

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**  
**MORRISVILLE/MORRISTOWN PLANNING COUNCIL**  
**WARNED PUBLIC HEARING AT 5:00 PM ON 28 MAY 2024**  
**FOR ADOPTING A NEW MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN, a/k/a TOWN PLAN**

The Morrisville/Morristown Planning Council hereby provides notice of public hearing being held pursuant to 24 VSA, Chapter 117, §4303, §4381, §4382, §4384, §4385 and §4447 for the purpose of hearing public comments concerning adopting a new Morrisville/ Morrystown Municipal Development Plan (referred to hereafter as “the Town Plan”). State law requires town plans be updated at least every eight years. The Town Plan was most recently updated and approved in May of 2022. This Town Plan is being adopted in accordance with VSA 24, Chapter 117, §4303, §4381, §4382, §4384, §4385 and §4447.

A public hearing for the proposed Morrisville/Morrystown Town Plan is scheduled for:

**DATE: Tuesday 28 May 2024**

**TIME: 5:00 PM**

**PLACE:** The Community Meeting Room of the Old Tegu Theatre at 43 Portland St, Morrisville

**Statement of Purpose:** To provide the Village of Morrisville/Town of Morrystown with a Town Plan that meets State of Vermont’s statutory requirements, furthers the planning goals contained in 24 VSA §4302, and provides a sustainable roadmap for the community’s future.

**Geographic Area Affected:** All areas in the Town of Morrystown and the Village of Morrisville.

**Table of Contents:** 1-Statement Containing Objectives & Policies, 2-Land Use, 3-Transportation, 4-Utilities & Facility, 5-Historic, Scenic & Natural Resources, 6-Education, 7-Implementation Program, 8-Statement Concerning Development Trends & Adjacent Municipalities, 9-Energy, 10-Housing, 11-Economic Development, 12-Flood Resiliency 13-Wellness

**Location of where full text may be examined:** A copy of the full text of the proposed Town Plan is available at the Morrystown Town Clerk’s Office at 43 Portland St. in Morrisville. For more information, or feedback, please contact Todd Thomas in the Zoning Office at 888-6373.

# 2024-2032

## Morrisville/Morristown Town



Photo Credit: Jasmine

This plan is dedicated to Max Paine who gave more than a decade of his life volunteering on the Planning Council.

The plan itself is authored by Planning Director Todd Thomas, with assistance from Morrisville/Morristown Planning Council Members: Allen Van Anda, Steven Foster, Joshua Goldstein, Etienne Hancock (Chair), and Tom Snipp. Thanks to Lyndon Burkholder, and Penny Jones for editorial assistance.

This Plan was approved by the Morrisville Village

# **Table of Contents by Chapter**

<b><u>Chp 1: Policies guiding future development &amp; environmental protection</u></b>	<b><u>p. 2</u></b>
<b><u>Chp 2: Land use</u></b>	<b><u>p. 5</u></b>
<b><u>Chp 3: Transportation</u></b>	<b><u>p. 11</u></b>
<b><u>Chp 4: Utility and facility</u></b>	<b><u>p. 17</u></b>
<b><u>Chp 5: Historic, scenic, rare and irreplaceable natural resources</u></b>	<b><u>p. 27</u></b>
<b><u>Chp 6: Education</u></b>	<b><u>p. 33</u></b>
<b><u>Chp 7: Implementation</u></b>	<b><u>p. 61</u></b>
<b><u>Chp 8: Statement concerning development trends &amp; adjacent municipalities</u></b>	<b><u>p. 37</u></b>
<b><u>Chp 9: Energy</u></b>	<b><u>p. 40</u></b>
<b><u>Chp 10: Housing</u></b>	<b><u>p. 46</u></b>
<b><u>Chp 11: Economic development</u></b>	<b><u>p. 51</u></b>
<b><u>Chp 12: Flood resiliency</u></b>	<b><u>p. 54</u></b>
<b><u>Chp 13: Wellness</u></b>	<b><u>p. 58</u></b>

# Chapter 1: Statement of Policies

## Guiding Future Development &

### Environmental Protection

Welcome to Morrisville, and welcome to the town plan for this fantastic quintessentially Vermont community. This plan, which is dated from 2022 to 2030, provides both a template, and a wish-list, for the development, and growth, of our community over the coming decade. This town plan includes the elements required by 24 VSA §4382, and is separated into chapters that are ordered to match the requirements found, as enumerated, in this same State Statute. As you read the plan, agreed upon community priorities therein have been **bolded** for emphasis, and objectives of the community (i.e. goals we want to accomplish within the coming decade) are highlighted via *underlined italics*. The priorities and objectives that the reader will find interwoven, but emphasized via bold, or via underlined italics within the town plan, shall guide the future growth and development of land, public services, public facilities, and local environmental protection.

As you will find in Chapter 8 of this plan, our community has come a long way over the last decade. And yet, there are many exciting new developments, and community improvements, still in the pipeline. Interest in developing and redeveloping within the core of the village is no longer just an aspirational goal of previous town plans. It is currently no longer possible to walk around downtown Morrisville without stumbling upon one, if not more, active major construction sites. As Chapter 10 will relate, our community desperately needs the new housing being provided by these new residential townhouse and multi-family developments that are being built in the village. Demand to live within our community has never been greater than at the time of this writing (late 2021). The town plan, in Chapter 2, therefore designates certain parts of our community for zoning changes, and increases in residential density, to accommodate the need for future residential growth. Meanwhile, this same Land Use Chapter, looks to preserve the existing rural feel of the undeveloped, or lightly developed, remote sections of the town, while also protecting the ridgelines that give our town its scenic backdrop. The amount of available conserved land for recreation options need to be bolstered for the growth in population that this plan anticipates. Thus, a Conservation Fund shall be initiated in order to be informed and prepared for the designation of land for the purposes of recreation and conservation. In addition, our town is committed to adopting language to protect buffers along bogs, wetlands, rivers, and other waterbodies, as these resources importantly filter phosphorous and other pollutants from stormwater. This plan strives to ensure compliance with State shoreline regulations, and supports adopting its own shoreline zoning as a way to accomplish the same means, but with local control. This plan also acknowledges that wildlife should be better protected by looking to conserve contiguous lands that will allow wildlife to travel in the woods, rather than on our roads, for the

safety of all parties. Chapter 9 of this plan expresses strong support for the continued utilization of natural features like the Lamoille, and the Green River, to generate hydro-power, in an effort to power the growth of our community, while maintaining and improving our town's current levels of environmental sustainability. Chapter 9, along with Chapters 3, 4, 6, and 11, speaks to the public services and facilities that are available, or that this plan imagines being expanded, to serve the taxpayers and residents of our community. Chapters 5 and 12 highlight key environmental protections that are essential to balance the ongoing growth currently happening within our community.

Please note that as you read this town plan, intentional effort has been made to not refer to either Morrisville or Morristown throughout its various chapters unless there is intent is to acutely address or identify the Village of Morrisville or the Town of Morristown. Instead, this plan, due to the confusion caused by the two commonly and interchangeably used names of Morristown and Morrisville, uses the words “community” or generically “town” instead. Writing an aspirational document like a town plan becomes unnecessarily complex when there is likely to be confusion as to what part of the town is actually being spoken about if Morrisville and Morristown is used in the text. Additionally, very few people in our community know where the actual boundary line between the village and town lies. As such the first priority of this plan is to create and charge a committee with studying this town name issue, with the goal of said committee initiating a Selectboard, Village Trustee, or Town Meeting action that results in a binding vote on adopting a singular name for our community. In 2018, a non-binding ballot initiative was approved on Town Meeting Day that changed the name of our entire town to Morrisville, but the Selectboard decided to not take any action on this initiative. Settling on the commonly used Morrisville name that the voters expressed support for would mesh with how the post office handles mail, and mailing addresses, regardless if a property is located in the village or out in the town. Additionally, most people from outside Lamoille County commonly refer to the entirety of our town as Morrisville. Few outsiders use or refer to Morristown. A compromise position for those that prefer the Morristown name would be to consider using the name Morris instead of Morristown. With the Morris name in place, if someone used Morrisville or Morristown, it would be clear that either the town or the village was specifically being discussed. The Town of Lyndon has a somewhat similar name arrangement. Until there is agreement on the name of our community, it will be impossible for our town government, and the many tourist driven businesses therein, to market our community in a clear and effective manner.

Lastly, throughout the town plan, the reader will continually see the desire for more efficient outcomes within local government. This town plan, as an example, will need to be approved by both the town and village's Legislative Bodies, as does any corresponding zoning change. Getting two separate Boards to agree to every statement in a town plan can be laborious, and even precarious, as this setup gives either municipality veto power over the other in regards to zoning decisions, with the prospect of separate town plans, and separate zoning bylaws, for each community as the only other, highly undesirable, alternative. As such, this plan supports

evaluating the “Joint Planning Commission” option detailed by 24 VSA §4327. *This plan also supports studying what it would entail to update the Village Charter, as there is likely some benefit to be had by expanding the village boundary lines into developed sections of the town.* These benefits may include Morrisville having to pay less taxes to Morrystown than it did in 2020 (\$183,355.40) for the village owned properties, including utility poles, that lie outside the village limits (but within the town). Currently, there are more benefits to expanding the village boundaries to include Morrisville Water & Light (MW&L) owned water and sewer properties than there is in including electric utility properties, as the local taxes paid on electric properties come from ratepayers located across the county. If such a charter change committee is formed and successful, this committee should remain as a standing committee, charged with evaluating, and working towards, other big picture items that will make for a better future for our community. The Vermont Council on Rural Development’s Community Visioning process that planted the seeds for the Morrisville Food Co-Op, is a great example of the positive community change that can happen when a committee is asked to look into the future, instead of being more focused on daily activities.

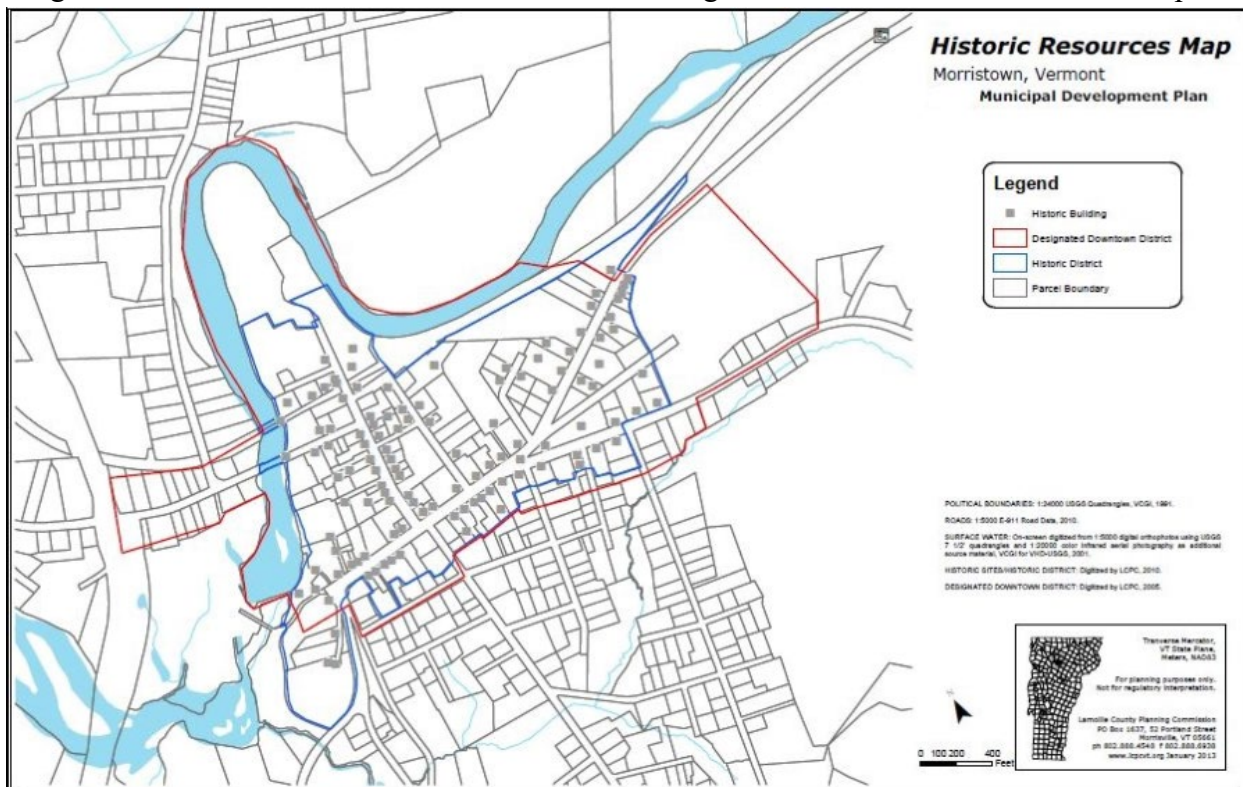
Thank you in advance for reading the Morrisville/Morrystown Town Plan 2022-2030. We believe this plan, if the “Implementation Plan” in Chapter 7 is fully executed, will positively transform our community. The pages of this plan represent nearly three years of the Planning Director’s and Morrisville/Morrystown Planning Council’s time going chapter-by-chapter to create this aspirational document. If there are any questions about the town plan, or the process used to draft it, please contact Planning Director Todd Thomas at 802-888-6373, or via email at [tthomas@morrystownvt.org](mailto:tthomas@morrystownvt.org). Thanks again for reading, and we hope the following pages will help you discover, and truly appreciate, all the unique things that make our community such an awesome place to live, work, and play.



# Chapter 2: Land Use

Our town is approximately 53 mi.<sup>2</sup>, or 34,176 acres in size. The land use thereof, outside the core of the village, is predominantly forested, rural, and low-density residential. There is a desire amongst the various town boards (Selectboard, Planning Council, Conservation Commission, etc.) to preserve much of the forested land located outside the village, especially tracts at relatively high altitudes (which is discussed in more detail in Chapter 5: Natural Resources). Looking towards the developed areas of the town, Morrisville, which is an incorporated village within the town, is a compact area characterized by a mixture of relatively compact residential uses, and mixed commercial uses in the downtown. Thanks to zoning and parking minimum changes, downtown Morrisville is on the rebound, and the larger mixed-use buildings therein are no longer solely used as strip retail. Our community is pleased to have added well more than a hundred new housing units downtown within the last decade (after having zero housing growth in this same area during the previous two decades). All of this new housing has brought more vitality to the downtown, and returned it to a typical New England village use, with commercial uses on the ground level, and apartments located on upper floors.

Downtown Morrisville, especially considering its location outside of Chittenden County, has been incredibly successful at adding new housing, and further revitalizing over the last 5 years. However, the recovery from Covid-19 for small downtown businesses will likely be an all-hands-on-deck situation. As such, renewed interest exists in rejoining the Designated Downtown Program. The limits of the most recent downtown designation can be seen on the below map



While this plan supports enlarging any future designated downtown area, it is anticipated that the State will force a renewal application to use the same boundaries of the former designated downtown (before it was allowed to lapse during the most recent 5-year renewal). The re-designation of the downtown would further numerous goals within this plan, and the State Planning Goals found in 24 VSA, §4302, by directing new development, (especially large development that may benefit from an expedited Act 250 permit process, and tax credits for façade and code improvements), into the core of downtown Morrisville. Doing such will maintain the historic settlement pattern of our compact downtown, while preserving the rural countryside from development pressures. By concentrating more density into the downtown, future economic development efforts will be more successful as the businesses therein will benefit from more close-by customers. Downtown Morrisville is an excellent candidate to regain downtown designation, as it has already seen millions of dollars of reinvestment in the form of commercial space upgrades, and hundreds of new housing starts therein in just the last few years. Morrisville also already has historic preservation standards included as part of its downtown zoning, as well as a long-standing zoning bylaw that allows the Development Review Board to review local Act 250 Impacts.

While there is much to celebrate regarding the revitalization of downtown Morrisville, there is still work to be done. These new downtown residents will need additional recreation areas created via new conservation efforts in the village. Plus, there is always a need, whether perceived or real, for more parking downtown. Current efforts to expand the Pleasant Street municipal parking lot should be supported and funded by the Selectboard within the next two budget years. The Selectboard should also create a capital fund that, as the balance grows over the years, could eventually be used to create a deck of parking accessed from Hutchins Street, located above, but preferably beneath, the surface of the existing municipal parking lot on Pleasant Street. **The town's recent acquisition of land at the intersection of Pleasant and Railroad Streets should also be expanded and developed into additional parking that will support downtown businesses, nearby apartment buildings, and users of the Lamoille Valley Rail-Trail.** These additional parking options, which are also shown on the downtown parking map found on page 25 (Utility & Facility Chapter), could help spur development interest at 82 Portland Street, which has been boarded-up since Norm's Furniture closed approximately 20 years ago. The Sunoco gas station at our main downtown intersection is also an extremely underutilized property. The Planning Council should work with the Selectboard to help spur the redevelopment of both of these cornerstone properties. **Widening the sidewalks on the south side of Lower Main Street, to better utilize its approximately 50 feet of pavement width, should be completed within the next 5 years to encourage the redevelopment of the gas station.** This work would also help give the existing food businesses on this street, such as Pizza on Main, Black Cap Coffee, and North Country Donuts, badly needed additional area for outside seating (which was absolutely crucial during the Covid-19 Pandemic). Much can also be gained by helping the downtown reembrace the river that runs through it. The buildings in the downtown largely turn their backs to the Lamoille River. **This plan strongly supports efforts to**



**source, grant and trust funding, to plan for and construct a boardwalk along the river, paralleling Portland Street, linking Lower Main Street to Bridge Street.** *The Planning Council should work with the Copley Trust to see if there is an appetite for funding this boardwalk, lighting, benches, etc. to relink downtown Morrisville to its riverfront.* Similarly, this plan supports an effort to study or locate a path, or even boardwalk, along the portion of the river that backs up to the new apartment houses recently built on Bridge Street.

In recent years, after decades without any new construction or investment in downtown, large new apartment buildings are being developed in the Central Business Zone: currently on Bridge Street, Foundry Street, and on Upper Main Street. At the time of this writing, similar new developments are planned or being permitted on Hutchins Street, and out on Jersey Heights. **This plan strongly supports the continued development of new dense housing in the core of Morrisville** (parking issues will be addressed in a future chapter). With the rise of Ecommerce and the resultant retrenchment of brick and mortar retail nationwide, **we must continue to increase the density of downtown Morrisville to help support the existing commercial core therein. As such, this plan supports future zoning efforts designed to expand multi-family housing in the Commercial Zone, and a reinvented Mixed Office Residential Zone.** The additional people living in our commercial areas creates new customers for our wonderful local businesses, helping to ensure their long-term viability. With that being said, there is a growing desire to see new ownership-based housing constructed in the downtown. There is concern that all the new rental housing being constructed in the downtown will throw off the longstanding ratio of rented versus owned housing in our community.

