvements. Work on this building has often come from a combination of town funding and volunteer work. The remaining municipal buildings are not currently in need of major improvements. Funding for town building maintenance comes from the general government budget for town buildings.

Funding the town budget is achieved primarily through individual property taxes. A small amount is derived through revenue from the town clerk's office. There currently is no business tax or inventory tax levied.

#### **6.11 CEMETERIES**

There are several cemeteries in Roxbury under the supervision of the Town. These are:

First Settlers' Cemetery, Orcutt Cemetery, West Hill Cemetery, East Roxbury Cemetery, Hayes Cemetery and the Roxbury Flats Cemetery and a cemetery on Route 12A north of the village.

#### **6.12 CHILD CARE**

Access to quality childcare is a basic need. Children require nurturing and guidance to flourish. Our community needs to prioritize resources to allow all parents to take advantage of child care programs. Although some parents choose to provide their own childcare by staying home or utilizing trusted family and friends, many other single or two parent families are dependent on out of home childcare to maintain their incomes. It is critical for these young families that Roxbury prioritizes providing resources and developing policies which encourage access to facilities and programs for these families and help with the financial burdens that they encounter. This will encourage an increasing number of young families to remain in town which is key to our town growth.

Presently, Roxbury Village School provides public preschool for ages 3-5 from 7:30-11am daily with a private childcare provider extending classroom time until 5pm. The Roxbury Free Library hosts a weekly story hour and other free activities for young children at unscheduled times. Prior to the pandemic, three private home-based facilities housing a maximum of six full time children were registered for operation with the state. These facilities are considered public buildings and are inspected by the state for health and fire safety and must obtain a water and wastewater disposal permit as well. The cost of maintaining a registered facility has increased due to increased cost of living, supplies and liability insurance which challenges these providers



in an environment where this service is critical for our families. Demand continues to be high as Vermont has the highest percentage of women in the workplace with children under the age of six.

The challenge for Roxbury is to develop policy and provide financial assistance to aid and encourage both those citizens establishing or maintaining state registered programs and parents who wish to utilize local high-quality childcare.

### **6.13 SENIOR SERVICES**

Roxbury senior citizens, aged 60 or older, may participate in a variety of programs and services offered through the Central Vermont Council on Aging or right here at our own Senior Center. Transportation is available through the Central Vermont Transportation Association "Wheels" program. Additionally, Roxbury senior citizens may participate in the programs sponsored by the Northfield Senior Center. Presently meals are served weekly to interested seniors at the Roxbury Community Hall.

### **6.14 SOCIAL SERVICES**

Roxbury Food Shelf is open and available to anyone in need located at the Roxbury Congregational Church. It is open every Wednesday of the month from 12:30 to 4:30 or on an emergency basis. The Roxbury Free Library publishes a newsletter, The Newsy, quarterly which is mailed to every household.

### **6.15 UTILITIES**

Green Mountain Power and Washington Electric Co-op provide electricity to Roxbury while a growing number of citizens are living "off the grid" on alternative energy sources. Phone service, for most residents, is through Northfield Telephone Company, a subsidiary of TDS Telecom; though some have opted for cell phones as their primary service if they are able to utilize the limited access to either cell or internet service. The activities and choices of the area's utility companies can have direct and indirect impacts on land use (both locally and elsewhere). Locally, distribution line extensions can spur residential, commercial and industrial growth.

At present, there is no cable television service in town, but satellite service is common. However, with the rise in cost of satellite service and the increased internet capabilities, some are turning to the internet for their digital entertainment and news.



## 7. ENERGY

### 7.0 ENERGY RESOURCES:

Energy resources in Roxbury include electricity provided by utility companies, as well as residential systems. Various fuels are supplied by local and regional providers along with solar, wind, water and other renewable energy sources. Our forests also provide firewood for thermal heating energy.

In 2012, the Roxbury Energy Committee, with the help of Efficiency Vermont and CVPS/ Green Mountain Power as part of the Municipal Street Lighting Program. Roxbury's antiquated streetlights were updated to brand new LED streetlights. The Energy Committee also completed the air sealing and weatherization of the Roxbury Senior Center/Community Hall thanks to a grant from CVRPC and the Department of Energy. Roxbury is in the midst of reviving the Energy Committee with one current member and in need of additional volunteer members.

### 7.1 ELECTRICITY:

Green Mountain Power (GMP) and the Washington Electric Co-Op supply electricity to the town. Both companies conduct conservation and demand-side management programs.

Three-phase service for industrial use is provided by GMP from Randolph as far north as the Roxbury State Fish Hatchery, and by the Washington Electric Co-Op in a limited section through East Roxbury. The limited access to three-phase power runs in the remainder of the town is a constraint for business and economic development. The lack of three phase distribution also poses challenges to larger scale renewable power development. This is a constraint in meeting the 2050 goals.

A number of households and seasonal units are not served by utility power lines, and in some cases generate their own electricity with independent off-grid systems. GMP is promoting Tesla Wall power systems which can be called upon during power outages and high demands on the utility. GMP is also promoting high efficiency cold climate heat pump exchangers for heating and air conditioning.

Digital Smart Power meters have been rolled out across the grid replacing the old analog spin dials.

As the Central Vermont Regional Plan notes, conservation is our least expensive and most environmentally benign source of electricity.

## 7.2 HEATING FUEL:

Fuel oil, propane and kerosene are provided by locally based and regionally based companies. Firewood is supplied locally from Roxbury itself and surrounding towns. The movement of wood is discouraged to limit the spread of the Emerald Ash Boring beetle. The use of firewood as a primary or secondary heating source underscores the importance of maintaining our local and regional forest resources.

Close attention to energy conservation measures in the setting, solar orientation, design, new construction or renovation, and maintenance of buildings could substantially reduce heating and cooling energy needs. High efficiency lighting and appliances will further impact per capita energy consumption.

## 7.3 TRANSPORTATION FUEL

Gasoline and diesel fuel are used for private and commercial transportation, agricultural uses, municipal road maintenance, and school buses. Roxbury is predominantly a bedroom community with limited employment within the town. Fossil fuel use for commuter transportation is the primary transportation energy source. The projected increase in electric vehicle sales and use will eventually impact the use of Gasoline and Diesel fuel use. A high percentage of residents travel alone in a car. This could be reduced through ridesharing. Other forms of public transportation if they become available in Roxbury will further limit fossil fuel use. Expansion of tele-commuting, tele-conferencing, and tele-work would further limit fossil fuel use. These gains are currently restricted by the marginal internet access within the town. Those properties with internet access are constrained by limited bandwidth. Bike paths along the highway shoulder and maintenance/extension of existing sidewalks in the village area could decrease motorized vehicle use as the Village center is very walkable with little to no hills. Vehicle technologies, such as Hybrid, EV, and hydrogen, also hold promise for decreasing emissions and fossil fuel use. Land use and settlement patterns that minimize transportation requirements, including the concentration of employment opportunities, housing and social services, could be encouraged.