**Outside of the downtown Central Business Zone, this plan supports adding more multi-family housing in the areas zoned High Density Residential (HDR), and Mixed Office Residential (MOR). This plan also supports evaluating and potentially replacing the small Commercial Zone located in the lower village, by Rock Art Brewery, with an expansion of a revised and denser MOR Zone from the west** (see Future Land Use Map located at the end of this chapter). Located concentrically outside the area zoned HDR, **we support the continued development of duplexes, and single family homes, in the Medium Density Residential Zone.** Located on the edge of the village, and in close-by areas of the town, **we support the continued development of single-family homes in the Low Density Residential Zone. This plan also supports reducing the current 80,000 ft<sup>2</sup> minimum lot size to no more than 40,000 ft<sup>2</sup> minimum lot size in less remote parts of the Rural Residential Agricultural Zone.** Outside of these areas, the hope is that there is little change made in the 2020s to the rural parts of the town. We cherish our forested hills, mountain ridgelines, and open agricultural fields. As such, should look to the Conservation Commission to guide the permanent protection, or outright purchase, of natural areas for recreation and conservation. **Major subdivisions in the Rural Residential Agricultural (RRA) Zone shall continue to be done via the conservation subdivision process, which ensures that the town’s rural areas are preserved to some degree, and still maintain a similar rural feel, while also supporting new housing.**

After reconstructing the zoning map in 2018, additional zone changes, other than those cited in this chapter, or shown on the below Future Land Use map, should not be needed during the coming decade. With that being said, **this plan supports any density changes the Planning Council deems appropriate over the coming decade, provided such density change is located within the Sewer Service Management Area.** *The Council should evaluate if allowing more density on the short section of Brooklyn Street between the Central Business Zone and the Commercial Zone makes sense for a developed area already served by village water and sewer that is walkable to both downtown and uptown.* Up-zoning this relatively small area to High Density Residential would likely incentivize developer investment in this neighborhood, but said investment could be a negative for the existing single-family homes that are presently intermixed with the non-conforming multi-family residential uses on this street. **The consensus elsewhere is to encourage infill housing (new single-family homes on smaller lots) to satisfy demand for housing and population growth.** When this strategy becomes limiting, or when the relatively affordability of the town can be seen as clearly eroding, **the Council should only focus on converting land zoned Rural Residential Agricultural Zone to Low or Medium Density Residential in areas where municipal services already exist or can be extended to, such as Cadys Falls, Morristown Corners, Pinewood Estates, and along Needles Eye Road (which all are served by municipal water). The areas, which are called out on the Future Land Use Map included at the end of this chapter, should be relied upon to house much of the new single family home growth outside the village of Morrisville for the next decade.** These zone expansions would link (and merge) the LDR #3 Zone (Sunset) and the LDR #4 Zone (Cadys Falls), as well as the LDR #5 Zone (Morristown Corners) to LDR #1 Zone (Jersey Way). As the town grows, the addition of pocket-parks for residents to enjoy these neighborhoods, should also be considered.

Outside of the historic downtown Morrisville, the developed land around the junction of Routes 100 & 15 continue to be the commercial core of the county. **New commercial growth that is too large for the downtown should be entirely concentrated in the uptown Commercial Zone. This plan supports the continued commercial development of the properties zoned as such that can be served by municipal water and sewer. There is presently no need or desire to expand the Commercial Zone to adjoining lands, especially if said development would have to rely on well and septic for services. As the Commercial Zone continues to be developed, and redeveloped, sidewalks, and other pedestrian friendly amenities, must be included so this area is not auto-dependent. This plan also encourages the addition of multifamily residential construction in the less highly trafficked areas of the Commercial Zone in an effort to make the area more vibrant, and more pedestrian friendly over time.**

Further south on Route 100, the land surrounding the Morrisville-Stowe airport was rezoned industrial to help support the continued growth, and viability, of this important community facility. **Residential uses shall continue to be discouraged in the immediate area surrounding the airport because they pose a threat to the airport's long-term viability. As**

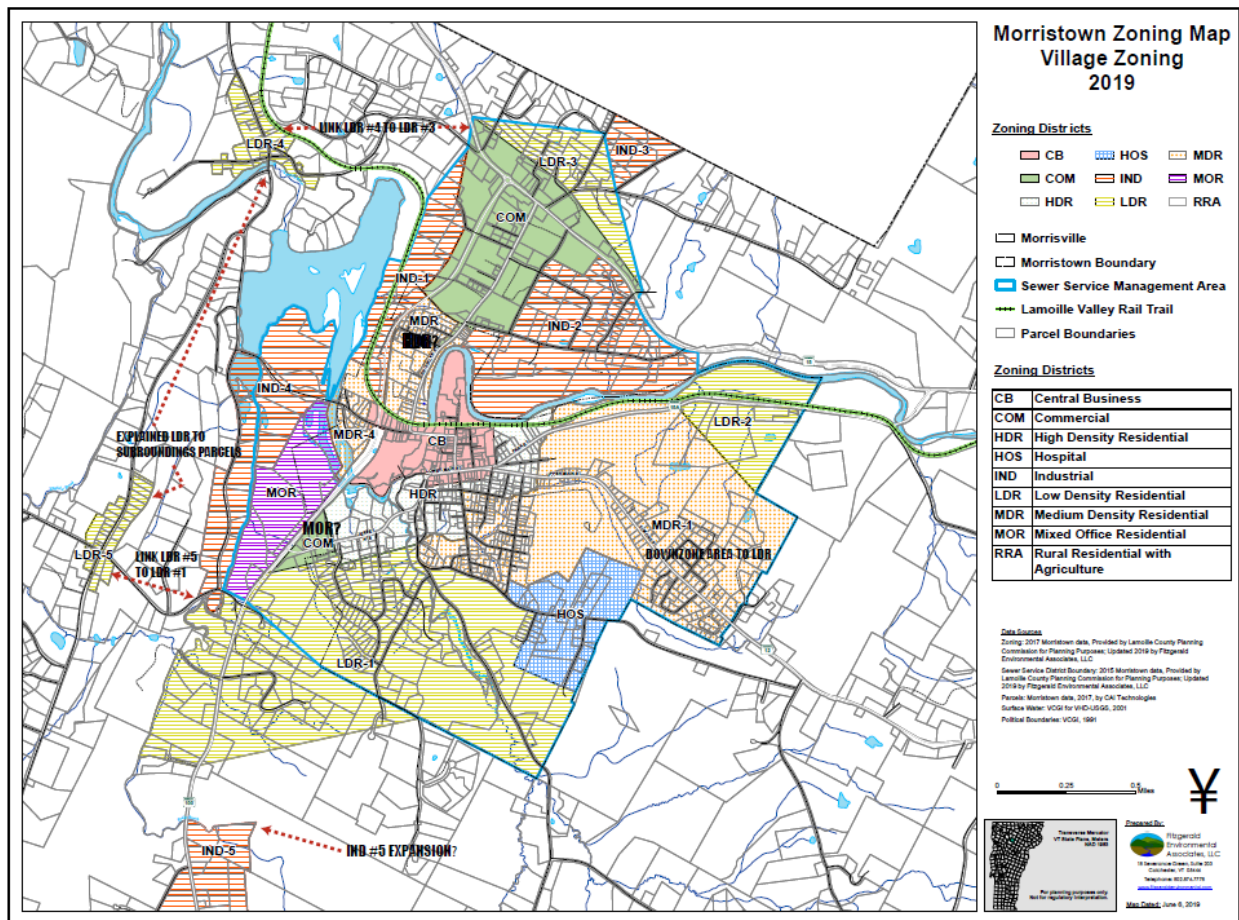
**such, the Planning Council can consider adding directly adjacent residentially zoned parcels to the airport's Industrial Zone during the coming decade.** However, in doing so, the Council should also evaluate if a physical means to buffer noise pollution can be required by zoning when new development takes place along a zoning boundary line that separates residential and industrial zones. These physical means to attenuate noise pollution along zoning boundary lines shall include, but not be limited to no-cut zones, landscaped setbacks, stockade fencing, and berms. **While the development of the airport and industry on the surrounding lands will continue to be supported, the visual appeal of the open land south of the airport, and down to the Stowe town-line, should be preserved as much as possible. The conservation of sensitive lands in this area, including around Joe's Pond, and Molly's Bog, should be supported, but "right-to-farm" language in this plan, or in any local or state permit conditions, is discouraged. In more remote areas, development on Class 4 roads that put a strain on municipal services located in the village should be discouraged. However, said policy shall not be used to stop developers from upgrading Class 4 Roads to Class 3 Roads when said roads can serve as important connector roads (ex. Darling Road: which could connect Rte. 12 & Rte. 15A, Rooney Road: which could connect Mud City Loop to Walton Rd, and Gallup Road: which could connect Stagecoach to Cole Hill Road).**

As the industrial park located on the corner of Harrel Street and Munson Avenue has been largely built out, there remains a future need for additional land zoned for industrial growth in our community. **With that being said, this plan supports changing a portion of Industrial-2 Zone, from Houle Avenue to the east, back to a residential use due to the fact that more than 80% of the properties in this area are still being used residentially, and have not been bought out by neighboring industrial uses. It is of paramount importance to our town's ability to retain locally owned companies that, as the companies in our Industrial Zones grow, that enough industrial zoned land is always available for purchase, allowing these companies, and the good jobs they offer, to remain local.** As discussed previously regarding the anticipated growth of the airport industrial zone, the zoning boundary separating Industrial Zones 1, 2, 3, & 4 from directly adjacent residential properties, should be buffered from any undue and adverse noise pollution resulting from new development (residential or industrial).

Copley Hospital on Washington Highway continues to serve as the town and regional seat for medical care, and related health care services. **The undeveloped land that remains in the Hospital Zone must be preserved to accommodate the area's future healthcare needs. Therefore, adding new multi-family residential uses that are not directly associated with a health care use in this area are opposed by this plan.** The conversion of undeveloped land in the Hospital Zone into multi-family uses shall only be allowed for assisted living facilities, nursing homes, or other continuum of care living arrangements that strive to give older adults maximized independence through personalized healthcare provided in a residential setting. Copley Hospital may be purchasing some of this undeveloped land in the coming months. This plan supports this purchase, and future efforts to locate a child enrichment center thereon.

Finally, it has been anticipated for decades now that the land around the Bishop Marshall School would be an ideal place for business expansion and further development. However, in today's rapidly changing Ecommerce world, this land area will clearly not be used for business expansion. Therefore, the Planning Council should open up a dialogue with the Bishop Marshall School Board about rezoning this area, potentially allowing Multi-family residential uses therein. This land could also be used for trails and outdoor education by both students and the public. Trails and mini outdoor classrooms would enhance both place based education and accessible trails for the use of recreation. We believe that the recently expanded school could benefit if more residential uses were located nearby, at a distance that school age children can safely walk. It is important that the town's zoning not restrict that possibility of developing high quality residential dwellings that benefit the school and the larger area in close proximity thereto, including the land owned by the Cheng Family which is located on the opposite side of the Truck Route from the entrance to the school.

### Morrisville/Morristown Future Land Use Map



## Chapter 3: Transportation

In 2008, the town had a public road network measuring 104 miles. More than a decade later, the town's road network has grown to only 106.7 miles in length (the 2020 town highway map can be found at the following web address:

[https://maps.vtrans.vermont.gov/Maps/TownMapSeries/LAMOILLE\\_Co/MORRISTOWN/MORRISTOWN\\_MILEAGE\\_2020.pdf](https://maps.vtrans.vermont.gov/Maps/TownMapSeries/LAMOILLE_Co/MORRISTOWN/MORRISTOWN_MILEAGE_2020.pdf)). This 106.7 mile length measurement includes 15 miles of State Highway. The village has a total road network of 14.1 miles, including 2 miles of State Highway. The 2020 village highway map can be found at the following web address

[https://maps.vtrans.vermont.gov/Maps/TownMapSeries/LAMOILLE\\_Co/MORRISTOWN/MORRISTOWN\\_MILEAGE\\_2020.pdf](https://maps.vtrans.vermont.gov/Maps/TownMapSeries/LAMOILLE_Co/MORRISTOWN/MORRISTOWN_MILEAGE_2020.pdf)). This decade-to-decade comparison shows that our road network is growing slowly. Growth aside, the approximately 90 miles of total local public roads is a sizeable burden, especially economically, for a relatively small town to maintain.

Even though the town government has no control over State roads located in our town, these roads still play a very important part of day-to-day life here. Commuters coming to, and leaving our region, use these State roads daily, which are the property of the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans). Access to the Essex area via Route 15, and the access that Route 100 provides to the interstate highway and Burlington, are incredibly important to this community, and the many residents who commute to these areas. With rush-hour commute times to Burlington already at an hour plus for a distance of only 45 miles, the Selectboard, and Planning Council, must use all the influence available to ensure that these commute times do not become even longer. Our town is hurt economically the further it gets in terms of travel time by car to and from Burlington, and Chittenden County as a whole.

Even though the town government has no control over State roads located in our town, these roads still play a very important part of day-to-day life here. Commuters coming to, and leaving our region, use these State roads daily, which are the property of the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans). Access to the Essex area via Route 15, and the access that Route 100 provides to the interstate highway and Burlington, are incredibly important to this community, and the many residents who commute to these areas. With rush-hour commute times to Burlington already at an hour plus for a distance of only 45 miles, the Selectboard, and Planning Council, must use all the influence available to ensure that these commute times do not become even longer. Our town is hurt economically the further it gets in terms of travel time by car to and from Burlington, and Chittenden County as a whole.

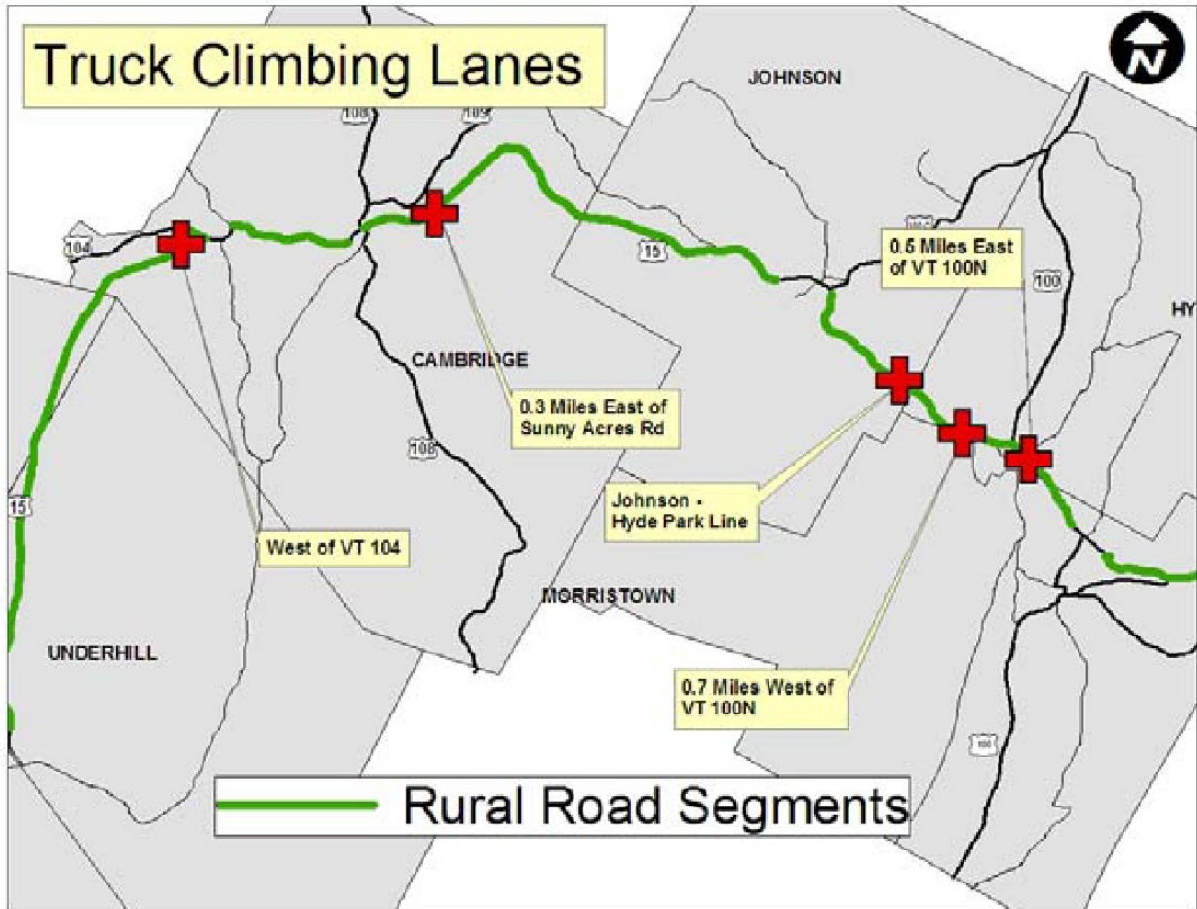
**Therefore, this plan encourages open communication with neighboring communities through the State Route 15 and State Route 100 pass. The town is supportive of the designated village center and downtown initiatives which strive to enhance pedestrian and bicyclists' safety. We support the reduction of the speed limit around the rail trail crossing in the Town of Johnson that provides additional bike and pedestrian safety. The Town will work collaboratively with our neighbors to ensure they are made aware of any negative impacts to our community which may occur because of slowing traffic outside the village center and/ or designated downtown.**

While ensuring that commute times to Chittenden County on Route 100, and Route 15, are not lengthened by reduced speed limits, and unwarranted traffic lights, it is also important to lobby for physical changes to State roads that can improve commute times. Physical roadway changes made to improve commute times will help offset increased traffic as our community and the surrounding communities grow. Truck climbing lanes are a great example of such a positive change. **This plan supports the creation of truck climbing lanes at locations where the road grade exceeds 5% for 1,000 feet or 7% for 500 feet on Route 15** (per VTrans *Truck Network*



*Improvements Prioritization Study* (Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, 2001). The following figure details these areas:

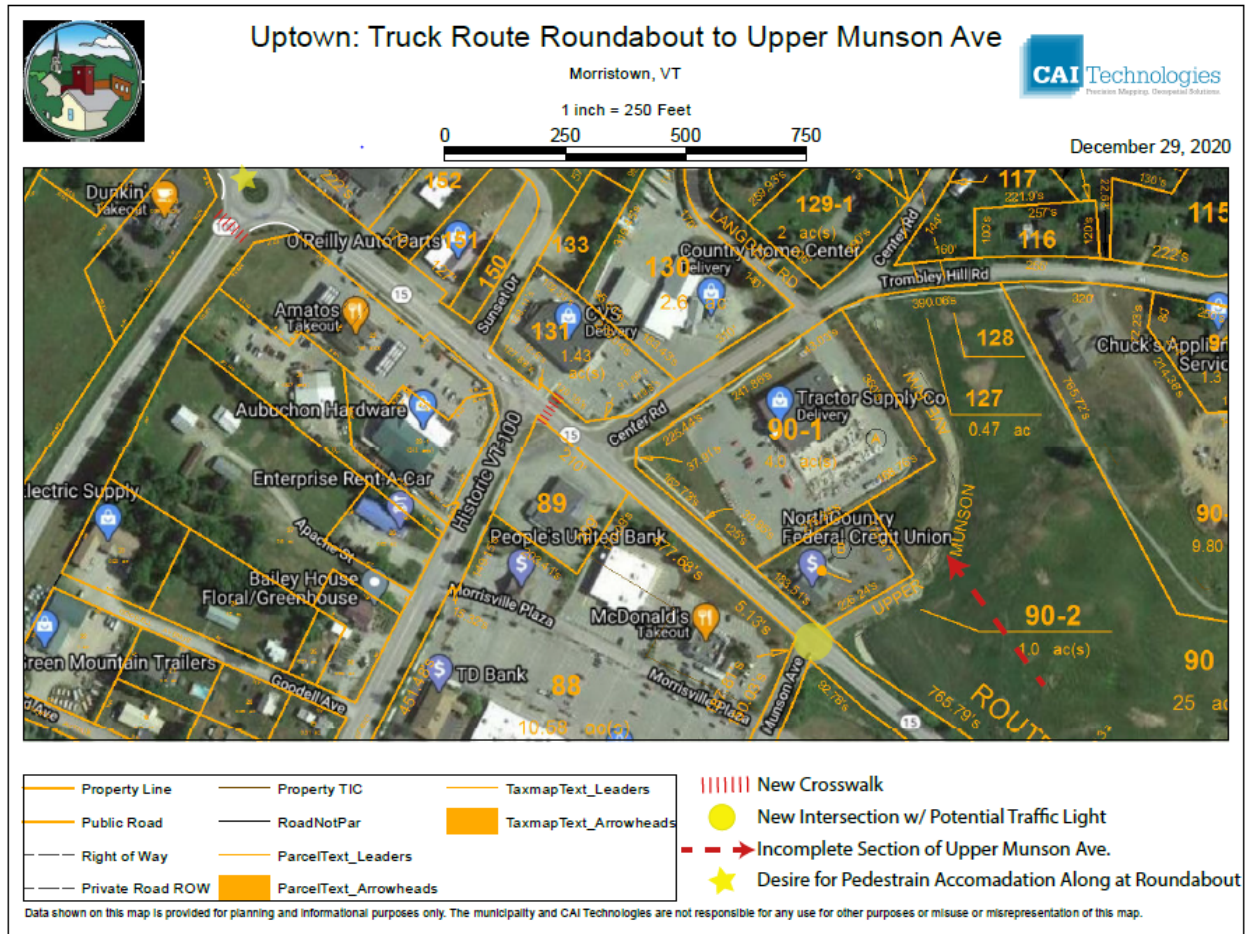
### Supported Locations for Truck Climbing Lanes



Truck climbing lanes and passing lanes are also important features that should be encouraged between our community and the interstate highway in Waterbury. An example of a location where a truck climbing lane is needed is Route 100 southbound on Shutesville Hill, which is located just before the Stowe Waterbury town-line. This plan also believes the widening of Route 100 between Morrisville and Stowe, and Stowe to the interstate in Waterbury will eventually be warranted. **As such, efforts to add more road width, lanes, or other measures to improve, or protect, existing commute times on Route 100, will be supported by this plan.**

In addition to commuters, State roads also help us drive around town efficiently, getting us to our favorite shopping areas uptown. With the advent of the Truck Route, it is time to re-envision the State portion of Brooklyn Street. Given the generous road width, and reduced traffic demand (thanks to the Truck Route) on the State owned section of the road, Brooklyn Street must be more than just a highway featuring strip commercial retail. **Planning should begin immediately**

with State partners to remake Brooklyn Street into a tree-lined boulevard, possibly also with street trees in a planted median. This would help to soften the appearance of the street, and make it into more of a destination. We believe such an improvement would be a net positive to the retailers on Brooklyn Street, while also possibly encouraging pad-site developments like restaurants alongside the more visually appealing roadway.



In 2011 RSG Inc. of Burlington worked with town staff to publish a plan entitled Morristown North End Business District Circulation Study (referred to hereafter as “the Circulation Study”). The Circulation Study was particularly helpful in guiding new development uptown over the course of the last decade. Relying on the recommendations in this plan, the Development Review Board required new developments like Maplefields, CVS, Tractor Supply, and North Country Federal Credit Union to include the construction of new sidewalks along their frontage that greatly enhanced the ability of pedestrians to get from business to business in the area. Presently, Upper Munson Avenue, first envisioned during the Circulation Study’s planning process, is currently only partially constructed. As traffic counts grow, this road, once completed, will become an important cut-through route that alleviates pressure on the already busy intersection of Center Road and VT Route 15 East. When warranted, and as shown on the illustration at the beginning of this paragraph, **this plan supports VTrans scoping and developing either a**

traffic light or a roundabout (if feasible) where Route 15 and Upper and Munson Ave meet. **This plan also supports adding a crosswalk across Route 15 at this intersection, or as shown on the below map at the top of Brooklyn Street, which is a location that was approved via a letter sent to the Town by VTrans dated 2 February 2018.** *This plan also recommends that the Selectboard allocate funding to update the Circulation Study so it contains post Truck Route traffic data.* The Circulation Study has proven valuable enough to warrant an update, especially in light of how variable the post Truck Route traffic count projections have proven to be. It would be a loss for the town’s planning process if the Circulation Study were to become obsolete due to the traffic data therein becoming too old. *The Selectboard should also entertain if a similar study should be undertaken for the roads in downtown Morrisville given the recent growth in housing units therein.*

**In the uptown commercial core that the Circulation Study focuses on, as well as in downtown Morrisville, Level of Service F & E is an acceptable wait time at traffic lights.** Allowing longer wait times will help encourage denser development patterns in our commercial core, and improve pedestrian and bicycle access and safety therein. Especially in downtown Morrisville, the need to efficiently move cars from Point A to Point B, must take a backseat to the needs of pedestrians. A Walk & Bike Safety Action Plan was recently developed with the help of Local Motion for downtown Morrisville. **Some of the ideas in the Walk & Bike Safety Action Plan should be explored and implemented, such as sidewalk bump-outs where parking in the downtown is striped-off, and other similar pedestrian-friendly traffic calming solutions.** It is important to remember that the Truck Route was built to remove heavy truck traffic from downtown Morrisville, and **the Selectboard and Planning Council should continue to try to recreate a more pedestrian-friendly version of downtown now that large trucks have another way around.**

On the edge of the downtown, **this plan supports moving forward with the improvements proposed to the intersection of Routes 12, 15A, and Park Street in the RSG Inc. study of that intersection published in 2005. Reinstating crossing guards to help school-age children navigate this intersection should be considered. Strong consideration should also be given to eliminating all of the 1970s era “slip-lanes” that we still exist, both in the village and the rural areas, (with the slip-lane allowing westbound traffic on Washington Highway to turn onto Maple Street without stopping as an example).** This plan also supports the continued efforts to upgrade the existing sidewalk infrastructure both in the town and village. Sidewalk extensions are currently needed in the village on Cherry Avenue (to connect to Congress Street), along Washington Highway (from Congress Street to Randolph Road), Munson Ave (behind Northgate Plaza and north to Morrisville Plaza), and along Jersey Heights (from Feline Loop out to the Bishop Marshall pedestrian underpass). It is anticipated that land development will be the main driver of sidewalk extensions over the next decade, especially along Jersey Heights. **All sidewalk extensions shall meet the construction requirements contained in the Morristown Sidewalk Policy. Crosswalk and sidewalk infrastructure is**



**also highly desired and supported by this plan at the Truck Route roundabout. This plan also supports efforts to make both uptown and downtown Morrisville safer and more accessible to bicycle traffic, including places to store and lock bikes, both outside and inside (where feasible).**

Outside the village, the town's roads are mainly Class 3 gravel roads. **New roads, unless covenanted to be private, shall meet the construction requirements of the Morristown Road Policy. New roads, where feasible, shall add to the connectivity of the existing street network, and the creation of new dead-end roads is discouraged. This plan supports making new road connections whenever possible when intervening properties are developed.** Class 4 Roads located in the town should not see the development that is considered acceptable on Class 3 Roads. **Class 4 roads and legal trails should generally be reserved and protected for recreational uses. In more remote areas, development on Class 4 roads that puts a strain on municipal services located in the village should be discouraged. However, said policy shall not be used to stop developers from upgrading Class 4 Roads to Class 3 Roads when said roads can serve as important connector roads** (ex. Darling Road: which could connect Rte. 12 & Rte. 15A, Rooney Road: which could connect Mud City Loop to Walton Rd, and Gallup Road: which could connect Stagecoach to Cole Hill Road). *The Selectboard, with assistance with the Planning Council, should also work with the School Board and nearby property owners to open up a new access driveway to the school that obviates the need for all the traffic that comes down Elmore and Upper Main Streets from cycling around the fire station to reverse direction up Copley Avenue.*

Contrary to popular belief, there is a way to get around town other than by car. **This plan supports the continued operation of the Route 100 Commuter Bus Route that runs between Morrisville and Waterbury.** This bus, with stops in downtown Stowe, connects residents, via the park and ride in Waterbury, to the larger bus service that runs frequently on the interstate between Montpelier and Burlington. This plan supports the continuation of the shopping loop bus route that is predominantly used by seniors that no can longer drive to access uptown grocery shopping. **This plan also supports the use of car-sharing, car-pooling, and other means to minimize the amount of cars needed for village, and especially downtown, residents. All road improvement projects, including those mentioned above, should be planned with measures to increase safety and accessibility for bicycle riders and pedestrians, with due consideration given for budgetary concerns, as approved by Town Meeting.**

Area residents also now have the ability to fly out of town to the New York City area thanks to the air passenger service that Stowe Aviation recently brought to our airport. The Morrisville-Stowe airport, which is owned by VTrans, is the region's only airport. Its location less than 2 miles south of the village on LaPorte Road ties the economic well-being of the airport to the economic well-being of the community. **This plan supports continued investment into the airport.** In the early 1980s, the airport's runway was paved and lengthened. A grass runway was completed in 1997 alongside the paved runway. Safety areas were paved in 2018, and plane taxi

areas were improved in 2021. However, the length of the current runway remains problematic for landing purposes during inclement weather and, almost as significantly, for private aircraft insurance purposes in relatively good weather. **This plan, while being sensitive to the needs of the existing homeowners nearby, supports lengthening the runway of the Morrisville-Stowe Airport to 4,000 linear feet in length to obviate these insurance issues, and to ensure the continued viability of the airport. Furthermore, this plan supports the approved masterplan improvements to the airport, as more activity thereat helps our economy. However, this plan opposes the permitting and development of new private airstrips and helipads in any area outside of Industrial Zone #5. The helipad for Copley Hospital, and future expansion thereof, or improvements thereto, is exempted from this plan's helipad prohibition, as the hospital's basic helipad is inarguably a community good.**



# Chapter 4: Utility & Facility

## Cemeteries

Our town has 8 public cemeteries: Pleasant View, Lakeview, LaPorte, Mountain View, Plains, Randolph, Riverside, and Wheeler (with the latter 7 managed by the Morristown Cemetery Association). The ultimate responsibility for the town's cemeteries lies with the Selectboard. The town maintains the cemetery grounds, and elected cemetery commissions, or local cemetery associations, handle lot layout and sales. The availability of new plots varies depending on the cemetery in question. Only the Randolph and Wheeler cemeteries are believed to have adjacent land that could be purchased to accommodate future expansion. The other cemeteries, before available space for burials becomes an issue, should look to employ more efficient use of existing lands. For example, 4'x4' cremation lots were recently platted where there was not room for standard 4'x12' plots. This plan supports better promotion of the 4x4 cremation plots, due to their land efficiency, and potential for better financial returns for the host cemetery. This plan also supports the new push for green burials. It is unclear at this time if green burials can be accommodated within the town's existing cemeteries. As such, this plan supports local, or even regional efforts, to plan and locate a "green cemetery" to accommodate residents that want to leave less of an environmental footprint when they are buried.

## Cultural Facilities

Outside of Stowe, Morrisville has the only freestanding facility in Lamoille County dedicated to our local history, and one of only four historical societies in the county. Since 1953, the Noyes House Museum has been operated by the Morristown Historical Society, who maintains the collection housed in the museum. The museum and the grounds are owned by the town, but the museum's trustees hold a long term lease on the building and property. The Noyes House is located in the heart of the village at 122 Lower Main Street. In recent years, via funding allocated by Town Meeting, meaningful repairs have been made to the Noyes House building, including reinforcing failing chimney structures, repointing the exterior brick of the museum, and rewiring the original home and barn. More repair work to the museum building is still needed, including repairing interior plaster that failed due to the overdue repointing of the brick. *This plan supports continuing the current ½ penny on the Grandlist of annual funding from Town Meeting through the 2030 lifecycle of this plan (but terminating said funding in 2031), plus sourcing other grant funds, to help ensure the preservation of what is believed to be the 2<sup>nd</sup> oldest home in Morrisville.* **Within one year from the date of the approval of this plan, the Selectboard should also examine if current practice of letting a stone foundation building freeze and thaw due to a lack of a heating system is sustainable and a recommended practice for an historic building.**

## Dispatch / Emergency Communication

The Town of Morristown currently participates in the Enhanced 911 program (E911). Through the linking of phone numbers to locatable addresses, the E911 system allows call takers at Lamoille County Sheriff's Department to see the caller's locatable address, and which emergency service providers are responsible for that address. Locatable addressing is the backbone of the E911 program. All streets in our town that serve 3 or more residences have been named, and all structures have been assigned a number. The system is based on 1/100<sup>th</sup> of a mile addressing

increment, with even numbered structures on the right hand side of the road, and odd numbered structures on the left hand side of the road (for example, if the structure number is 3500 Randolph Road, it is located 3.5 miles from the beginning of Randolph Road and on the right hand side thereof).

### Emergency Medical Services

The Morristown Rescue Squad provides immediate emergency medical care to all town residents. Rescue calls are dispatched out of the Lamoille County Sheriff's Department in Hyde Park via the E911 system. The squad's ambulance building is located across from Copley Hospital at 539 Washington Highway. This facility was renovated in 2006 with a new garage, a larger more efficient training room, handicap accessibility, and a second bunk room. This facility, which is also equipped with an emergency generator, should serve the town well for the foreseeable future.

### Fire Protection

The Morrisville Fire Department is located in the William Towne Memorial Fire Station at 162 Upper Main Street. The Fire Department is run by the Fire Chief, his two assistant chiefs, and a volunteer crew. The Morristown Fire Department provides three types of services to the community: 1) immediate response to fires in the village and town; 2) fire prevention and education services; and 3) rescue services, equipment and vehicles for other emergency situations. The Fire Chief's main concerns are inadequate water pressure at hydrants in certain parts of the village, and a dearth of fire ponds with dry hydrants in remote areas of the town. **This plan supports the new zoning bylaw requirement that all Major Subdivisions that are not connected to a public water system be equipped with a dry hydrant located within a half mile drive of the subdivision road, which provides at least 100,000 gallons of water.** The Fire Station is only adequate for now in terms of size. As fire trucks continue to get bigger over the years, the Selectboard should look to acquire any adjacent properties that come on the market to ensure that there is ample room to expand the fire station, if needed, at a later date.

### Gravel Resources

Our predecessors were extremely wise to purchase the Duhamel property in Cadys Falls in 1991 at a cost of \$850,000 in an effort to provide the town, and its roads, with a multigenerational source of high quality gravel. The Selectboard has smartly not adopted the State's road and bridge standards in recent years to the extent that doing so may obviate the use of this important gravel resource. **Recreational uses of the Duhamel property, such as hiking, biking, or disc-golf shall be allowed on the Duhamel property in so far as they do not interfere with the town's current or future gravel needs. This parcel was purchased by the taxpayers for its gravel resource, and this plan prioritizes the taking of gravel from said property above any and all other uses. The town will continue to work with recreational users to ensure safe access to the trail system.** Newly proposed gravel pits shall only be supported per this plan when located in the Special Industrial area, which is east of Garfield Road (between the Lamoille River on the south and the town lines on the north and east). New gravel operations in this area could help supply the local need for gravel, while still balancing appropriate extraction with the planned reclamation of the area when the resource is exhausted. Existing gravel operations in town that are located outside the Special Industrial Zone, shall be supported by this plan only while due regard is given to neighboring residential areas while the pit remains active. Due to

incompatibility with nearby residential uses, gravel pits that become inactive for more than 3 years should not have the support of the town, or this plan, to recommence operation when they are located outside the Special Industrial Zone.

#### Hospital

Copley Hospital, located at 528 Washington Highway in Morrisville, is a designated "Critical Access Hospital" by the federal government, and is the primary health facility serving the town and region. Copley provides emergency care, and critical care access for local emergency services, providing in and out patient care, long-term care, and birthing services. As stated in the Economic Development Chapter of the plan, the continued operation of Copley Hospital is critically important to the well-being of this community. **Any efforts from the State, such as the Green Mountain Care Board, to limit the services, or financial well-being of the hospital, shall be vehemently opposed.**

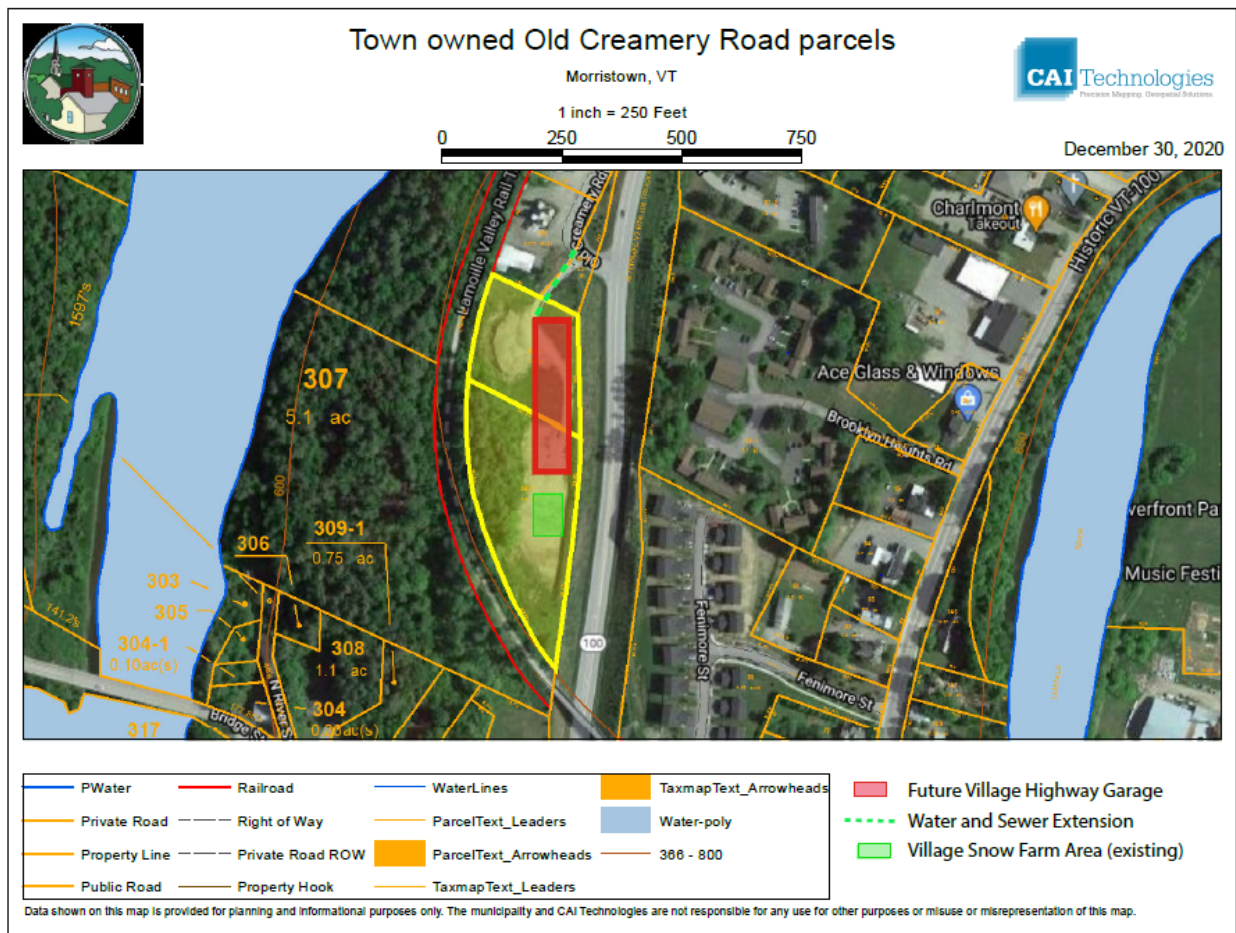
#### Library

The Morristown Centennial Library provides library services to the community including books, periodicals, DVDs, public computers, research facilities, and programming for children and adults. The library is located in the Carnegie Building at the corner of Park and Richmond Streets. The Library completed a large expansion within the last decade that more than doubled the usable space, while making the entire building handicap accessible. With this addition, the library should be able to meet the capacity needs of our community for generations to come.