## 7.4 RENEWABLE ENERGY SOURCES

The use of Solar PhotoVoltaic (PV) is expanding throughout the town, region, state and country. Residential Grid Connected NET metering is growing as a lower cost initial install over offgrid battery-based systems. Regional Solar businesses install and finance both rooftop and ground mount pole systems for residents. Cord Wood is a renewable biomass thermal energy source and is commonly used by many homes in town. Residential wood heating alone may produce more joules of energy than any other renewable source currently generated in town. Wood heating includes highly efficient residential wood pellet and wood boiler systems. Town and Municipal energy systems could be studied for implementation of Photovoltaic (PV), wind,



biomass, Cold Climate Heat/AC Pumps, Geothermal or other emerging renewable technologies, like hydrogen fuel cells.

### **7.5 ROXBURY ENERGY COMMITTEE:**

As of the Spring of 2021, the Roxbury Energy Committee (REC) has started up again. It has one member and is always looking for volunteers to join.

The REC has identified some areas where the Committee would like to concentrate:

- Roxbury town municipal operations to consider electrical net zero operations for all items that use electricity currently. This will require a new energy audit of town owned facilities, understanding factors of energy use, and to consider where the town may be able to install a solar, wind or other renewable energy system to offset these electrical uses (while also planning for future energy transitions).
- Create a plan to measure how we can make rural public transportation more accessible to Roxbury residents, reducing single person car trips and lowering our dependence on oil/gas. Fossil Fuel Emissions is a recognized factor driving climate change.
- A comprehensive home-energy campaign should concentrate on how we employ conservation measures to better heat and power Roxbury resident homes; saving residents heating costs, and electrical costs thereby reducing the carbon footprints of the Town. Fossil Fuel Emissions is a recognized factor driving climate change.
- Work to formalize the Roxbury Energy Committees' standing among other statewide energy committees and in particular work with the Northfield energy committee and adjoining towns within the CVRP region on joint projects.



## 8. LAND USE

### 8.0 INTRODUCTION

Historically the town was dependent upon its natural resources to support the population. In the early days land use was almost exclusively farming, forestry, fishing and quarrying. Today less than 3% of the working population derives their incomes from farming, forestry and fishing, while just less than 80% of the workforce is now employed elsewhere. Although the livelihood of Roxbury's residents has shifted away from working the land, the rural nature of the town is intact (it remains the most rural community in Central Vermont, with 17.1 persons per square mile) and is highly valued by its residents. It is Roxbury's rural character, forested and pastoral settings, which has in part attracted new residents, and it is also considered the town's most valued attribute by long term residents.

For planning purposes, the Town of Roxbury is divided into three districts:

- 1) Forest Reserve District: created to conserve land for forest-based business, wildlife habitat management and recreation.
- 2) Agricultural - Residential District: created to provide for homes, home based small business and agriculture, while maintaining the pastoral rural appearance of Roxbury.
- 3) Village Center: provides for residences, town services, community life facilities and limited small business in a central area as infrastructure supports it.

In addition to specific guidelines provided within each land use district, future development within the Town of Roxbury should:

- Utilize the existing town road network
- Not result in an undue burden on municipal services
- Avoid undue negative impacts of the town's natural and scenic resources
- Avoid areas within designated floodways or characterized by steep slopes (25 degrees or more)
- Not result in undue soil erosion
- Comply with all existing town ordinances, state and federal regulations

### 8.1 FOREST RESERVE DISTRICT

The Forest Reserve District is all the land above 1800 feet in elevation and all state forest land. At present, this land area is almost totally covered with forests and has the least accessible areas with a few un-maintained Class 4 roads and logging trails (with the exception of Tracy Hill Rd., which is a Class 3 road). The area contains steep slopes, scenic ridges and large tracts of productive forests as well as extensive wildlife habitat, scattered camps and a few homes. For the most part, the soil is shallow with hardpan or bedrock within three feet of the surface.

Our forests are our most important natural resource. Over 80% of the town's surface is forested. Many of our residents in town heat their homes with wood and approximately just under 4% of the working population derives their income from some form of forestry. About one quarter of the town is owned by the State of Vermont, consisting largely of state forests. Another eighth is owned by paper companies. Approximately 29% of the town's total acreage is enrolled in the Woodland Use Value Appraisal Program. The townspeople value our forested land for its aesthetics and consider conservation of the forest lands a priority.

The use of the Forest Reserve District should be restricted in order to preserve this natural resource and aesthetic asset. At the same time, the lands should provide the maximum recreational opportunities. The following are steps to ensure the maintenance of our Forest Reserve District:

- a) Forestry should constitute prime use of this land, with importance placed on avoiding clear cut practices and on promoting conservation.
- b) Residential construction, with the exception of low impact seasonal camps, is discouraged in the area above 1800 feet.
- c) Recreational use should be encouraged for hunting, fishing, cross country skiing, snowshoeing, snowmobiling, hiking, cycling, horseback riding, etc.
- d) Wildlife habitat protection should be encouraged.
- e) Quality of water and streams should be maintained or improved.

## **8.2 AGRICULTURAL - RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT**

The Agricultural-Residential District comprises all of Roxbury below the 1800 foot elevation, excluding state forest land. The Village District is within the Agricultural-Residential District.

The Agricultural-Residential District contains most of the residences, farms and maintained roads. Geographically, the district is in three parts, each running north and south: 1) along the valley of the Dog and Third Branch Rivers (either side of Rt. 12A); 2) either side of the Bull Run stream bed and 3) in the east along Rt. 12 and Steel Hill Road. Much of the land along the Dog and Third Branch White Rivers are in the one-hundred-year flood plain (see Utilities and Facilities map) About one half of the Agricultural - Residential District is forested. The majority of open land and all farmland are found in this district. Recent residential growth has been in random and scattered patterns. Soils in much of the village and the land adjoining Rt. 12A is of a sandy texture, meaning that the agricultural attractiveness would be small. Only two families are enrolled in the Working Farm Tax Abatement Plan, and only eight families have registered a total of 269 acres in the Agricultural Use Value Appraisal Program. State statistics show only 52 acres in crops and 593 acres in pastureland, for a total of 645 acres of active farmland. Less than 2.4% of the town is used for agriculture. Roxbury is a rural residential town.