#### Miscellaneous government properties

The Town Offices at 43 Portland Street were purchased in 2013. This building, with a mostly unconstructed second floor, should be large enough to house Town office staff for years to come. The Village Offices, which are located on Elmore Street, also provide adequate space to house Village office staff for the foreseeable future. This plan recommends that the Village Trustees sell non-revenue producing properties that are taxable because they are physically located in the town, outside the village limits. While the town and village boundary line is largely non-existent to community members, this otherwise relatively arbitrary line matters very much in Montpelier. The village owning property that is located outside of the village limits results in sending more than \$100,000 per year in local tax money to Montpelier for the education tax. **As such, this plan strongly supports the sale of any taxable village owned properties that are located outside the village limits that are non-revenue producing for MW&L. Conversely, this plan also supports the creation of a committee to study expanding the village limits further into the town, so to avoid the village paying town taxes because the vast majority of said tax money gets sent to Montpelier for State education tax.** The Bugby Springs property located on VT Route 15 East in Morristown is a perfect example of such a property. The village had to pay \$3,659.28 in taxes to the town in Fiscal Year 2019/2020 just because this 82 acre parcel, which produces no revenue for the village, is located in the town, and outside the village limits. Whether this parcel is sold to a developer, or to a conservation land trust, will be the Trustee's decision. *However, the current status with the village paying property taxes to the town for non-revenue producing properties should come to an end, either via the sale of the subject properties, or the possible expansion of the village line, so most of these properties can be located inside the village limits, and therefore become tax exempt.* This plan also supports the town purchasing village owned land outside the village limits in areas where recreation amenities exist.

This plan supports the relocation of the village highway garage from its leased location on Old Creamery Road to an owned location at the south end of this road. Old Creamery Road is centrally located, with excellent access off the State's Truck Route. However, the current situation with the town paying nearly \$100,000 a year to lease the current highway garage is not a long-term solution. **This plan supports the Selectboard working immediately towards building a permanent highway garage on the land it owns on the south end of the road.** A map showing the location of the future village garage location on Old Creamery Rd is as follows:

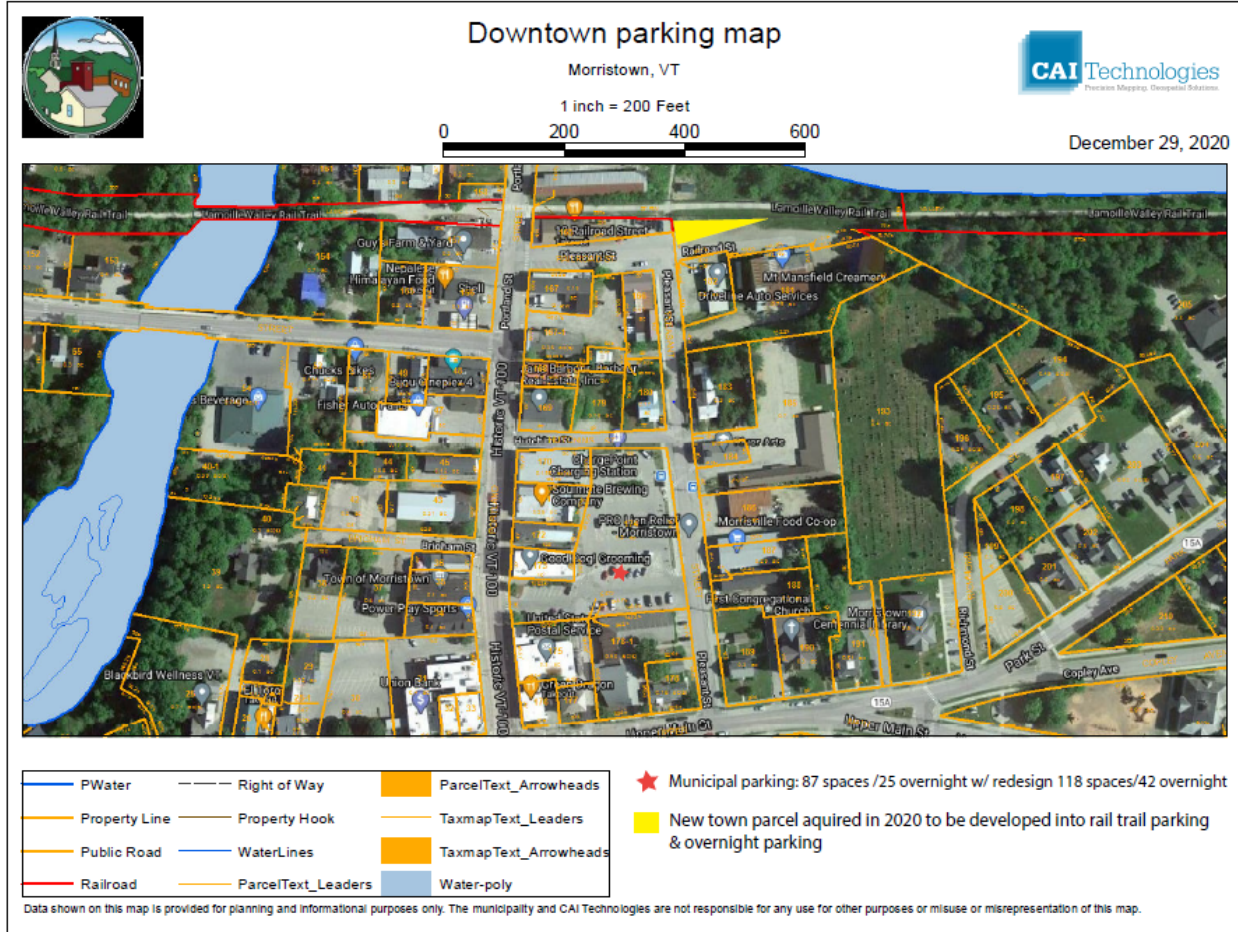


### Parking facilities downtown

The Selectboard and a developer of a large housing project at 26 Hutchins Street recently signed an agreement to add more parking spots to the Copley Municipal Parking Lot, which is located between Portland and Pleasant Streets. 31 total parking spots will be added to help support this development, with 17 of those spaces designated for overnight parking. These additional parking spaces are being added by simply striping the existing parking surface more efficiently. **This plan supports a similar effort to restripe the Brigham Street municipal parking lot more efficiently to achieve similar parking gains.** *The Planning Council should also work with the Mt. Vernon Lodge at 65 Portland Street on a plan to turn the south facing side lawn of that building into angled parking. The Planning Council should also plan when a level of parking might need to be created above, or preferably beneath, the Copley Municipal Parking lot (with a Hutchins Street entrance to the lower parking level located behind the Nepveu Building, and*



*with the existing parking surface becoming the top deck parking elevation, or the site of a community building). The Selectboard should also secure the old rail car loading area lease at the bottom of Pleasant Street from VTrans when it expires in 2031 so a proper parking lot can be built that services the downtown, and rail trail users at the kiosk. The Selectboard should reach out to VTrans in the interim in hopes of taking over the lease before 2031.*



## Police

The Morristown Police Department (MPD) is located in the public safety building at 121 Lower Main Street. MPD provides enforcement services to the citizens, and businesses, in the village and town. The Morristown Police Department, including the police chief, consists of 11 full-time police officers, and a part-time administrative assistant.

## Recreation

New life has recently been brought to the Morristown Parks & Recreation Committee, which aims to promote the development of a wide variety of recreation programs, park facilities, and services to meet the total needs of our community. *To support awareness and accessibility of recreational amenities in our community, the Selectboard should look to employ someone part-time to staff the recently resurrected Parks & Recreation Committee. The Committee should create an online calendar, and list of recreational amenities in the community, including: tennis and basketball courts, groomed Nordic ski trails, athletic fields, fitness and nature trails, the*

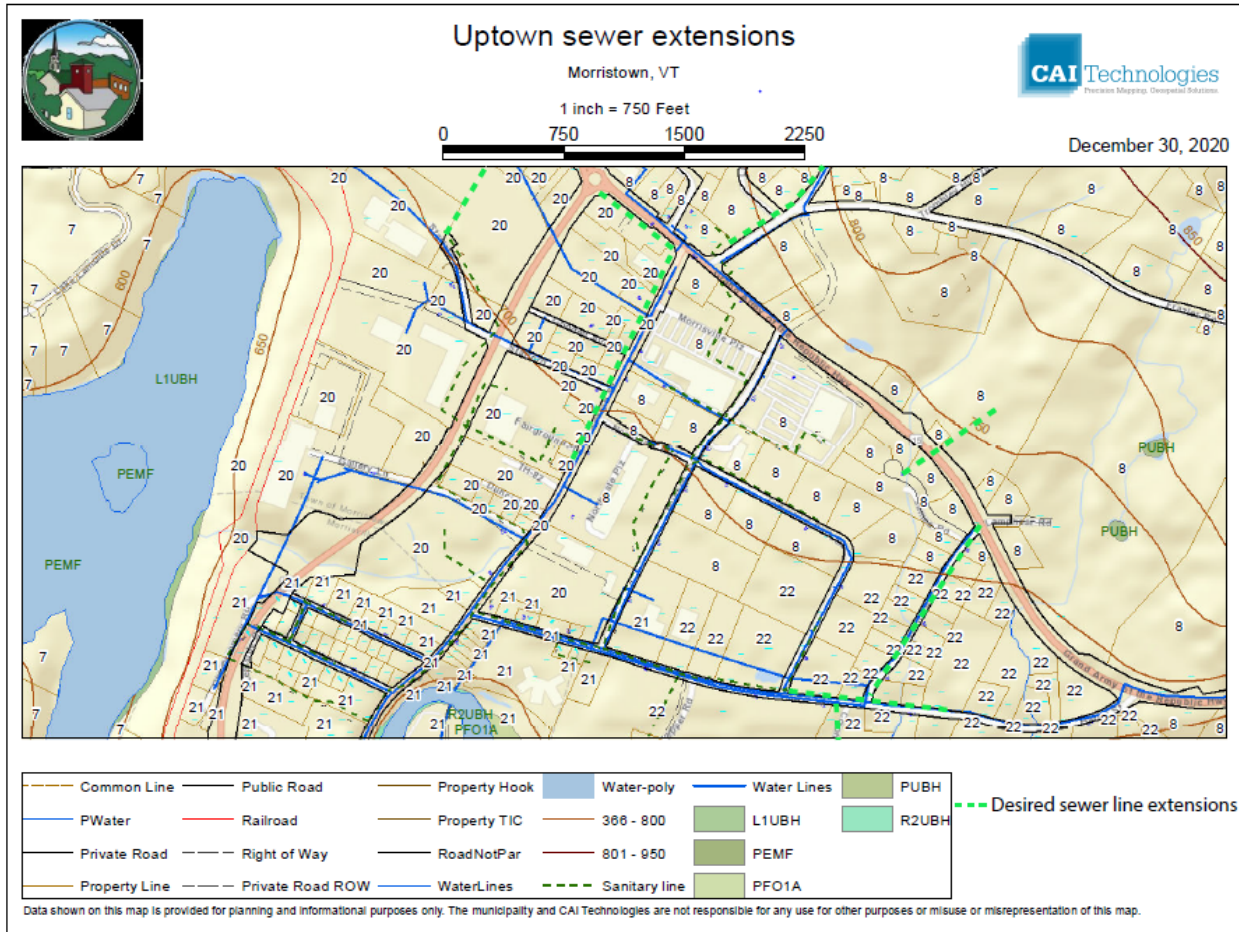


Copley running track, the school gymnasiums, and the two playgrounds. The trail system located out behind Peoples Academy is extensive, beautiful, relatively accessible, and underappreciated. The Supervisory Union, Conservation Commission, or like-minded organizations, should work towards mapping these trails, while look to add new trail connections out to both Elmore Street and Park Street (where feasible). Oxbow Riverfront Park is utilized for soccer fields, a community garden, a music pavilion, a seasonal ice-skating rink, and a small playground area. Close-by, Copley Country Club is a village owned property that supports a 9-hole semi-public golf course that outside the summer months, provides open space for recreating in the winter. Morristown also hosts a Town Forest with newly signed trails that can be skied, hiked, and snowshoed. **This plan supports the continuing efforts meant to enhance the enjoyment and the vitality of each of these town owned recreational properties.**

If allowed by the pending state and federal relicensing permits for MW&L's hydro-electric facility on B Street, the Selectboard should open a dialogue with the Village Trustees regarding adding recreational opportunities within a leased, or acquired, portion of the Clark property that surrounds the dam. **This plan, once the state and federal relicensing is complete, and allowed thereby, supports developing portions of the Clark property (if it can be done without compromising public safety around an active hydro facility, and without damaging a fragile ecologic area), so this property can include typical park features, such as signed nature trails, picnic areas, a kayak launch, improved public access, etc. This plan also supports the funding and construction of a small parking facility on the Truck Route construction trailer parcel (located at the corner of Bridge Street and the Truck Route), and efforts to create a small parking facility at the Bryan Pond Road access to the Town Forest.** While it may not need to be said, this plan of course supports the maintenance of other existing town owned, and operated, trail systems, and the creation of new trail systems on lands conserved via the conservation subdivision development process.

**As stated in the Education Chapter, this plan also supports the construction of a fieldhouse on the school campus, or close by within the village, to alleviate the high demand on the existing gymnasium for student recreation and sports. This fieldhouse, in order to get the support of the community for such a large capital expense, must have a community access component.** The community badly needs recreation space for the winter months that can accommodate the following indoor uses: pickle ball and basketball courts, soccer, and a track, which will be well utilized by seniors during the winter months. **If plans for a new fieldhouse move forward, this plan supports efforts to study if such a recreation facility could be located atop the existing Copley Municipal Parking Lot located off Pleasant Street.** Any such location will require the construction of an underground parking deck beneath the facility.

#### Sewer Service



The Morrisville Wastewater Treatment Plant is operated under the jurisdiction of the Village Trustees. Sewage treatment in the Sewer Service Management Area is performed by the use of sequential batch reactors (SBRs) technology, and ultraviolet light disinfection, at the wastewater treatment plant located on South River Street. There are currently two pumping stations, on South River Street, and on Jersey Heights (at the bottom of water-trough hill). It should be noted that the Village Trustees currently do not want to take on the ownership, or maintenance, of additional pump stations. Wastewater capacity is critically essential to support existing and new economic development activities through the year 2030. **This plan supports a municipal sewer system with a transparent and competitive rate structure, and management of the plant asset that is adoptable, and flexible enough to work with existing businesses, and any new business wishing to locate in our town. It is an unassailable goal of this plan that sewer capacity should never be a limiting factor for locating new residential, or commercial development, in our community.** While conservation of a resource should always be the first priority, should flow, phosphorous, or BOD levels become problematic at the sewer plant, **this plan supports funding and constructing any needed additional capacity. This plan also supports alternative treatment strategies that could help further divert high strength waste away from the MW&L owned sewer plant, while generating electricity locally (provided the existing electric grid can handle the new generation). Any alternative treatment strategy, if constructed, would not be owned or operated by MW&L.**

Solid Waste Disposal

Our town, along with eleven other communities, is a member of the Lamoille Regional Solid Waste Management Distrust (LRSWMD). A volunteer board of supervisors governs the District. The Selectboard appoints a supervisor who represents the community on this board. The District is responsible for regulating the local waste industry, developing and implementing programs to increase waste reduction, increase recycling and composting, and securing sufficient disposal capacity for unsorted mixed solid waste, and construction and demolition debris. The District has a solid waste implementation plan to address long-term waste management needs of its constituents. The District provides six waste and recycling drop-off facilities in various locations. The Morrisville Recycling Station is located at the Town Highway Garage on Cochran Road where any District resident can drop off their bagged waste or recyclables on Saturday mornings. **With the onset of new composting laws, this plan supports the recent addition of a compost collection area at the existing LRSWMD highway garage location.**

### Storm Drainage Facilities

There are existing stormwater issues in both the town and the village. **The town should continue to partner with the Conservation District to retrofit areas where stormwater is an issue, or where significant water quality results can be achieved without burdening the current taxpayers (who, on the whole, did not create these stormwater issues). This plan supports the separation of contaminated stormwater in parking lots from clean rooftop runoff, which can be infiltrated back into the ground without treatment.** Such separation results in more ground-water recharge from roof runoff, and less stormwater infrastructure due to the need to only treat parking lots (and not roofs). **As the technology improves, the use of pervious surfaces should be investigated for sidewalks and the surface of municipal parking lots as a way to green the town's stormwater infrastructure.** The Copley Municipal Parking lot located off Pleasant Street is a great example of an impervious area that could be made pervious in the future. With much less investment, this parking lot could easily be retrofitted to at least provide basic stormwater treatment, instead of the current point-source drainage that pollutes the Lamoille River. **This plan supports any and all efforts to fund and construct a stormwater system for the Copley Municipal Parking lot, and even the smaller municipal parking lot at the terminus of Brigham Street. Stormwater infrastructure installed alongside Northgate Ave could attenuate runoff from a vast adjacent paved parking area. This plan also supports the immediate need to construct catch basins, treatment, and an outlet for stormwater at the intersection of Harrel Street and Munson Avenue.** Large storm events and spring melt-off inundate this intersection and damage private property immediately south of this intersection.

Wilkins Ravine, which is a small deep ravine that hydrologically connects Lake Lamoille to Brooklyn Street at the village and town boundary line, is a positive example of the town working with the Conservation District to solve a stormwater issue. Before the Wilkins Ravine restoration project, sediment, nutrients, and trash from Uptown's commercial core were washing into the ravine and ending up in the Lamoille River. Today, Brooklyn Street includes drainage swales, culverts, and catch basins to convey stormwater runoff from approximately 200 acres of developed, and undeveloped, land area that is relatively heavily commercialized, and approximately 1/3 paved or impervious. The small stormwater system on Brooklyn Street has both capacity issues and a cost to the taxpayers (especially to maintain the swirl separator). As such, *the Selectboard should develop a permit process for all future point connections to this*

stormwater system, with said permit process designed to protect the capacity of the system by slowing the rate that stormwater arrives at the swirl separator.

### Water Supply

There are 3 public water drinking systems in Morristown. Each public water sources is required to develop a Source Protection Area (SPA) plan. The plan identifies the Wellhead Protection Area (WHPA), and any potential sources of contamination within the area. The plan should also establish some mechanism for protecting the WHPA, whether that is through adoption of WHPA zoning, or through purchase of easements or property. The water system owned by Morrisville Water & Light has such a plan, which helps protect land in the Park Street / Route 15A area from the adverse impacts of development. Provided this plan, and the protections currently included in the zoning bylaw are heeded, MW&L has more than ample water capacity to satisfy existing, and future, development demands. Morristown Corners Water Corporation, which serves approximately 55 homes in Morristown Corner, has also adopted a plan. Its WHPA district exists near the top of Magoon Road, and local zoning protections help to ensure that land uses above the well do not have a negative impact on water quality. The Pine Crest Mobile Home Park water supply also has a WHPA, with that WHPA including land owned by the town that is used for the town highway garage, and Saturday transfer station. **The day-to-day care of the town highway garage property for the Pinecrest WHPA, and the town's zoning must ensure that these three WHPA are never impacted to the extent that the quality of their water supplies is threatened, or negatively impacted.**

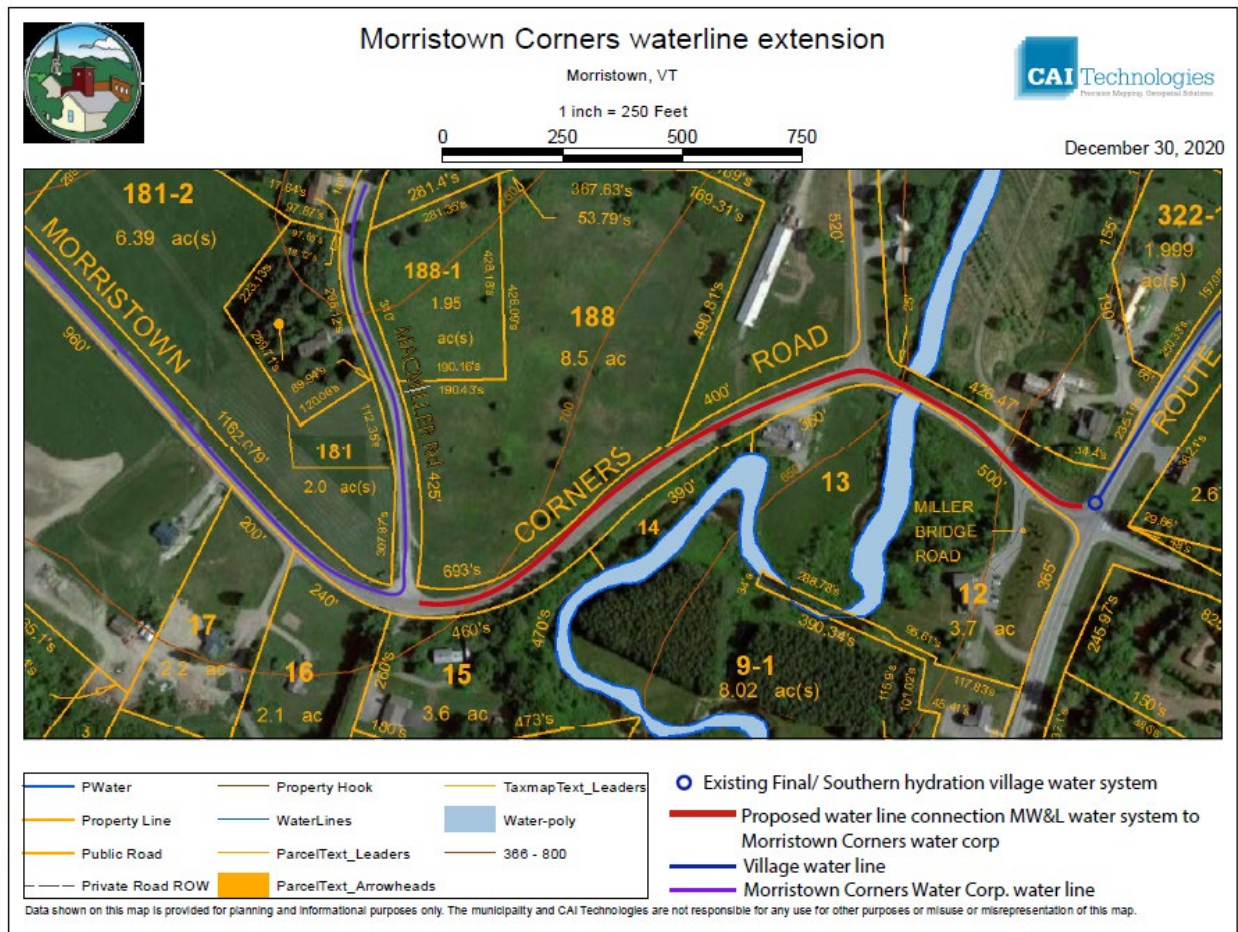
The MW&L water system is by far the largest public drinking water system in our town. The water system currently has approximately 900 total accounts, and serves the majority of village residents, as well as a limited number of households, and businesses, in the town, located mostly along Vermont Routes 100, 15 & 12. The system's primary well provides 1,500 gallons per minute (GPM), and a backup well provides 560 GPM. There are two reservoirs on the system with a total capacity of 1.9 million gallons. **This plan believes that the following priorities must be kept in the forefront of all decision making to preserve MW&L's excellent water system, and to ensure there is ample high quality drinking water for future population growth:**

- 1. The continued protection of the Source Protection Area along Park Street,**
- 2. The identification and correction of water system loses, and**
- 3. The continued maintenance, and upgrading, of the aging distribution system, as several parts of the system are approaching 100 years in age.**

The Morristown Corners Water Corporation, which serves the greater Morristown Corners area, provides drinking water for approximately 160 residents. The corporation's water system, originally constructed in 1948, has a 35,000-gallon reservoir. The corporation became a chartered municipality with the State of Vermont in 2008 and underwent an extensive systems upgrade in 2010. It now operates as a Class 3 water system. Consumption on the system is now metered. While the system has some capacity remaining for expected future population growth in Morristown Corners, the system's 3 hydrants do not provide enough water pressure for firefighting. **With the recent success connecting the former Cadys Falls water system to the MW&L water system, the town or village should begin a dialogue with the Morristown**



Corners Water Corporation regarding a similar water line extension, and connection, to the water system in Morristown Corners.



Bringing the homes and businesses in Morristown Corners onto the MW&L water system, if feasible, and desired by the Village Trustees, will give this area the water pressure, and volume, needed for fire suppression, which will lower homeowner insurance costs. Such a connection will relieve the Water Corp.'s volunteers of the arduous task of running a public water system.

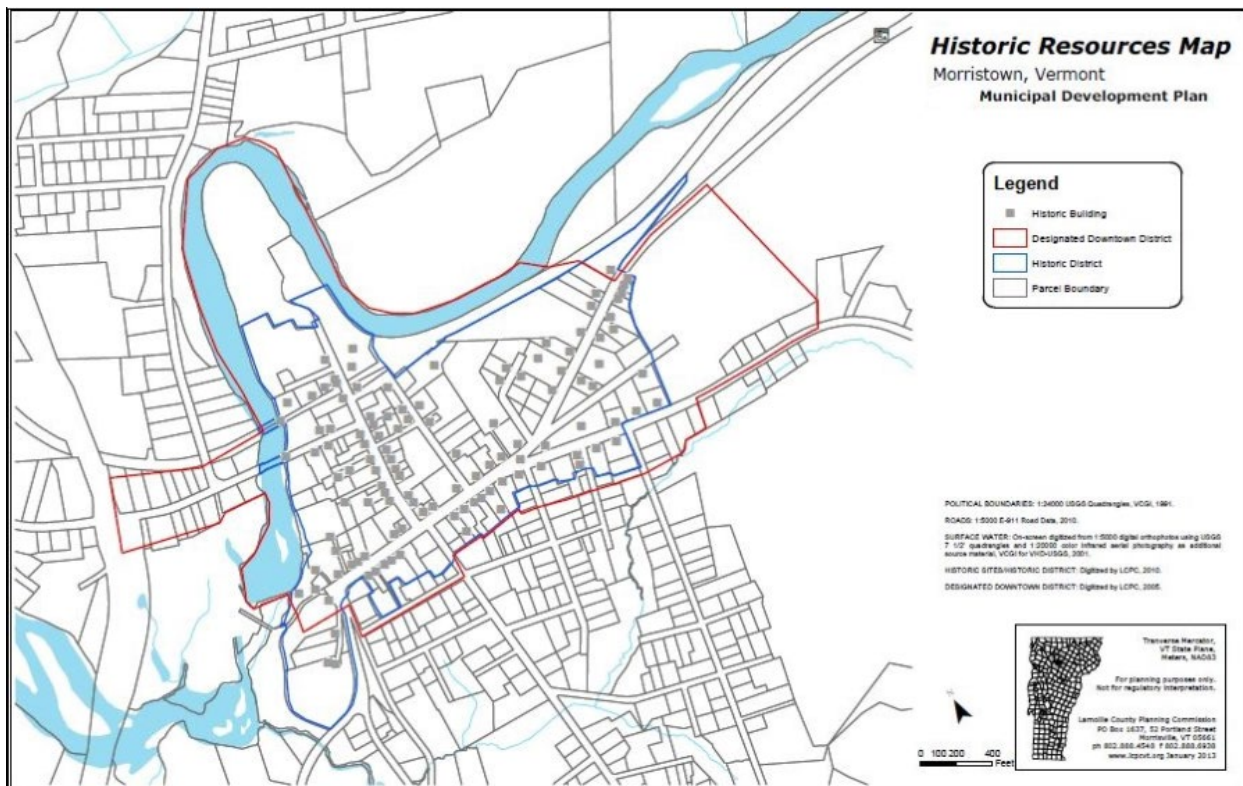
There is also a public water supply serving Pine Crest Mobile Home Park on Cochran Road. The Pine Crest Mobile Home Park provides water for approximately 50 mobile homes and one single-family dwelling. The function and quality of this water system has suffered in recent years. **The town should support any grant or loan requests made by the owner of the mobile home park aimed to improve its water quality, and water delivery system.**



# Chapter 5: Historic, Scenic, Rare and Irreplaceable Natural Resources

Our town is blessed to have many rare and irreplaceable natural areas, as well as scenic, and historic features and resources. This chapter will identify some of the most important of these areas, features, and resources, and seek protection for them where appropriate.

Most, but not all of our town's significant historic features and resources, are found in the village. Understanding and celebrating Morrisville's unique history has undergone a renaissance in recent years. Green circa historic plaques that celebrate the year in which many of the homes and commercial buildings were built are now a common sight in the Morrisville Historic District, which is designated by the blue line on the below map.



The Morrisville Historic District was first listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1983, and it entailed 50 mostly commercial properties found on Portland and Main Streets. These properties, and their unique architecture and history, are the heart and soul of our community. They create our sense of place, which is why the recent razing of some of these buildings in the name of progress is extremely problematic. Since the historic district's 1983 listing, contributing structures 3, 12, 16, 17, 18, 19, 24, 33, 40, 47, 50 and 123(b&c) have been lost forever. And many of these historic buildings have been torn down in just the last few years. **It is extremely**

**important that these “contributing structures” in Morrisville’s original historic district be preserved.** The Planning Council, in conjunction with the Historical Society, should immediately evaluate if a demolition delay provision belongs in the town’s zoning bylaw for contributing structures in Morrisville’s original 1983 historic district.

Morrisville’s Historic District was expanded in 2007 to include Pleasant Street, Richmond Street, Copley Avenue, and sections of Upper Main Street and Park Street. This expansion added 114 commercial, residential, industrial, educational, transportation, and religious resources to the historic district. The Planning Council, with an assist from the Historical Society, should evaluate if the historic district should be enlarged again to the south down E. High Street, Congress Street, Summer Street, Court Street, and Maple Street, as there are many largely intact historic homes in this primary residential section of the village that will be nearing 200 years in age by the time the 2022-2030 Town Plan expires. The Planning Council should also examine if zoning per 24 VSA, §4414(f) should be adopted for the downtown’s initial historic district.

For history buffs, thanks to funding from the Alexander Hamilton Copley Trust, there is now a self-guided tour, aided by a tri-fold pamphlet and walking map, of the historically significant buildings that still exist in downtown Morrisville (along with some new public art). The “Morrisville History and Art Walk Tour” begins at the intersection of Portland Street and the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail, heads south up Portland Street, then west and east along Main Street, and then returns to the point of beginning via Portland Street. Some of the highlights of the tour include Morrisville’s Italianate Architecture false-front buildings on Portland Street (a style that was popular during the great railroad expansion of in the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century), the Noyes House Museum on Lower Main Street, and an intact Civil War cannon and church bell hanging on Upper Main Street (the bell was seized from the Rebel Army during the Civil War’s Battle of New Orleans). This bell is believed to be the only Rebel Civil War bell hanging in Vermont. The Morristown Historical Society should help preserve this fabulous historical artifact by allocating the time and resources needed to help the owners of the bell, the Lamoille Valley Grace Brethren Church, preserve it, and make it available for public viewing. The Morristown Historical Society, with backing from the Planning Council, should investigate the steps needed to designate the Grace Brethren Church, with the Civil War bell hanging in its spire, as a State and potentially even a National Historic Landmark.

While the village is rich in history, the historic resources that exist out in rural parts of the town also need mentioning. The Red Covered Bridge (aka Chaffee Bridge) that crosses Sterling Brook is an excellent example of an historic structure located in a rural section of the town. This bridge, built in 1896, is one of the last remaining covered bridges that was built in Vermont with local materials. It was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1974. **As such, the Morristown Selectboard and town road crew must take great care to ensure that any maintenance or reinforcing work done for this bridge is undertaken in an historically sensitive manner.** Reasonably close-by, hikers on newly marked trails in the Town Forest can

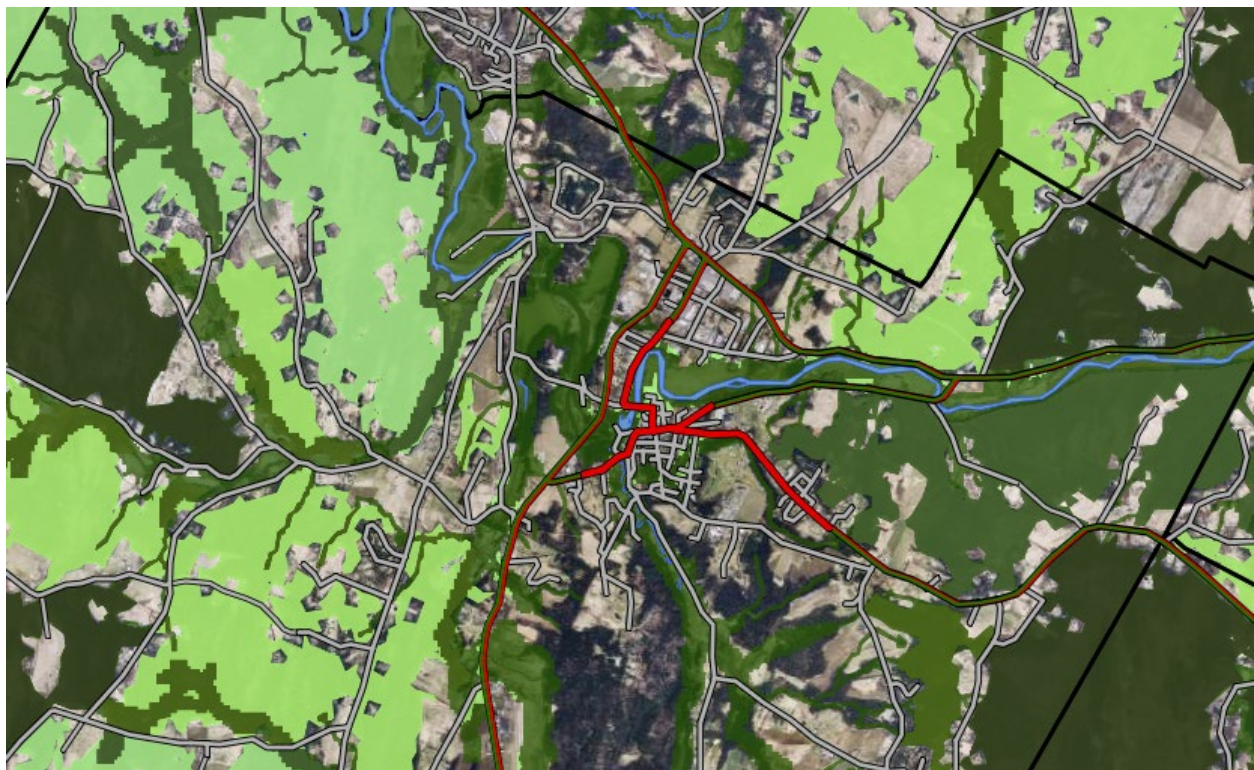
walk past remains of historic cellar holes of homes in the failed town of Sterling. The Town Forest is best known for its recreational and scenic resources, more so than its historic resources. The Town Forest offers access to Sterling (aka Whiteface) Mountain, the tallest peak in our town, measuring in at 3,715 feet in height. Sterling Mountain, which is bisected by Vermont's Long Trail, and also hosts a leg of the V.A.S.T. snowmobile trail, is a valuable scenic resource, and an irreplaceable natural area. The Conservation Commission, and the Recreation Committee, should continue to enhance the trail system in the Town Forest as usage increases. As the town's population grows, the Conservation Commission, in consultation with the Selectboard, should acquire properties adjacent to the Town Forest when they are for sale.

Opposite Sterling Mountain, which is part of the Green Mountain Range, east across the valley and populated lands of our town, lies the Worcester Mountain Range. Morrisville Water & Light owns an 82 acre parcel of land (#09-026) located on the northern edge of the Worcester Range that used to supply the water source for the village. With the village water source long since having moved across the Lamoille River, the Conservation Commission, and the Selectboard, should work towards the purchase and conservation of the 82 acre "Bugby Springs" property (and creating recreational opportunities thereon). Close-by Elmore Mountain, which is also part of the Worcester Range, is one of the most iconic, scenic, and natural areas in our community. Elmore Mountain begins its rise from the valley floor within the Village of Morrisville, and the fire-tower at its peak sits just across the town line in Elmore. The homes on our town's side of Elmore Mountain Road can be seen from the valley floor, and from Vermont Route 12. There is a strong desire within the community to keep our town's side of Elmore Mountain looking natural and not pockmarked by new houses (or brightly colored roofs on new or existing house). The Planning Council, and the Conservation Commission, should work to see if this goal of preserving the natural areas and existing scenery on our side of Elmore Mountain is attainable via instituting a design review district, or adopting an elevation limitation for new development in this area. A similar design review district is likely not warranted for the ridgeline of the Green Mountains on the west since the vast majority of these high elevation areas are owned by the State.