The town's population has experienced sporadic growth in the last three decades. This growth has essentially been in the Agricultural-Residential District. A 2007 survey of the population



shows a desire to maintain our remaining rural and pastoral town with a mixed opinion on whether the town should grow or not. We must find a compromise that allows for increased dwellings while preserving the integrity of our landscape.

Most economic activity will be found in the Agricultural-Residential District. There will be increasing competition for the best building sites. The free-market forces can ultimately determine the use of a particular parcel of land, but careful planning can create acceptable and limited restrictions that protect neighbors, maintain our character and allow for necessary growth.

It is envisioned that some of the land in this District would protect open lands, meadows, streams, wetlands and deer wintering areas (see Section 1). Examples of acceptable uses for land in the Agricultural-Residential District would include, but not be limited to, the small scale activities listed below:

- a) Forestry, woodlots, forest product manufacturing, sawmills, firewood, maple sugar stands
- b) Residential and seasonal homes
- c) Home-based offices, home-based arts and crafts
- d) Agriculture part-time farming, truck farms, farm stands, landscape nursery, cattle and/or sheep farms
- e) Lodgings, inns, bed and breakfast establishments
- f) Other small businesses
- g) Recreation facilities
- h) Extraction of stone, sand and minerals.

These uses could be compatible with residential areas and are part of the traditional Roxbury growth patterns.

### **8.3 VILLAGE CENTER**

The present Village and its immediate surrounding area are the center for commercial, community life and essential services, and should be expanded to allow for future growth. The Village Center would accommodate higher density residences, higher traffic business and small industry.

The Village presently houses Town Offices, a post office, fire department, town garage, school, library, church, Senior Center and Historical Society as well as several small businesses. It is located at the intersection of two principal roads--Vermont Route 12A and the Warren Mountain Road--and is the site of the railroad siding.

The 2019 survey again confirmed that the townspeople would like to see a revitalization of the center of the town and would like to develop a sense of pride in its appearance. It has also been



expressed that revitalization would assist in providing a better sense of community, and that there is a need for additional quality retail facilities, a solid waste transfer station, expanded recreational facilities, a town park and possibly a medical clinic. It has been further suggested that a need exists for the expansion of business opportunities to provide both an increased tax base and local employment. Several persons have suggested a restaurant, professional offices, nursing home, childcare center and a bed and breakfast establishment. All such businesses are appropriate for a central location in the immediate vicinity of the Village.

The concentration of business growth and expanded service in a central location is convenient. Co-location allows separate activities to benefit from the proximity of the others. The present Village site has the potential of a local growth center because of existing facilities, central location and a road network. However, there are some major disadvantages: pockets of flood plain, areas with a high-water table, and the lack of a public water and sewage system.

While the problems are considerable, we should work to resolve them. Abandoning the Village and its current facilities is not realistic and no other site has the central location and transportation advantages as does the Village. The Village is a major asset and well worth saving. If we are to achieve controlled growth, there must be enforcement of the existing statutes and careful development of new measures to control growth. If we do not act, we may lose the opportunity to save what remains of our unique Village and the rural character of our town. We would then be vulnerable to strip development and uncontrolled, poorly planned business growth throughout the entire town.

The successful creation of a Village Center is dependent upon a carefully developed plan. The addition of new facilities and activities to the Village must ensure that the residential character is not violated. The plan for growth in the Village should be consistent with traditional village patterns and take careful consideration of the aesthetic impact of combining residential and commercial buildings. There are methods of making these competing interests compatible, such as setback provisions, screening, cluster development and small lots.

Village Center Designation is a program through the Vermont Agency of Commerce & Community Development which supports the revitalization efforts of small to medium-sized historic centers. The designation brings financial incentives, training and technical assistance for the maintenance and development of business and housing in the center.

## 9. REGIONAL COOPERATION

### 9.0 OVERVIEW

The existing and proposed Town Plans for the communities of Warren, Braintree, Granville/East Granville, Brookfield and Northfield have been reviewed to identify any incompatibilities. The town of Roxbury is committed to working cooperatively with neighboring towns to address issues of mutual concern and to avoid conflict. The Planning and Development Act goals established in 24 V.S.A. §4302 are the basis for the Roxbury plan. The Statute generally requires a Town Plan to be compatible with those of the neighboring communities and with the regional Plan. As the term “compatibility” is defined, the Roxbury Plan will not reduce the desired effects or implementation of the regional Plan, or the town plans of neighboring communities. Roxbury’s new Town Plan is consistent with the development patterns in adjoining communities, each community was provided with a copy of the proposed Roxbury Town Plan for its review. It is intended that this Roxbury Town Plan be reviewed by the Regional Planning Commission under 24 V.S.A. § 4350.

#### Warren:

The Roxbury Town Plan is intended to provide guidelines for planning and coordination of review of the natural and economic features of our two towns. The Roxbury Town Plan is viewed as a companion document to the Warren Plan.

#### Braintree:

With particular regard to land use districts and other general development policies that may be affected, no conflicts have been identified.

#### Granville/East Granville:

Though the town of Granville is actually separated from Roxbury by a mountain range and 25 miles of highway, the tiny village of East Granville is located 6 miles to the south on Route 12A. In reviewing Granville’s Town Plan, we find it utterly consistent with Roxbury’s, in its commitment to preserve outstanding scenic areas as well as to discourage developments that have an undue adverse impact on the land’s resources.

#### Brookfield:

Roxbury shares its entire eastern rural edge with Brookfield. Both towns encourage development as long as it does not overburden town services or disturb the towns’ rural character. Communication between towns will be crucial as both Route 12 and Steele Hill Road, both located on the edge of each town line, provide ample opportunity for growth.



### Northfield:

Geographically, in our rural setting the Northfield Town Plan is compatible with the Roxbury plan. There may be opportunities to partner with Northfield on some initiatives as they have quite a positive outlook on solar and wind energy. Given the connections that already exist between the two communities (drug free initiatives, newspaper), Roxbury should plan on having one or two of our Planning Commissioners attend a meeting of Northfield's Planning and Zoning, to articulate our willingness to cooperate on any initiatives that align.