The two mountain ranges in our community, besides providing beautiful scenery, natural unspoiled areas, recreational opportunities, and places for rural home-sites, also provide for wildlife habitat, and habitat connections within the town's existing forested areas. Steep slopes, which are defined as grades that exceed 25%, can be found on both mountain ranges, and even in ravines in the valley below. Steep slopes present several land use and development challenges. They are more susceptible to erosion and high rates of runoff, particularly when cleared for construction, agriculture, or forestry, and pose a risk to water-quality when used for on-site septic systems. Development on steep slopes can adversely impact the town's scenic landscape. Such development, especially at higher elevations, tends to stand out from many vantage points in town, diminishing the backdrop of our towns scenic vistas. **It is important that the development of new homes in the high elevation forested areas along of the Green and Worcester Mountain Ranges (i.e. above 2,000 feet in elevation), do not present an undue adverse impact to the ecological integrity of intact forest blocks. Residential development in these forested areas should also not present an undue adverse impact any existing working**



**forest lands.** With the 2020 zoning change, the goal of protecting forest connectivity was added for the first time into the §510(2) purposes of the town’s highly successful conservation subdivision bylaw. This inclusion will minimize the encroachment of residential development into the interior of intact forest blocks, reduce impacts on habitat connectors, and minimize the fragmentation thereof. More work can be done to prevent further forest fragmentation and degradation of wildlife corridors, with the acute goal of ensuring connectivity between the Green and Worcester Mountain Ranges. As such, *the Planning Council along with the Conservation Commission should evaluate if wildlife and forest connectivity should be designated as §340 Environmental Resource Areas in the zoning bylaws to promote the health, viability, and ecological function of these important areas.* A snippet of town map showing “connectivity blocks” in lime green and “interior forest blocks” in the darker green is included below for reference.



There is more to our town’s beauty and natural resources than just our two mountain ranges that bracket where we call home. **Joe’s Pond and Molly’s Bog, owned by UVM and the home to rare species, are natural and irreplaceable areas that need recognition, and perhaps further protection than the local zoning process has thus far afforded.** The Joe's Pond property consists of an 11.3 acre pond and wetland complex, bordered to the north by an approximately 19 acre mixed hardwood, and softwood, forest. The remainder of the property is an actively hayed agricultural field with frontage on Stancliff Road. Joe's Pond, which is reasonably well protected by the Stowe Land Trust, is open to the public for a number of non-motorized recreational activities including, but not limited to, hiking, hunting, birdwatching,

cross-country skiing, snowshoeing and nature study.<sup>1</sup> Nearby Molly’s Bog is even more noteworthy, having achieved National Natural Landmark Status by the National Park Service. Molly’s Bog “illustrates a classic, early successional, cold northern bog. The site contains a small, dark-water pond, floating mat of sphagnum moss, surrounded by a black spruce-tamarack forest.”<sup>2</sup> While the bog itself is owned mainly by the State of Vermont, some of this natural area, and its headwaters, are located on privately owned lands. *The Planning Council, along with the Conservation Commission, should evaluate what zoning tools might be available to help better protect Molly’s Bog, and Joe’s Pond. The Conservation Commission should also work towards conserving the private lands that encroach upon both of these rare and irreplaceable natural areas.* Other less visible, but not less important, rare, irreplaceable, and natural areas in our town can be found by using the Agency of Natural Resources “Natural Resource Atlas” mapping system. §340, Environmental Resource Areas, of the town’s zoning already screens potential subdivision development so it will not have an undue adverse impact on the following natural resources, as mapped on the Atlas: Wetlands, Rare Threatened Endangered Species, Significant Natural Community, Uncommon Species, Deer Wintering Areas, and Steep Slopes. §510 of the zoning bylaws looks to conserve and permanently protect these same areas as part of the conservation subdivision development process. **This plan supports continued protection for these rare and irreplaceable natural areas via the town’s conservation subdivision bylaw, and the Conservation Commission’s land conservation efforts.**

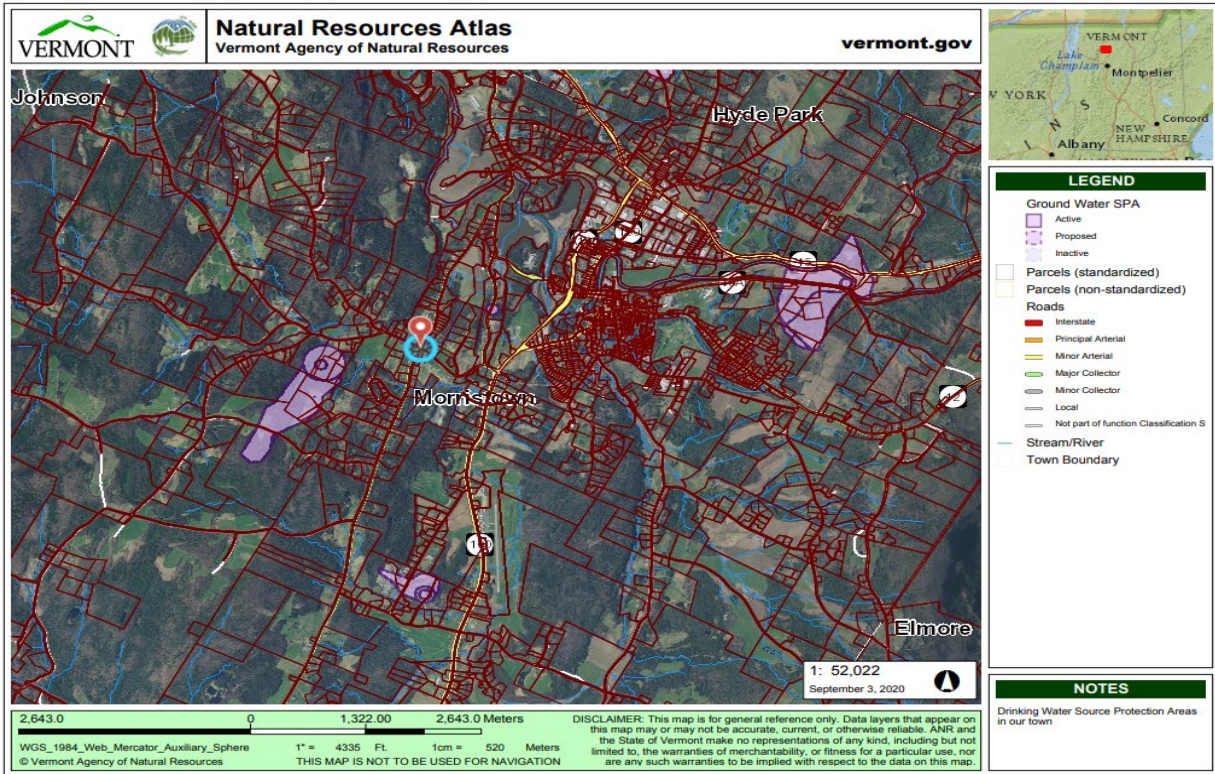
Before closing this discussion on natural resources, it is of paramount importance to discuss groundwater. Groundwater is the source of over 90% of the drinking water for rural areas in Vermont. It is replenished through rain and surface water which percolates through the soil. Any activity that introduces contaminants directly into the ground, such as underground storage tanks, leach fields, and agricultural activities, can negatively affect ground water quality, and drinking water reserves. Source Protection Areas (SPA) are surface and subsurface areas that serve as natural recharge, collection, transmission, and storage zones for public water supply systems. SPAs include a buffer, which incorporates the area through which contaminants would likely move to reach the well. The 3 SPAs, which are located at least partially on public lands in town, can be seen in purple on the following map.

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.stowelandtrust.org/conserved/properties/joespond>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nlandmarks/site.htm?Site=MOBO-VT>





§300 of the town’s zoning bylaws protect these SPAs, and the drinking water they supply to Morrisville Water and Light, Morristown Corners Water Corporation, and the Pinecrest Trailer Park public water systems. **It shall be the policy of this plan to protect these public drinking water source protection areas from contaminants with the full force of the town’s zoning bylaws, ordinances, and any other applicable police powers. The Conservation Commission should discuss conserving land in these areas, and limiting the use of road salt in and around drinking water source protection areas.**

# Chapter 6: Education

## Public Education Governance

The Lamoille South Unified Union (LSUU) School District Board of Directors is responsible for developing the budget, and overseeing the administration of our schools. The School Board oversees the schools in Elmore, Morrisville, and Stowe, including Morristown Elementary School, Peoples Academy Middle Level and Peoples Academy. The board also oversees the Graded Building in Morrisville, which houses administrative offices, and prekindergarten programs. **LSUU, the School Board, and this plan support a rich continuum of educational opportunities that foster lifelong learning, from early childhood through adulthood.**

The governance structure of Lamoille South Unified Union School District changed effective July 1, 2019 by order of the Vermont State Board of Education. The Board of Directors has seven seats, all with three-year terms, which are elected on Town Meeting Day by a vote of the combined electorate of Elmore, Stowe, and our town. Three seats are designated for our town's residents, one seat is designed for a resident of Elmore, and three seats are designated for Stowe residents. Under this new governance structure, the interface between educational and municipal policy has regional implications. Communication and coordination between the municipalities of Elmore, Stowe, and our town will be helpful for any policy that impacts education, as the implications have an impact on both the schools and electorate of all three communities. As such, **municipal projects should be planned and aligned with school-related needs, such as sidewalks around the Graded Building and roads and sidewalks to and from the school grounds. Traffic flow, especially around school start and end times, and well attended events can present challenges, and merits thoughtful planning, and problem solving.**

## Enrollment Changes and Projections

The New England School Development Council provides enrollment projections for LSUU regularly. Their December, 2018 report indicates that, after a period of decline, enrollment appears to have stabilized. Meanwhile, the Planning Council believes that a small uptick in enrollment should be on the horizon due to the abnormally large numbers of new housing starts over the last 4 years. In the 2018-2019 school year, pre-kindergarten through grade 12 enrollment included 867 students. Over the next five years, enrollments are forecast by NESDC to continue to remain flat from our town and in LSUU as a whole. Given these enrollment numbers, **the Planning Council should continue to encourage population growth in our town, while also acknowledging that changes in enrollment in other towns in LSSU, and tuitioned students from outside the district, impact enrollment and tax rates, and changes in adjoining communities will have an impact on Lamoille South's Educational System.**

## School Facilities and Infrastructure

The Graded Building: The Graded Building is located on one acre of land at the foot of Copley Avenue. It is a three-story, wood framed structure that was constructed in 1899 and was substantially enlarged in 1917. A 1998 renovation updated the electrical, plumbing and ventilation systems and installed an automated sprinkler system throughout the building, bringing this facility into compliance with all State of Vermont safety codes. The Graded Building currently houses LSSU Central Offices, and pre-kindergarten classrooms. These programs were relocated into the Graded Building in 2010 when the K and 1<sup>st</sup> grade were moved

to the Morristown Elementary School building. In recent years, capital funds were allocated to the Graded Building for improved energy efficiency and repairs of the surrounding grounds to ensure safety, accessibility, and an attractive appearance. Continued investment to maintain this highly visible village landmark is needed, including replacing windows throughout the building.

Morristown Elementary: Morristown Elementary is located on Route 15A and shares over 56 acres of land with Peoples Academy. Morristown Elementary School houses students in grades K through 4. It was built in 1972 and was designed without interior walls. A 1998 renovation project provided defined classroom spaces, improved ventilation, added classroom and expanded multi-purpose room space that serves as the school's cafeteria, gymnasium and auditorium. In 2018, improvements included reconstruction of the road between the schools, as well as a new bus loop, additional parking and playground improvements at Morristown Elementary. In the next five years, capital funds should be spent to improve energy efficiency and renovate space based on student needs. It should be noted that any significant increases in student's enrollment will require the need for additional instructional space for K-4 students.

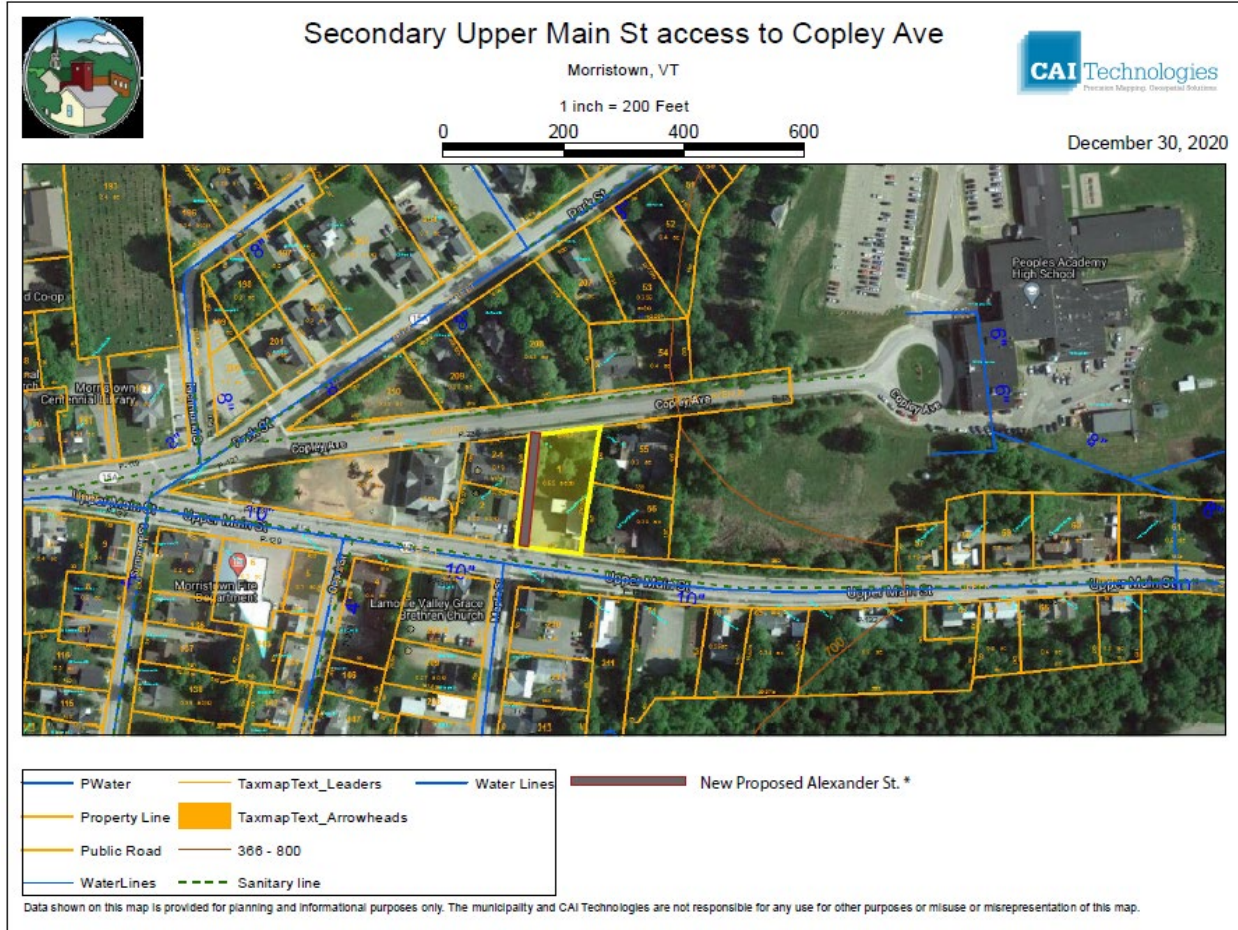
Peoples Academy Middle Level and High School: Peoples Academy is located at the head of Copley Avenue overlooking the Village of Morrisville. The original three-story brick structure was erected in 1927 and was renovated and added onto on multiple occasions. The most recent renovation was completed in 1999, which provided new science laboratories, a library and additional classrooms, and created a distinct area for the Peoples Academy Middle Level that now serves students in grades 5, 6, 7 and 8. Recent improvements include replacement of the fire alarm system, renovations of PAML bathrooms (near main entrance), rebuilding of the exterior stairs at the library entrance, and installation of a wood pellet boiler system. In the next five years, capital funds are needed for continued energy efficiency improvements and the replacement of components of the aging facilities that were not addressed in the most recent renovation.

Needed Facility Upgrades: Previously, the Morristown School District, through careful study and with community input, identified the need for a second gymnasium at PA/PAML as an instructional priority. Adequate indoor space for physical education is essential to provide for the needs of both middle and high school students, as well as a regulation-sized gym for extracurricular programs. Given the extremely high levels of use of the existing facility, it is likely that additional space will be fully utilized on a regular basis year round and may serve to strengthen not only the educational programs, but community recreation and wellness as a whole. As such, instead of just a second gymnasium, *the School Board should evaluate the construction of a larger field house.* Such a field house could accommodate all of the schools recreation and sporting needs, and also accommodate community needs like an exercise track, indoor basketball, soccer, and pickle balls courts, etc. *Concurrent with the construction of the new field house, the school's outdoor recreational facilities are also in need of attention. In order to allow that a regulation-sized track be rebuilt, it is recommended that the baseball field be repositioned, the tennis courts be replaced.*

**Secondary Campus Access Point: This plan supports adding a new access point to the school property, which would offer school traffic coming from the east a better option than driving by the fire station and reversing direction up Copley Ave. A new access road would**



alleviate traffic jams downhill in the village caused by school drop-off and pick-up traffic movements. *The Selectboard, or the School Board, should purchase a right-of-way to connect Upper Main Street to Copley Avenue.* Funding opportunities should be sought by both Boards to construct a connector road, and accompanying sidewalk, that would provide a direct connection from Upper Main Street to Copley Avenue.



**Future School Facility Mergers:**

The Council feels that it is of paramount importance to the health and well-being of Morrisville, and its downtown, that its teenagers can walk to school. As such, **if further merger of the schools of the Lamoille South Supervisory Union occurs, especially the facilities thereof, Peoples Academy, given its central location and its walkability, should retain its long-standing function as a high school.**

**Educational Attainment**

According to the 2010 Census, 91.6% of town residents over the age of 25 are high school graduates and 40.6% have a Bachelor’s Degree or higher. These figures represent significant increases since 2000 when 84.9% of town residents over the age of 25 were high school graduates, and almost 24% had a Bachelor’s Degree or higher. Countywide, about 92.2% of the population over 25 have high school diplomas, and 34.6% have earned a college degree. These educational attainment figures highlight a strong and strengthening workforce.



### **Other Close-by Educational Opportunities**

Various educational opportunities exist in the region that are not municipal. A brief summation of these other educational opportunities found in, or close by, our town are as follows:

- The Bishop John A. Marshall School. The Bishop Marshall School is an independent Catholic school that offers an alternative education choice for children in pre-kindergarten through eighth grade.
- The Community College of Vermont (CCV). CCV offers access to degree and certificate programs, workforce, secondary and continuing education opportunities and academic and veterans support services. **This plan supports continued investment in CCV Morrisville, especially in regards to expanded offerings and job-training dovetailed to the needs of local employers. This plan also supports any move that brings the Morrisville CCV campus into the downtown.**
- Mountain River School. The Mountain River School is newly located on Randolph Road in Morristown. The school has a mission “To inspire children’s lifelong passion for learning and cultivate healthy, compassionate, environmentally-conscious individuals who follow their dreams and contribute with conviction to the world.”
- East Meadow School. The East Meadow School, located on James Road, is a trauma informed day treatment school whose therapeutic model is developed from components of multiple, evidence based frameworks. This small school provides three classrooms for students grades K – 12
- Green Mountain Technology & Career Center. Green Mountain Technology and Career Center, although located in Hyde Park, provides technical education to many of Morristown’s high school students and adults.

# Chapter 8: Statement Concerning Development Trends & Adjacent Municipalities

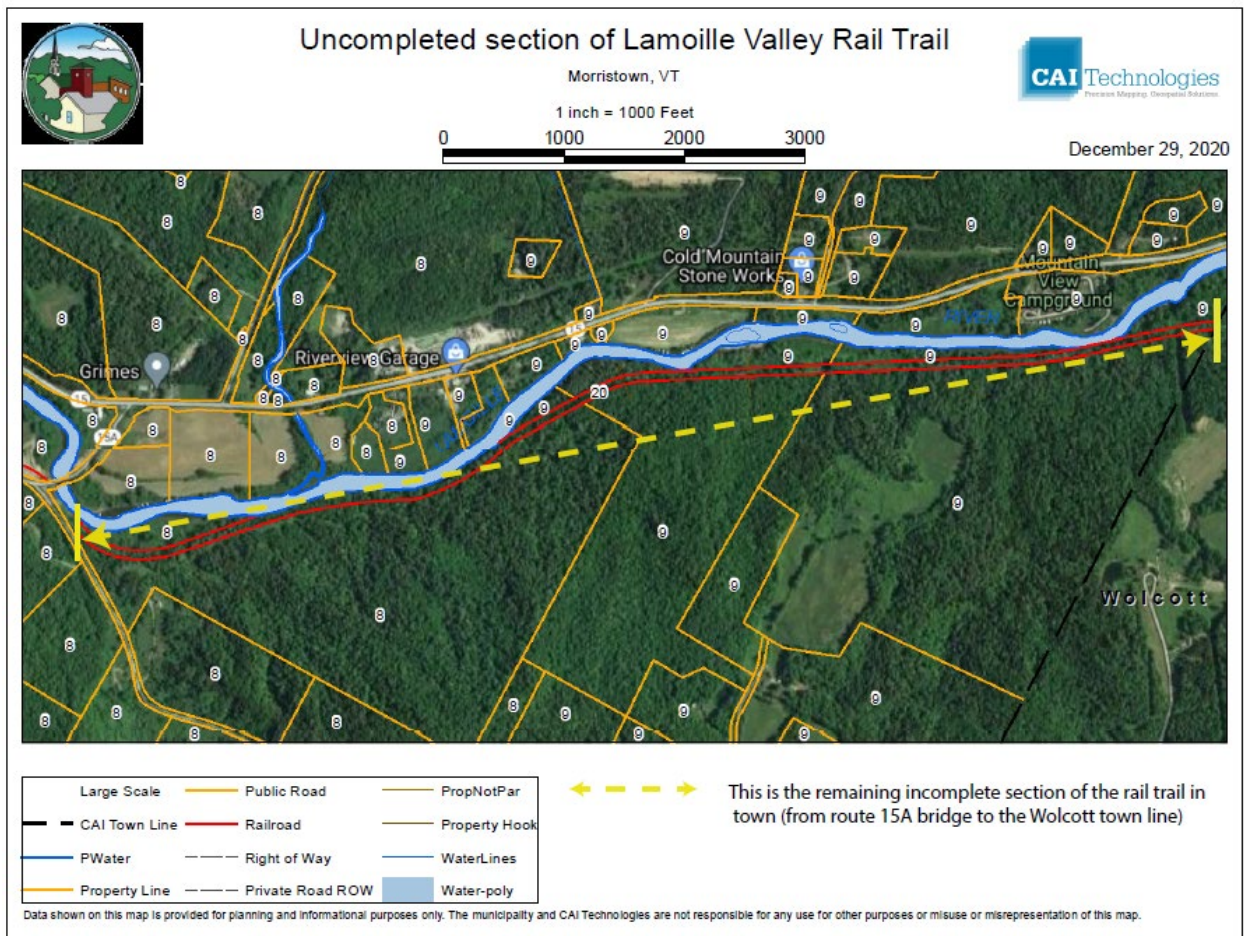
A plethora of positive developments have taken place in our town since the last full update of the town plan in 2013. A sampling of some of these projects is as follows:

1. The completion of the long-awaited Truck Route, which provided some traffic relief for the non-linear streets in downtown Morrisville, has spurred the development of various vacant parcels of land that were given visibility after its construction.
2. The 60,000+ ft<sup>2</sup> expansion of MSI's manufacturing facility, which is one of the more prominent recent developments along the Truck Route.
3. The construction of the 34 unit Fenimore Street townhouse development on old railroad land that was "daylighted" by the development of the Truck Route.
4. The construction of 28 units of new rental housing on the corner of the Truck Route and Bridge Street, with 24 more apartments in the permitting stage at this location as of 9/21.
5. The construction of 28 units of rental housing across from the library on Upper Main St.
6. The construction and rehabilitation of the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail, which provides both recreational opportunities, and new ways to access existing properties along its right-of-way, including within the heart of downtown Morrisville.
7. The establishment of out town's second brewery (Lost Nation Brewing), and the establishment of a distillery by the airport (Green Mountain Distillers), both of which are tourist centric businesses that will draw visitors here from Stowe.
8. The successful effort to locate a food co-op in downtown Morrisville.
9. The creation of downtown's Morrisville Art & History Walk that is drawing visitors to the area, and helping local residents discover Morrisville's rich history and architecture.
10. The redevelopment of the Arthur's Block on Lower Main Street, which saved two historic buildings, and brought 18 apartments units back to life that are located above a new coffee shop and new pizza parlor.

Our town is incredibly fortunate, especially given the aforementioned success over the last decade, to have a number of additional projects still that will, if built, positively impact our community over the 10 year life of this plan. A sampling of the proposed projects that represent positive development trends are as follows:

- A. The recent groundbreaking for 3 new apartment buildings on Foundry Street. With 14 townhouse units already under construction, and another apartment building to come, high quality housing is replacing dilapidated industrial buildings, some poorly maintained outbuildings, and the burned out remains of the old Foundry that sat in ruins for years.
- B. The under construction development of 54 townhouse units located behind Fred's Energy off of Rail Trail and Lake Ridge Lanes.
- C. The under construction 4½ story, 24-unit, apartment building by Lamoille Housing Partnership, on Hutchins Street.

- D. The rebuilding of the old Town Clerk’s office on Upper Main Street. Such a development would take the same form as the long ago razed building, but the new building would be used for rental housing.
- E. The redevelopment of the Morrisville Water & Light owned gristmill on Feline Loop, which should be able to finally move forward after the adjacent hydropower facility is re-permitted.
- F. The creation of a boardwalk along the Lamoille River, starting at the redeveloped gristmill and running east, past Brigham Street, and connecting to Bridge Street.
- G. The continuation of the boardwalk from Bridge Street east to Oxbow Riverfront Park.
- H. MACC’s planned illumination of the Rail Trail Bridge that spans the river.
- I. The planned construction of a new office building at the intersection of Brooklyn and Harrel Streets.
- J. The addition of new townhouses and single-family homes on the hillside owned by Weslang Meadows, LLC that sits above Tractor Supply on Route 15.
- K. Completing the upgrades to the yet to be improved sections of the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail located to the east of Tenney Bridge (towards Wolcott).



While none of the above projects are large enough to impact the town’s economy on their own, the sum of the above projects (that are actually constructed) will provide for years of solid, diverse, and sustainable growth within our community, without negatively impacting the

environment. **The town government should lend whatever assistance it has at its disposal to ensure that the aforementioned projects, as well as any new development projects that further the goals of the town plan, become a reality.** Such assistance is inclusive, but not limited to, malleable zoning regulations (where necessary), and the use of the Morrisville Development Fund (where appropriate). With that being said, village water and sewer services should only be extended where necessary to support new development to ensure that we make prudent use of existing public services and facilities.

The true benefit of the aforementioned projects, is that the underlying development trends thereof are in lockstep with the goals, priorities, and the objectives of the town plan. Most of the development proposed is in-fill housing, within mixed-use areas, that makes prudent use of existing Morrisville Water & Light services, while also reinvigorating the core of downtown Morrisville. The proposed development of vacant parcels of land being given visibility by the Truck Route, reinforces the uptown section of Morristown as a regional hub for jobs, commerce, and business growth. The confluence of this new economic activity bolsters the stated goals in the town plan's Economic Development Chapter that call for "a diverse economy, and retaining Morristown's status as the commercial and industrial center of the region." Our town's status as a regional job center also assists some of the surrounding municipalities' town plan goals to remain rural, and lightly developed, in the areas along the town-line.

*Aside from directing new housing into the core of the village and adjacent parts of the town, and supporting business growth in areas zoned for such, this town plan reinforces the existing rural character of our community by ensuring the continued existence of the agricultural, low density residential, and open land in the rural sections of the town that provide for the sweeping and cherished views of our countryside.* The town plan's vision for a compact village core, and uptown business area, surrounded by rural and agricultural countryside mirrors the goals of the State's Planning and Development Act, and the Lamoille County Regional Plan. This vision also meshes well with the municipal plans of the town's surrounding municipalities. The town plans of surrounding municipalities envision the continued existing agricultural and low density residential uses of land in areas that directly border our town. This fact, coupled with our town's plan for similar rural residential and agricultural areas located outside the village and the uptown business area, ensures that the existing miles of unbroken countryside between villages in Lamoille County will remain intact for the foreseeable future.



## Chapter 9: Energy

Our community has the potential to provide a significant amount of energy for our residential, and business uses, from local renewable resources, including wood, hydro, wind and solar. Local renewable energy generation keeps money in the local economy. *An overarching objective for our community is to encourage the protection and use of these local renewable energy resources, to reduce reliance on out-of-state energy resources, and to especially reduce reliance on out-of-state non-renewable energy resources. Encouraging greater efficiency, affordability, and energy conservation is also a primary objective that must be kept in the forefront of all energy related decision making.*

This chapter will divide a discussion on energy into three main areas: electricity, heating/cooling, and transportation.

### Electricity

Morrisville Water & Light (MW&L) provides electric utility service within the village, to the eastern and central portions of the town, as well as to surrounding communities within Lamoille County. MW&L has three hydroelectric power generation plants: the Cadys Falls Dam (constructed in 1906); the Morrisville Dam (constructed in 1924), and the Green River Dam (constructed in 1946 and located at the Green River Reservoir in Hyde Park). There are two generators/turbines at each of these dams. Since the year 2000, MW&L has invested almost \$4,000,000 in upgrades to increase the energy produced from these local renewable hydropower resources.

A current concern of MW&L is the high level of cost, which already exceeds \$1,100,000, being incurred in an attempt to relicense its three existing hydro plants. This high cost is being driven by the injurious conditions that the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources is attempting to place on the MW&L hydro plants, in an effort that is largely aimed at creating better fish spawning habitat directly below the dams. In early 2020, MW&L requested the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) declare the Agency of Natural Resources' opportunity to incorporate the water quality certificate into the FERC license be waived. If the waiver petition is successful, MW&L hopes to operate the Green River Reservoir dam in the same manner as it has been run for generations. If this petition is unsuccessful, electric rates for customers, both within our community, and within the utility's larger service area, would immediately have to increase by at least 3% to accommodate the unfortunate State mandated loss in local green hydropower production. According to the Vermont Energy Burden Report published by Efficiency Vermont in 2019, the "electricity burden" for our town is already one of the highest in the State, with more than 2.7% of local incomes being spent just on electricity.<sup>3</sup> As such, **it is the policy of this plan to fully support the generation of affordable power locally via MW&L's hydroelectric stations. Efforts from groups or individuals, that are not supported by MW&L, to decommission and remove these three hydroelectric dams, will be strongly opposed. MW&L has the full support of the town government in this regard, and in any area that may benefit both the ongoing appeal, and the relicensing of the hydro**

---

<sup>3</sup> Page 10 of <https://www.efficiencyvermont.com/Media/Default/docs/white-papers/2019%20Vermont%20Energy%20Burden%20Report.pdf>

**facilities. The plan also supports state legislative efforts to move hydropower permitting into the realm of the Public Utility Commission, ensuring that this power source is treated the same as other renewable energy resources, such as solar, and wind. Local hydro must be protected, preserved, and expanded where possible, to prevent MW&L from having to replace State mandated loses in hydro production with non-local, more expensive, fossil fuel power sources that our town’s residents, according to Efficiency Vermont’s 2019 Energy Burden report, clearly cannot afford.**

The amount of power generated by local hydropower remains relatively fixed, but is subject to minor fluctuations caused by dry and wet years. Overall demand for electricity from MW&L has generally been flat since 2000. While the number of new customers has increased gradually over this same time period, the average amount of power per hookup for residential uses has been on the decline due to efficiency improvements, and conservation. In 1988, the average residential unit consumed 562 kWh of power. By 2001, this figure dropped to 529 kWh of power per residential unit. In 2012, the average residential unit consumed only 515 kWh. As of 2019, the average residential unit is consuming 510 kWh of power annually. This trend of declining electricity demand per household is clearly waning per this data. However, the mainstreaming of heat pumps and electric cars (i.e. the new “electrification” of our community) in the very near future will likely reverse the trend of declining annual electric use by household. MW&L is aware of this trend, and via Integrated Resource Planning efforts, is already projecting future utility needs 20-years into the future.

This plan, and MW&L support customer efforts to reduce fossil fuel consumption through energy transformation efforts. Through programs administered by Vermont Public Power Supply Authority (VPPSA), MW&L offers financial incentives to customers who transition away from reliance on fossil fuels. Current financial incentives being offered by MW&L through VPPSA include rebates for electric vehicles, electric lawn mowers, electric forklifts, and point of sale instant discounts for heat pumps, and heat pump water heaters. Through these energy transformation efforts, MW&L is supporting the transition away from fossil fuel usage in the heating and transportation sectors, and increasing customers’ reliance on the state’s low-carbon supply of electricity.

A positive trend that will help offset the growth in electricity demand per household is the proliferation of solar power being generated locally just within the last few years. Not long ago, solar power was a very small percentage of the local energy supply. By 2019, solar projects in our community generated over 1 mW of power. The amount of solar power being generated locally will continue to increase in the coming years as solar panels are becoming more efficient and cost effective. This is true for both the average homeowner with rooftop panels, and for the larger utility scale projects that we are now seeing proposed, and built, within our community, with one large commercial project recently constructed on the south end of Route 100, and another large commercial project located in the old Hess junkyard that is currently being built out. **This plan, when cost effective, strongly supports the use of rooftop solar power. This plan also supports ground**

**mounted solar, that is potentially tall enough to allow for under grazing by animals, provided that adequate screening is planted to shield any adjacent house, including a house across a roadway, from view of a ground mounted solar array that is greater than 15 kilowatts in size.** While this plan supports cost effective solar, it should be mentioned that the recent proliferation of solar power through Vermont’s net metering program puts upward pressure on our electric rates, as solar power from this program is more expensive than other power sources in MW&L’s portfolio of purchased power. This plan supports efforts to bring rates paid to customers through net metering into alignment with the value provided to the utility from this generation source in order to minimize cost-shifting among customers.

Other potential sources of local renewable electricity include wind, alternative treatment strategies at the sewer plant, and cogeneration (wood burning). Tackling cogeneration first, large tracts of forested town and village owned land exists that could provide a wood heat resource for community members, especially those with limited incomes. **This plan supports examining if sustainable logging could take place on these municipally owned lands to provide a firewood resource for town residents, especially those residents that struggle to afford heat in the winter.** Regarding wind, the Planning Council believes that our town does not have sufficient locations with enough reliable wind to generate wind energy in a profitable manner, but locations may exist in town where homeowners may be able to generate enough wind power for personal use or net-metering<sup>4</sup>. **This plan supports the generation of community wind power using residential or small commercial scale (ie. less than 100kW each), but is opposed to wind power that is not net-metered, which often referred to as “utility scale” wind. If wind power facilities are constructed elsewhere in more favorable locations in the state, this plan supports MW&L negotiating a power purchase contract therefrom to contribute to MW&L’s portfolio of renewable and locally purchased power. This plan also supports private entities proposing alternative treatment strategies that can help divert high strength waste away from the sewer plant, while generating electricity locally (provided the existing electric grid can handle the new generation).**

While not a cost savings initiative, the desire remains to further divert or bury the electric and other utility lines in downtown Morrisville, specifically on Portland Street and the Route 100 sections of Main and Bridge Streets (and potentially Upper Main from the War Memorial west towards Portland Street). Such an initiative would come at a cost of nearly \$2,000,000, so **this plan supports the search and acquisition of any grants funds that would help fund such a project. This plan also supports the use of a special tax district, or a village, or town, tax that, if funded over the course of many years, would accrue the funds necessary to bury the overhead wires in downtown Morrisville the next time these roads were repaved. This plan also supports the creation of a committee charged with having the plans and funding**

---

<sup>4</sup> Vermont law defines net metering as measuring the difference between the electricity supplied to a customer and the electricity fed back by a net metering system (which is a small generating system that meets certain specified criteria) during the customer's billing period. In practice, net metering allows the owners of certain small electric generating systems to receive credit for the electricity produced by those systems, above what the owners consume on the premises.