### PLANNING COMMISSIONERS

- Lucinda Sullivan, Chair
- Elizabeth Carney
- Mike French
- Dotti Guiffre

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## IV. Goals and Objectives Chart – Implementation Strategies

GOALS			
OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMEFRAME
		SB -selectboard PC-planning commission	OG-ongoing ST- short term LT - Long Term
NATURAL RESOURCES			
<b>Goal: Maintain, preserve and enhance Roxbury's natural resources.</b>			
Objective 1: Protect or enhance the quality of Roxbury's surface and groundwater resources.	A. Wildlife corridors and significant wetlands will need to be protected.	SB	OG
	B. Construction, road maintenance, forestry and agricultural practices must follow state approved guidelines for protecting water quality (e.g. logging/agriculture Approved Management Plans). Best practices for gravel conservation (Agency of Natural Resources – River Mgmt).	SB	OG
	C. Conduct feasibility studies for a potable water supply and waste-water treatment facility for the village.	SB – via sub committee	ST
	D. Strictly enforce state requirements for sewage treatment by informing the state when there is divergence from its rules.	SB	OG
	E. Carefully designate and enforce wellhead protection areas for present and future public water supplies.	SB	OG
	F. Carefully regulate future development within designated flood hazard areas.	SB	OG
<b>Goal: Carefully regulate any further activities which may contribute to or introduce various pollutants.</b>			
Objective 2: Promote the responsible and efficient use of Roxbury's land resources (forests,	A. Support the development of forest management plans for state and private forests which provide for sustainable use and protection of natural resources.	SB	ST



agricultural and mineral) to ensure their sustained use, compatibility with surrounding land uses and aesthetics, and the protection of natural resources.	B. All cutting of private and state-owned forests must be in accordance with approved management plans and in accordance with the best management practices.	SB	OG
	C. Maintain large tracts of interconnected forestland through creative land use planning such as exploring the feasibility of adopting subdivision regulations.	SB	ST
	D. Protect critical wildlife habitat (deer wintering areas, rare and endangered species. etc.) See our <u>Natural Resources Map</u> . Put up warning signs along roads for deer/animal crossings; protecting wildlife corridors.	SB	ST
	E. Educate landowners to participate in private conservation programs (Forest Legacy Program, Current Use, Vermont Land Trust) to protect the town's land resources.	SB	OG
	F. Prohibit development about 1800 feet above sea level and on land that has more than a 25 degree slope (See section on Land Use). This could be done by the Select Board creating an ordinance	SB	OG
	G. Minimize social and environmental impacts from any future earth extraction operations through careful consideration of location and timing. Allow mining only during normal business hours and do not allow mining that would affect water quality. Require proper restoration of future mining sites. This would be accomplished by adoption of an earth extraction Ordinance, or through Act 250.	SB	ST
	H. Appoint a Tree Warden/Tree Committee/Forrester hired to manage Roxbury's Forests and riparian buffer as a part of river corridors.	SB	ST
<b>Goal: To protect life and property from natural disasters, including flooding and flash flood events. The 2018 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan clearly identifies issues which have and continue to present hazards to the community.</b>			

Objective 1: New development in identified flood hazard, fluvial erosion, and river corridor protection areas is avoided.	A. Replace and upgrade priority culverts and bridges identified in 2018 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan.	Road Commissioner	ST
	B. Flood-proof the Town Garage	SB	OG
	A. Prepare and distribute or make available NFIP insurance and building codes, explanatory pamphlets or booklets	RC	OG
	B. Develop a plan to review new development so that it does not exacerbate flooding and fluvial erosion being consistent with State regulations.	SB	OG
	C. Selectboard could direct these objectives through the formation of sub-committees.	SB	OG
Objective 2: Protect and restore floodplains and upland forested areas that attenuate and moderate flooding and fluvial erosion.	A. Identify possible areas susceptible to flood hazards that could be preserved as open space to maintain their ability to store floodwaters during future events.	SB	OG
Objective 3: Plan for flood emergency and response.	A. Develop a post flood clean-up, decontamination and recovery plan/procedure	SB	OG

## CULTURAL RESOURCES

### Goal: Protect and enhance Roxbury's agricultural resources

Objective 1: Support growth and development of agriculture for marketing	A. Continue to expand use of suitable lands for agricultural activity	SB	OG
	B. Develop market opportunities for agricultural products		
	C. Explore establishing a Food Systems Council with neighboring communities.		
	D. Continue to support local food access.		

### Goal: Protect and support the historic culture of Roxbury

	A. A. Develop an inventory of Roxbury's historic sites and investigate potential	Historical Society	ST
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Objective 1: Promote the history and historic sites of Roxbury	mechanisms for future protection (e.g., historic sites registry.)		
	B. Seek Village Center designation for the center of Roxbury which would support historic preservation and economic development within the designated area.	PC	ST
<b>Goal: Protect and support the environment of Roxbury</b>			
Objective 1: Identify and protect scenic sites	A. Develop scenic sites guide B. Monitor use of scenic sites and protect them from damage	PC	ST
Objective 1: Develop community outdoor recreation	A. Investigate specific needs and investigate the feasibility of developing additional outdoor recreational opportunities within the town.	SB	OG
<b>Goal: Provide cultural opportunities in Roxbury</b>			
Objective 1: Increase utilization of existing facilities within the village	A. Seek funding to complete renovations to Community Center B. Seek funding to support activities at the Community Center C. Increase membership in a Community Center committee.	Community Center Committee	ST
	D. Continue support of the Roxbury Free Library E. Continue support of the Roxbury Newsy F. Increase internet capability for all in Roxbury	Library Committee, Library staff	OG
<b>ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT</b>			
<b>Goal 1. Accommodate the rate of population growth in Roxbury.</b>			
Objective 1. Monitor and respond to the annual population growth rate for the next eight years in order for the town to accommodate needs for housing and economic opportunity.	A: Review population data and economic opportunities annually B: Provide projected data for population growth C: Review town services in light of current and projected population	SB	OG

<b>Goal 2. Maintain and strengthen economic activity.</b>			
Objective 1. Build a network of local businesses owners to identify and understand local challenges and opportunities for collaboration.	A. Invite representative from Windridge to meet with the town annually to discuss opportunities for collaboration	PC	ST
Objective 2: Access State funding to support local business.	A. Apply for Village Center Designation through the Department of Housing and Community Development to allow residents access to tax benefits in rehabilitating and revitalizing buildings located in the Village Center. B. Apply for a Municipal Planning Grant (MPG) to develop a strategic economic plan for the village to assess infrastructure needs, build out capacity and marketing techniques. C. Explore the addition of the position of Town Manager/Administrator. This person would then be responsible seeking project funding sources.	PC	ST
Objective 3: Support sustainable economic activity.	A. Provide marketing opportunities for home-produced products. B. Provide economic incentives for the new development of new businesses.	SB	OG
<b>Goal 3. Promote and support the viability of forest, agriculture, and outdoor recreation enterprises.</b>			
Objective 1. Work cooperatively with regional and state agencies to increase market opportunities that support value added agriculture and forest products.	A. Invite the County Forester to discuss ideas and opportunities B. Assess interest in developing a local farmers market in the village C. Support the incorporation of local agricultural products in local markets and the village school lunch program.	SB	ST
<b>Goal 4. Support local and home-based businesses while ensuring the rural character and environmental integrity is preserved.</b>			



Objective 1. Expand high speed internet to Roxbury residents.	A. Maintain member status of Central Vermont Fiber B. Maintain local businesses listing on municipal website C. Support development of cellular service to provide home-based employment and telecommute.	SB	OG
<b>Goal 5: Attract and support business activities that compliment Roxbury's rural character and are sustainable in Roxbury's environment.</b>			
Objective 1. Develop a plan for business development.	A. Provide opportunities for resident discussion of desirable business opportunities and locations. B. Identify areas in Roxbury that are compatible with business development.	RPC	OG
<b>HOUSING</b>			
<b>Goal 1. Ensure safe, affordable and environmentally responsible housing.</b>			
Objective 1. Achieve greater design flexibility and economies of scale in the development of particular land areas within the community.	A. Development plans should be reviewed by the Roxbury Planning Commission to assure appropriate mixed-use development. See Housing Resources map for an outline of "built up" areas.	PC	OG
Objective 2. Support the creation of new housing and the preservation of existing housing for moderate, low income and elderly households.	A. Housing should be safe, affordable and consistent with current land use. B. Investigate the creation of elderly housing.	SB	OG
Objective 3. Provide the opportunity to achieve flexibility in architectural design, a mix of compatible land uses as well as the preservation of key natural or historic features.	A. Review development plans by Roxbury Planning Commission in light of natural and historic features of the village center and town.	PC	OG

Objective 4. Adopt measures to encourage provision of moderate and low income housing in all appropriate areas of Roxbury.	A. Appoint at least one person with particular interest and skills in affordable housing issues to the Planning Commission.	SB	ST
<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>			
<b>Goal: Ensure safe and dependable roadways for the residents of Roxbury at a reasonable cost.</b>			
Objective 1. Stabilize the limited upgrading and reclassification of class 4 roads; proportion time and funds accordingly and develop a scheduled maintenance plan.	A. Develop and adhere to a consistent policy for review and reclassification of class 4 roads.	SB	ST/OG
Objective 2. Continue to upgrade and improve the serviceability of the class 3 road network	A. Develop scheduled surface grading, and construct and improve drainage facilities as required.	Road Commissioner	OG
Objective 3. Maintain new roads and bridges.	A. Investigate the need for developing regulations for new roads and bridges that don't come under State jurisdiction.	SB/Road Commissioner	OG
Objective 4. Discourage road growth especially in any steep or hard-to-maintain areas.	A. Develop strict regulation guidelines for road growth in steep or hard to maintain areas.	SB	ST
Objective 5. Utilize where possible neighboring towns for best use of resources in road maintenance and plowing.	A. Continue on-going cooperation with neighboring towns for road maintenance.	Road Commissioner	OG
<b>Goal. Cooperate with State agencies and utilities as regards road and railway development and maintenance.</b>			
Objective 1. The Selectboard should ensure that road construction and	A. Request that the Selectboard provide an annual review of road projects to the Roxbury Planning Commission.	RPC	Annual



improvements provide protection to the town's natural and scenic resources, as specified in Town Plan section 3.1.			
Objective 2. Establish a working relationship with New England Central Railroad in their maintenance of track-bed, etc., and explore possible use of the rails for future commercial activities.	A. Provide an opportunity for the Roxbury Selectboard and the Roxbury Planning Commission to meet with representatives of the New England Central Railroad.	RPC	ST
Objective 3. State Transportation Department construction, reconstruction or alternate proposals to Routes 12 and 12A in Roxbury should not alter, without careful consideration, the physical and economical make-up of the village areas.	A. Acquire Village Center Designation to direct financial incentives and technical assistance to the historic and economic center of Roxbury.	RPC and Select-board	ST
Objective 4. Adhere to the town's and region's commitments to maintain scenic highways as expressed in this Town Plan and in the Central Vermont Regional Plan.	A. Review the Roxbury Town Plan on a regular schedule to assure maintenance of scenic areas.	RPC	MT
<b>Goal: Develop alternate forms of transportation in Roxbury.</b>			
Objective 1. Identify areas of need for alternative transportation	A. Explore opportunities for public transportation B. Utilize a town-wide survey of transportation needs of citizens	Select-board or RPC	MT
Objective 2. Add a shoulder for bikes whenever and wherever	A. Work collaboratively with VT Department of Transportation during planning for road upgrades	Selectboard	OG

upgrades are made to paved roads		Road Commissioner	
<b>COMMUNITY UTILITIES, RESOURCES AND SERVICES</b>			
<b>Goal: Improve communication and cooperation among town groups and officials.</b>			
Objective 1. Strengthen the links between home, community and school through their personal involvement.	A. Provide opportunities for active volunteer membership in community organizations. B. Utilize Roxbury Newsy(quarterly) to provide educational materials about community issues	SB	OG
Objective 2. Increase recreational opportunities in Roxbury.	A. Support expanded use of existing community facilities and planned recreational activities for all citizens. B. Continue collaborative efforts with Windridge at Teelawooket to provide outdoor activities for Roxbury residents.	SB	OG
Objective 3. Maintain safety of walkways and biking routes along town roadways.	A. Utilize grant funding for sidewalk reconstruction to make safe pedestrian movement in the Village Center especially in the vicinity of the school and Windridge. B. Develop and enforce regulations to preserve sidewalk access. C. Install speed warning system in Village center. D. Reduce village speed limit to 25mph.	SB	ST
<b>Goal: Increase local services to townspeople.</b>			
Objective 1. Expand law enforcement options for the Town of Roxbury.	A. Continue collaborative efforts with State and local law enforcement	SB	OG
Objective 2. Improve management of solid waste and recyclable materials.	A. Establish a committee charged exploring the development of a local transfer station	SB	ST
	B. Provide educational opportunities regarding disposal of recyclable materials and composting.	Roxbury Free Library	OG
<b>Goal: Maintain provision of fire and emergency services</b>			



Objective 1. Continue to provide Roxbury with excellent fire protection services with trained volunteers and well-maintained equipment.	A. Complete the installation of dry hydrants at the identified areas of greatest need. B. Use available opportunities to publicize/advertise the need for volunteers. C. Continue to support “the fund” on a yearly basis for eventual replacement of needed vehicles.	Roxbury Fire Department	OG
Objective 2. Cooperate with neighboring and nearby towns in an effort to minimize costs and maximize benefits of government facilities and services where appropriate (e.g., fire and rescue; road maintenance; waste disposal/recycling, etc.).	A. Continue to maintain existing cooperative arrangements with neighboring towns. B. Seek mutual arrangements with neighboring towns that are appropriate for Roxbury	SB	OG
<b>Goal: Promote Health and Wellness</b>			
Objective 1. Minimize health risks posed by living environments.	A. Increase public knowledge of housing environmental risks such as lead paint, radon etc. B. Promote reduction of housing environment risks through the availability of state assistance programs C. Maintain sufficient affordable, safe housing	SB	OG
Objective 2. Increase access to healthy foods.	A. Support efforts to establish a local Farmers Market	SB	ST
Objective 3. Diminish concentrated exposure to tobacco, alcohol and drugs.	A. Enact regulations with regards to smoking, alcohol and drug use. B. Identify areas in Roxbury where smoking, alcohol and drug use are prohibited with appropriate signage.	SB	OG
<b>Goal: Be supportive of safe, nurturing childcare facilities and programs</b>			
Objective 1. Maintain a current inventory of all childcare programs in the town and their capacity.	A. Identify the number of families who would potentially utilize child-care services in the community by survey method. B. Compare survey results with the current inventory of existing programs in Roxbury and the surrounding area.	RPC	OG

Objective 2. Develop childcare infrastructure.	A. Apply for federal and state funds to assist with the development of childcare programs.	SB	OG
Objective 3. Provide opportunities for childcare providers to enhance their programs.	A. Develop a committee of child-care providers and residents whose goal is to identify items which would expand and improve existing child-care programs and services in the community.	SB	OG

## ENERGY

**Goal: Encourage the conservation of energy resources.**

Objective 1. Increase public information on Energy Conservation	A. Educate Roxbury residents about Efficiency VT. Hold forums or write articles for the local paper.	Energy Committee	OG
	B. Investigate energy-related grants and other programs, including those conducted by utility companies that may be available for municipal buildings.	Energy Committee	OG
Objective 2. Minimize transportation requirements to conserve energy.	A. Use the rideshare lot. Through media, the Planning Commission could help match up potential users of a rideshare program.	PC	OG
	B. Support the safe use of Route 12-A as one of the state's major and most scenic bike paths, by obtaining and erecting "Share the Road" signs.	SB	ST
	C. Expand the telecommunication systems to facilitate telecommuting and teleconferencing, and to meet communication needs of small businesses.	SB	OG

## LAND USE

**Goal: With citizen participation, establish a reasonable balance between land use planning and rights of individual landowners.**



Objective 1: To balance the necessary restrictions of land use regulations with the reasonable expectations of landowners.	<p>A. Ensure that local regulation does not deny the reasonable use of property and that restrictions imposed on land use are based on clearly defined community objectives.</p> <p>B. Continue administering and enforcing the Town's ordinances and regulations, and reviewing those ordinances on a regular basis, making revisions as deemed appropriate.</p>	SB	OG
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**Goal: Maintain and preserve the town's rural residential character of a compact village surrounded by rural countryside.**

Objective 1: Investigate the need for land-use regulations which recognize distinct districts and regulate land use activities to ensure compatibility with the purpose of the respective districts.	A. Apply for Village Center Designation	SB/PC	ST
	B. Repair and maintain Village sidewalks	SB	ST
	C. Maintain a committee to plan and develop town parks	SB	OG
	D. Set aside annual funding for town water and septic systems	SB	OG
	E. Maintain the Forest Reserve District for the purpose of protecting significant forest resources and headwater streams and to limit development in areas with steep slopes, shallow soils, wildlife habitat, fragile features, scenic resources and poor access to town roads, facilities and services.	SB	OG
	F. Maintain the Agricultural-Residential District for the purpose of encouraging low density residential development; encouraging moderate or high-density residential development in appropriate locations and designs (along existing roadways and where town services are easily accessed), encouraging continued agricultural forestry practices; and for the preservation of rural resources and natural features.	SB	OG
	G. Maintain and expand the Village Center with higher density mixed use development in a classic village setting in a manner compatible with the historic character of the village.	SB	OG

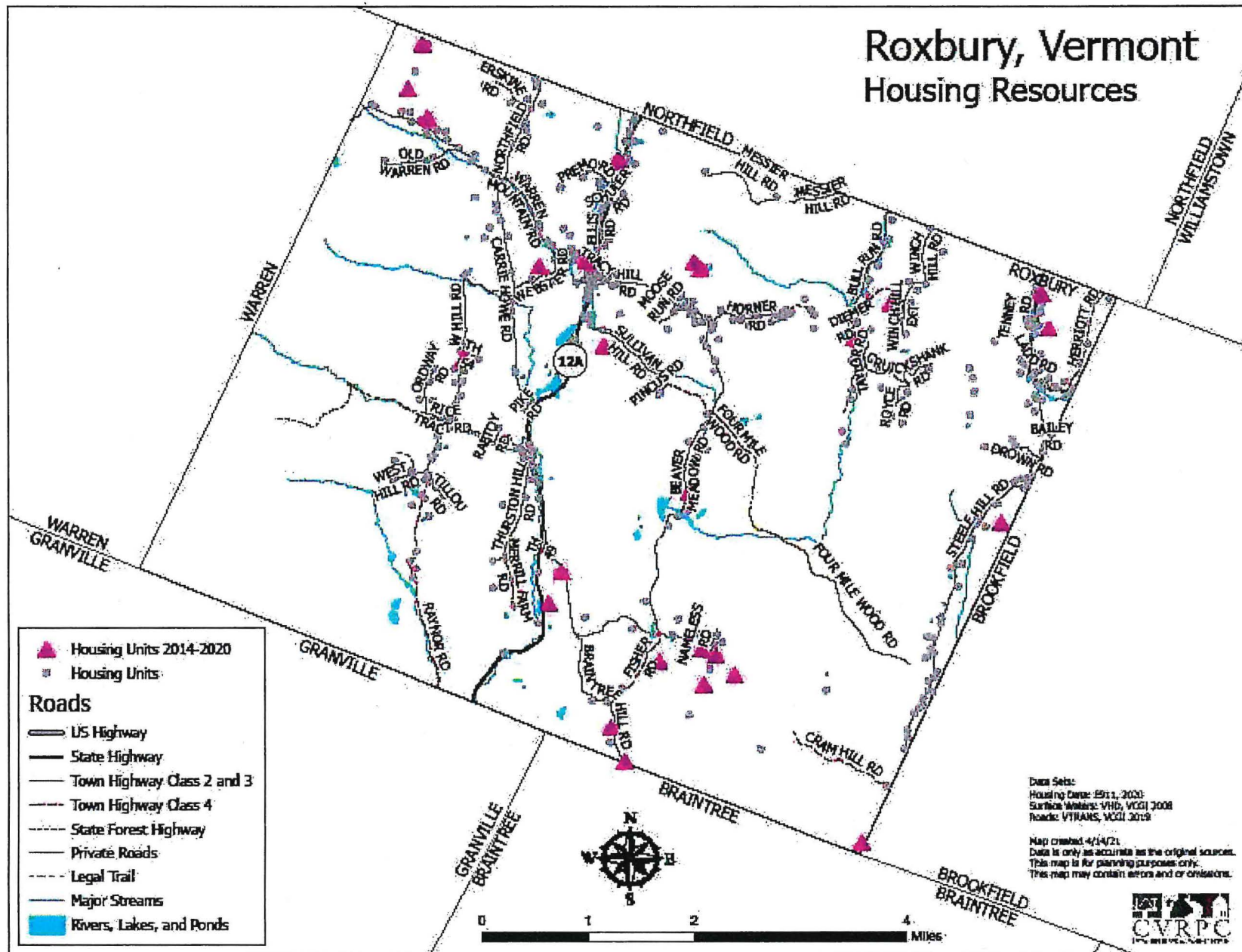


Objective 2: Reinforce Village Center as the town's growth center.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Ensure a full mix of commercial, public and residential land uses in the village center.</li> <li>B. Ensure the in-fill development of vacant land in the village in a manner which reinforces a village scale development pattern.</li> <li>C. Evaluate the potential for allowing higher residential densities on lands within the Agriculture-Residential District adjacent to the Village.</li> <li>D. Develop ordinances that address development standards (setbacks, building coverage, density, parking requirements, etc.) in the village.</li> <li>E. Implement the community facilities, transportation, housing and economic development objectives and strategies of this Plan as a means of reinforcing the function and viability of Roxbury village.</li> <li>F. Identify existing limitations and potential solutions, including funding sources, for full implementation of goals and objectives identified within this Plan for the Village.</li> </ul>	SB	OG
<b>Goal: Manage land use in order to encourage protection of open lands, support for commercial business, revitalization of the village, protection of the forests, streams and wildlife habitat.</b>			
Objective 1: Promote the efficient use of land and inhibit the further suburbanization of our rural landscape.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Investigate possible subdivision regulations and ordinances that would ensure that the pattern of future development does not adversely impact the town's natural features and rural resources and scenic character. To this end, such means as clustering, flexible development standards, and the preservation of significant features through conservation easements and/or protective deed covenants should be employed.</li> <li>B. Investigate subdivision regulations and ordinances that would require that new residential development does not adversely impact the town's rural character and natural and scenic resources. To this end, such means as buffering, screening, careful site selection, limited densities and minimum road frontage (to prevent "spaghetti lots") should be employed.</li> </ul>	SB	OG

	<p>G. Discourage land subdivision and consequent residential development in the Forest Reserve District.</p> <p>C. Through an ongoing planning process, ensure that capital improvement planning is coordinated with land use planning.</p> <p>H. Implement all objectives and strategies set forth in the Town Plan regarding the preservation of the town's rural character, natural and scenic resources, and the continued viability of farming and forestry.</p>		
Objective 2. Prevent the destruction of vegetation in right of way areas.	A. Utilize the most environmentally responsible application of herbicides for maintenance of utility rights of way within the town limits.	SB	OG

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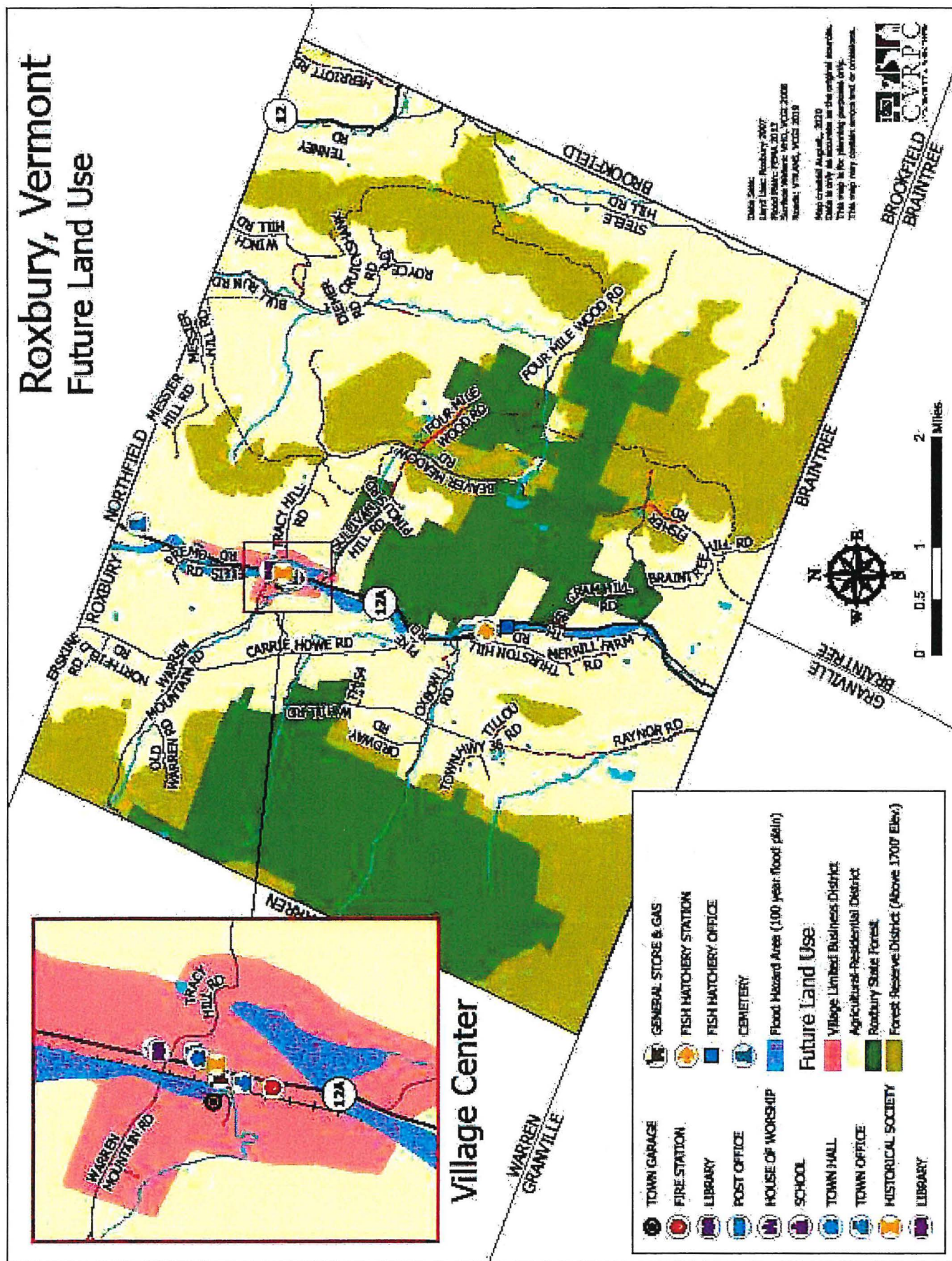
## V. Maps





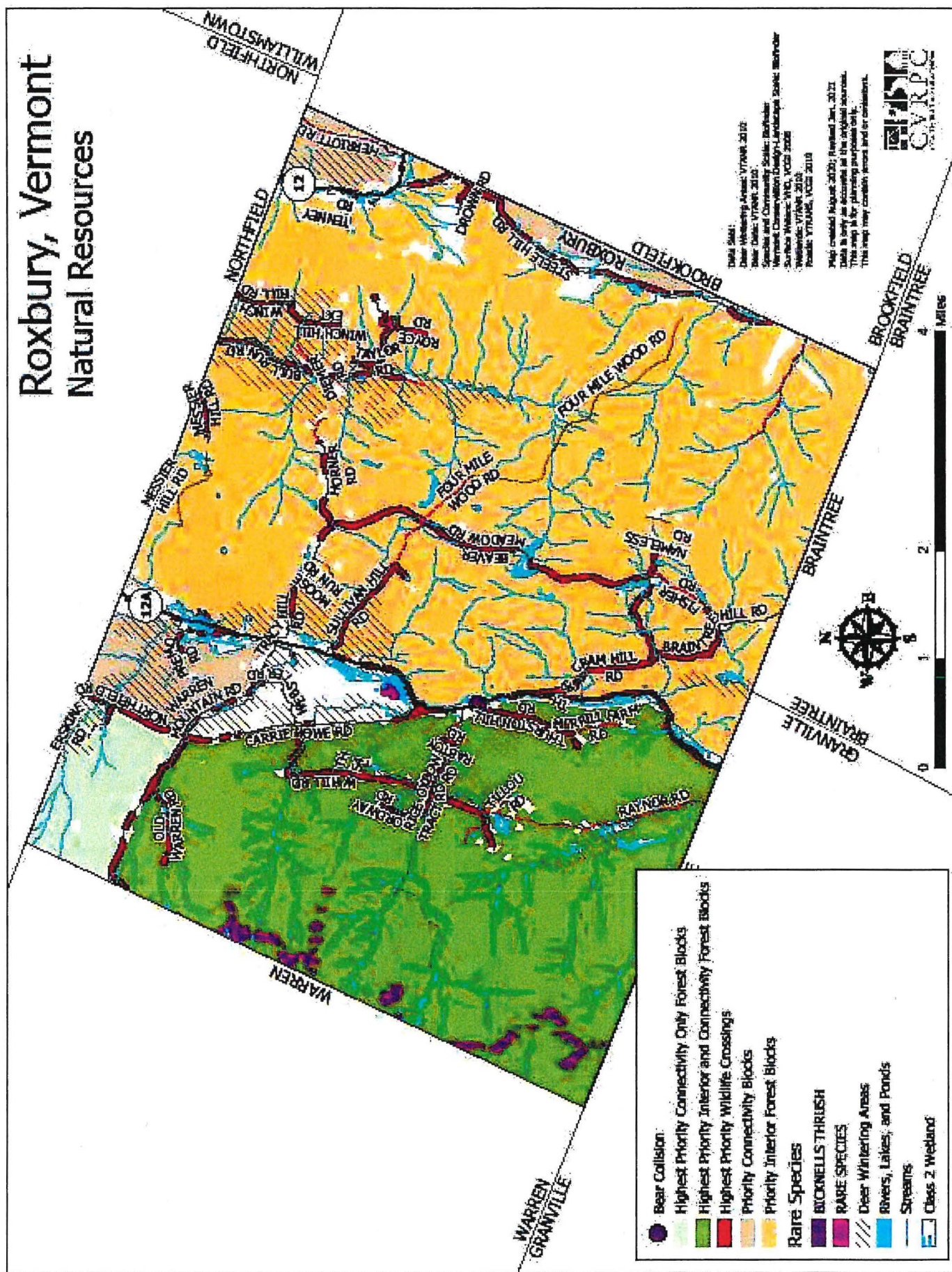
A map of the study area. A black dot indicates the study site. The map shows a road network with a road labeled '12A' and another labeled 'WAGON MOUNTAIN RD'. A blue area represents a water body, and a pink area represents a land area. The text 'TROPIC HILLS' is also visible.

WARREN  
GRANVILLE





# Roxbury, Vermont Natural Resources





# Roxbury, Vermont Transportation, Utilities & Facilities, and Education