**ready to bury the overhead utilities in the aforementioned sections of downtown Morrisville the next time these roads are repaved by the State of Vermont.**

### Heating & Cooling

The heating of homes and businesses is an important aspect of energy plans, especially given our climate in northern Vermont. The main energy sources for heating used in our community are oil, propane, electricity, and kerosene. Even with propane heat stealing some market share from home heating oil in recent years, the majority of homes in our community are still currently heating with oil. In the coming years, this plan envisions a significant percentage of the homes in our community abandoning traditional heating sources, and converting to heat pumps for both heating and cooling. Heat pumps are now a proven, and viable, option for efficiently providing heating in the dead of winter, while also having the added benefit of providing cooling in our warming summer months. **This plan strongly supports the adoption of more heat pumps within our community, as their use will, when compared to fuel prices, reduce homeowner costs over the long term, while provide heat and cooling in a more environmentally friendly manner.**

The new energy efficient townhouses being built in the village, and the new energy-efficient multi-family housing being built in the heart of the downtown, have thus far been heated with propane (with no cooling provided). *The Planning Council should therefore study if it would be worthwhile to develop thermal energy standards, or more simply, to offer a density bonus to encourage developers to use heat pumps within new townhouses, and new multi-family construction, so efficient heat and air conditioning can be readily available for these new households.* The new downtown multi-family housing, in particular, with its much smaller square footage size than is typical within our community, is a positive trend that will continue to decrease, or at least help keep at bay, electric demand per household, on average, within our town. **With new construction, or for existing buildings, this plan supports all efforts to improve weatherization of buildings for both heating and cooling. This plan also supports the recent zoning change that removed residential density caps within the Central Business Zone as a means of conserving energy needs per household as our community grows.**

Older residences with electric resistance heating add substantially to MW&L's total power costs by raising peak demand, and increasing transmission expenses. Typically, customers with higher energy usage end up being billed on the more expensive "on-demand" rate. The on-demand rate also impacts commercial customers with substantial power needs for things like refrigeration in restaurants, and vacuum lines for maple sugar operations. MW&L is currently looking into acquiring more smart meters in the next 2 to 5 years (only 180 of these meters currently exist). Smart meters provide hourly usage records and could allow customers to save on electricity costs by encouraging electricity use during off peak hours, thereby eliminating much of the need for on-demand rates. **This plan supports the option of MW&L installing more smart meters, and seeking regulatory approval for an updated rate schedule that financially incentivizes off-peak electrical use (which will become even more important as more heat pumps and electric cars come online in our community).**



A local renewable energy source for home heating that is growing in use is wood. Efficiency improvements in pellet boilers, and the maturation of the pellet supply are encouraging for increasing local energy production and use. **This plan encourages households and businesses to explore using wood for heating purposes.** While heating with non-renewables may be more convenient than wood, many residents are finding that new models of woodstoves, which are more efficient and much more air-quality friendly, reduce the amount of fuel oil or propane used and therefore cut their heating bills. Woodstoves also remain a critical backup heating source when strong storms result in long power outages, which is still a somewhat common occurrence outside the village. Residential buildings can also save energy by improving insulation, replacing inefficient appliances with newer *Energy Star* models, and by taking advantage of design techniques like clustering and solar orientation.

### Transportation

Personal transportation requirements constitute the largest share of a family's energy costs. Energy demand for transportation can be influenced by the location and type of roads, the convenience of services and facilities, the placement of new residential development, and the route coordination for things like school buses, and even trash hauling. Despite recent gains in the electric car market, transportation is still largely powered by fossil fuels. This ratio is unlikely to flip-flop locally during the lifespan of this plan. With that being said, **this plan strongly supports expanding the use of electric cars, both for residential use, and for town government use.** While something like an electric powered grader, or backhoe, may be more than a decade away, an electric vehicle for the police force is something that should be considered now. However, until battery life improves enough to make electric vehicles the primary transportation choice, efficiency remains the best way to reduce transportation related energy costs, through initiatives such as driving less, carpooling, using more efficient vehicles, utilizing public transportation (where available), cycling, or walking.

Much like personal transportation expenses, transportation spending on road maintenance accounts for a large share of the town's energy costs. During fiscal year 2005/2006 the Morristown Highway Department spent \$85,106 on fuel. During fiscal year 2011/2012, thanks to much higher gas and diesel prices, the Highway Department's fuel costs ballooned to \$131,920. With the recent pull-back in oil prices, the Highway Department spent \$70,175 on fuel during fiscal year 2019/2020. While the town budget is currently enjoying the spoils of very low fuel prices (spending in today's dollars for what amounts to less than 2005/2006 total fuel costs), we must be cognizant that fuel costs may not stay this low over the long term (and are already tending more expensive in 2021). Overall, the town spent \$86,729 on fuel for transportation in fiscal year 2019/2020. This amounts to a gas/diesel bill for transportation of \$237.61 per day. If fuel prices increase again, while development continues into more remote areas of the town, and with the Selectboard recently accepting more new town roads (including dead-end roads), fuel use to provide services and road maintenance will continue to rise. *Given the town's significant fuel use, the Selectboard should make fuel efficiency a leading component in the decision-making process when municipal vehicles are purchased. The Selectboard should also consider setting a generous fixed fuel budget every year with the goal of spending unused funds when fuel prices are low on improving the efficiency of the town's energy use.* For example,

setting a fixed transportation fuel budget of \$100,000 the last few years would have resulted in annual surpluses that could have been used to buy the community's first electric police car, or to upgrade the energy efficiency of town buildings. The reader should note that village and school fuel use is not included in the above figures.

#### Municipal Facilities & Services

In 2016 the town worked with MW&L to replace all of the streetlights in the village, and town, with LED bulbs, which are down-lit, and shielded. LED bulbs are brighter, provide crisper light, require less energy, and have a much longer lifespan than conventional streetlight bulbs. This street lighting changeover resulted in a significant cost savings for the town. In 2019-20, street lights cost town tax payers approximately \$21,200. The cost stood at \$35,836 in fiscal year 2011/2012. This annual savings of nearly \$15,000 for street lighting shows that energy use can be reduced, and financial rewards will follow when we allow the status quo for energy to be challenged. *The Selectboard should immediately look to build on this success by converting the interior lighting in town owned buildings to LED bulbs to create additional energy and cost savings.*

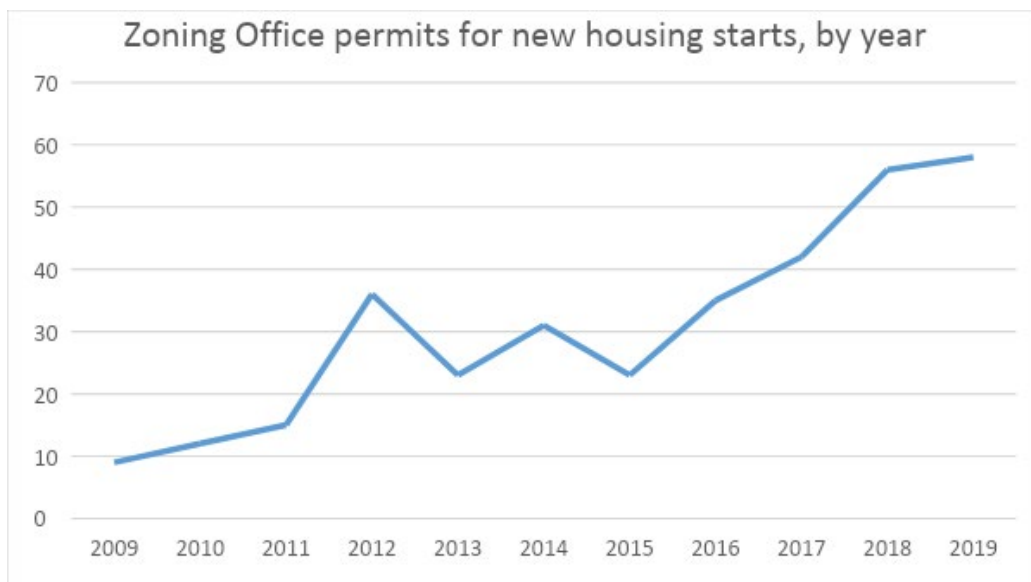
Public buildings require significant expenditures of tax dollars for energy. The cost of heat, cooling, and electricity for buildings that house town departments was \$104,869 in fiscal year 2011/2012. In fiscal year 2019-2020, lower fuel costs resulted in a reduced total energy cost of \$57,917. The town garage uses a combination of wood and oil heat. The recently relocated (rented) village garage uses propane for heating purposes. The EMS building uses oil for heat. The Town Office Building has oil heat as a backup for very cold days, but largely relies on heat pumps for heating and cooling. Electric demand for the town's buildings is now being offset by a power purchase agreement in a solar farm located off Elizabeth Lane (just over the Stowe town-line on Route 100). While such an arrangement is a benefit for the town's energy use and costs, projects like this have the opposite effect on the MW&L ratepayers due to the price for kWh that MW&L has to pay for the power being generated by this ground-mounted solar project. **The Selectboard should therefore focus more of its efforts on conservation and efficiency to slow down or reduce the rate of energy consumption in town's public buildings.**

Overall, the town spent \$242,775 on energy in fiscal year 2019/2020 (electricity, heating, and transportation) without including any of the capital costs of these systems. This dollar amount represents a significant percentage of the town's annual expenditures. The Selectboard should look at incremental costs for more efficient options. The evaluation of energy costs and systems should look at total life costs. Additionally, the current practice of having a portion of the town's budget tied to the price of fossil fuels complicates the budgeting process due to the price swings inherent in the energy market. *The Selectboard should evaluate the town's daily operating energy costs of \$665 to find more cost savings through achieving greater efficiencies.*

# Chapter 10: Housing

The newly released 2020 Census data show the town having a population of 5,434 people, which is a 4% population gain when compared to the town’s population of 5,227 people in the 2010 Census. The local 4% growth over the last decade compares to a nationwide growth rate of 7.4%. While our town grew at only about half of the national average over the last decade, 4% is a reasonably healthy number in a slow growing state like Vermont (which grew its population by a rate of only 2.8% from 2010 to 2020). Moreover, it is also important to note that the 2020 Census shows the town doubling its growth rates from the 2010 Census, which showed only a 1.7% population growth from the 2000 Census. This uptick in growth is a positive trend for our community. The 2010 Census growth of only 1.7% was a clear warning sign that there was not enough new housing be produced in our community. When rural towns stop growing, or worse, decline in population, a plethora of negative consequences can be brought to the table, including disinvestment. We are fortunate that the 2020 Census reverses recent anemic growth trends from the 2000 and 2010 Census counts.

It is important to note as you read this chapter that the above population growth and the below new housing start numbers are not proportionally correlated. In actuality, it takes really large housing start numbers to create just a little population growth. After decades of relative stagnation and slow housing growth, the following chart shows that the production of new housing in our town has exploded in recent years:



The above chart shows that during the years of 2009 through 2011, only about a dozen new housing starts were permitted by the town zoning office each year, on average. The amount of new housing skyrockets to nearly five times that annual amount by the time the graph reaches years 2018 and 2019. The acceleration from 9 housing starts per year in 2009 to 58 housing starts

per year within a decade shows a renewed and strong interest in investing and living in our community. So far in 2020, the Covid-19 Pandemic has added jet-fuel to what was already a hot real estate market both nationally and locally. With more than a quarter of 2020 to go, a record number of 108 new housing starts have already been permitted by Labor Day!

Actual housing needs, both nationwide, and within our own town will be quite dynamic during the 2022-2030 lifecycle of this town plan. According to *Reshaping Metropolitan America* by Arthur Nelson, by the year 2030, 83% of US households will have no children, only 11% of housing demand will be for families with children, and 63% of US households will consist of only 1 person. If these projections prove even to be somewhat accurate for our area, our town will have to work through a massive mismatch between the miniaturizing US household size, and an existing housing stock that was built generations ago to accommodate large families. Without the new apartments constructed downtown in recent years, the mismatch in 2030, with 63% of households consisting of a single person, and 83% of households having no children, juxtaposed with the large Victorian style homes that populate the village, would have been extremely problematic. **While our community has been and is always supportive of varied forms of housing (from apartments, to condos, to starter homes, and larger single-family homes), the Planning Council must incentivize, through its zoning allowances, the creation of significantly more small-sized housing stock. While there is clear and immediate need for all types of housing in our community, this plan strongly supports efforts to create more owned housing within our community, including multi-family housing, condos, townhouses, and single-family homes.** This preference for ownership versus rental housing results from the recent growth in multi-family rental construction without any corresponding construction of multi-family ownership housing.

Using Nelson's projections, if a town is to retain an assumed population of approximately 6,000 people, more than 1,000 new 1 or 2-bedroom apartments, condos, or small homes will need to be created during the lifecycle of this 2022-2030 town plan. According to the Lamoille Housing Study and Needs Assessment that was conducted by Doug Kennedy Advisors in 2018, only 523 new housing units were created in our town between the years 2000 and 2016. This data point shows that, with only about 30 units of new housing being created annually during this 17-year time span, our town is already well behind the curve in terms of needed housing production. Three times as many annual housing starts are needed just to keep pace with the shrinking household sizes, never mind any additional growth demands within the town, or from the larger area. As such, **it is of paramount importance that the Planning Council ensures that the town's zoning, which was previously an impediment to the construction of new housing,**



**continues to allow and even promote the construction of new housing in areas designated for such in the Land Use Chapter of the Town Plan.<sup>5</sup>**

Per State and Federal law, the town must ensure that Fair Housing Laws are upheld and local zoning does not discriminate against accessory apartments, group homes, manufactured housing, multi-family housing, and similar housing arrangements that are typically more affordable than a traditional single-family home. It is extremely important to keep in mind that the cost of housing directly impacts the quality of life in our town. When the cost of housing remains reasonable, residents have more expendable income to spend at local restaurants and businesses. Employers are also sensitive to housing costs. High housing costs place upward pressure on wages. With less upward pressure on wages, locally produced items are more competitive in outside markets. This is why the availability of affordable housing has been identified as a key factor in attracting business and industry to the area. If our town fails to allow enough housing to be built to meet demand, which has already been happening in recent years, housing affordability problems are quickly created.

In the last iteration of the Town Plan's Housing Chapter, the housing in our community was statistically affordable. Unfortunately, that is no longer the case. According to the Kennedy report, 30% of the town's owner occupied households are now paying more than 35% of income towards housing costs. For rental housing, 35% of the town's rental households are now paying more than 35% of income towards housing costs. **Eroding affordability is an extremely negative trend for our community that must be combatted by allowing the market to create enough new housing to meet demand.** General affordability, including housing, has always been one of our town's great strengths when compared to other comparable communities, and especially the Burlington metro area. *This plan therefore supports the Selectboard creating a housing committee that is charged with promoting the creation of all forms of new housing, including new affordable housing, and suggesting what incentives might be offered to help developers create more housing in our town.* **The Planning Council shall also take care to always ensure that enough land is zoned appropriately to meet demand (both for shrinking household size and new population growth). The creation of more infill housing, and smaller single-family homes on newly created small lots, is a strategy that must be echoed by our zoning code in order for our town to meet its housing creation goals.** To accomplish this, **the Planning Council should focus on converting land zoned Rural Residential Agricultural Zone to Low Density Residential in areas where municipal services already exist, such as Cadys Falls, Morristown Corners, and Needles Eye Road (which all are served by municipal water). The areas should be relied upon to house much of the small lot new single-family home growth outside the village for the next decade.**

---

<sup>5</sup> Link to the Lamoille Housing Study and Needs Assessment  
<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/520b971ae4b0cc1763ccaef5/t/5bcf6a93f9619a234a0a26b6/1540319904561/LamoilleHousing.pdf>

In terms of housing types, 31% of the total housing stock in our town, per the Kennedy Report, is multi-family. This percentage is on par with Johnson and Cambridge in the county, but smaller than Stowe's 42%. 9% of the multi-family homes in our town were owner occupied at the time of the 2018 study, which is double to triple the percentage of the other towns in Lamoille County. 24% of the town's entire housing stock is rented, which is below the county average, and trailing communities such as Hardwick, Cambridge, Johnson, and Stowe (which is at 34%). The owner-occupied rate of the town's housing stock has risen quickly in recent years. In 2000, 36% of the town's 2,101 housing units were rentals. That rental percentage fell only slightly to 34% by 2010. However, this rental percentage fell off quickly in the last few years with only 28% of the housing stock being rented by 2016. Even with the recent addition of new multi-family rental housing in downtown Morrisville, there were 98 less rental housing units in existence in 2016 than there were in the year 2000. This drop is a clear outlier in the county Kennedy report, and a sign that not enough rental housing is being created. **The Planning Council must ensure that the town's zoning rules maintain the current trend of new multi-family housing being built downtown, and in the surrounding parts of the village, to keep up with housing demand, thereby ensuring continued rental affordability.**

It is also worth noting in the Kennedy report that only Hardwick at 57 years, had an older average age of housing stock than our town, which has an average housing stock age of 50 years. Most of the county's housing stock is just over 40 years old. Accelerating the new housing start numbers shown in the graph on the first page of this chapter will be needed to reduce the average age of our town's housing stock. Generally, older housing stock, unless retrofitted and extremely well insulated, is less desirable than newly constructed energy-efficient housing. **The interplay between the age of our community's housing stock, and the desirability thereof, should not be ignored by the Planning Council.**

**Recent zoning changes in the village's Central Business District and in the High Density Residential Zone have encouraged the creation of more affordable multi-family housing in the heart of our community. This trend should continue in these zones. The reuse of historic apartments above existing storefronts in the downtown to provide housing that is affordable and convenient has been successful, and continues to be encouraged.** This type of housing is currently desired by both young professionals and senior citizens looking to downsize and relocate close to village amenities. **The Planning Council should continue to ensure that zoning regulations support efforts to increase senior housing opportunities within the village. Increasing senior housing opportunities includes this plan strongly supporting the construction of a large assisted living facility for seniors, provided it is located within the village, or within a portion of the town that is walkable to Copley Hospital.** Currently, residents who need assisted living are forced to move away from their own community to seek out such a living arrangement. This is a not an acceptable reality, and we must do better by our seniors as a community. Outside of assisted living arrangements, town policies and practices must support efforts to assist elderly and disabled residents who wish to age in place (and the

community based health care systems that enable this). Accessory apartments, which continue to be strongly encouraged by this plan, can be a great way to provide smaller household sizes, affordable housing (and needed income for homeowners), while maintaining the existing character of a neighborhood.

A housing discussion is not complete without noting that every community has individuals and families that have special housing needs. The elderly and families with children living in poverty are examples of groups with special housing needs that are found in most communities. The disabled or infirm may also require special housing arrangements. The town's current zoning supports the daytime care of children via the Family Child Care Facility and Day Care Facility uses in accordance with State statutes, which allows their parents to better participate in the work-force. A final category of special housing is group homes or institutional care. Living arrangement such as nursing homes, and group homes also fall into this category. **Our town supports all of the aforementioned forms of housing, and its zoning shall remain flexible enough to accommodate various and special housing needs. This plan supports the use of manufactured housing within our community. The plan also supports the equal treatment of housing, with mobile homes, manufactured homes, and single-family homes all being afforded the same treatment by the Town Plan and associated Zoning Bylaws.**

# Chapter 11: Economic Development

Employment & wages. Local employment opportunities have progressed steadily during the last few decades. The job base in our town has grown from just 2659 jobs in 1991, to 3,555 jobs in 2001, to 3,578 jobs in 2011, and to 4,041 jobs in 2018.<sup>6</sup> Meanwhile, unemployment in our town remains very low, ranging from 2% during the summer of 2019 to a relatively low “high” unemployment rate of 4.2% during the preceding winter. These numbers compare favorably to the unemployment numbers for Lamoille County, which has a winter unemployment rate of 4% and a summer low unemployment rate of 2.4% during the same time period.<sup>7</sup> Our town’s employers in 2018 paid an average wage of \$42,447. This is higher than Lamoille County’s average wage of \$38,506, but lower than the State’s average wage \$46,115.<sup>8</sup> Our town remains the County’s center of non-seasonal jobs, providing employment for a wide area. This primary position in the regional economy creates advantages for the local population. However, the town’s leadership in the regional economy increases demands on both local infrastructure, and town services. **During the next decade, all land use policies shall reflect the strong desire to remain as the commercial and industrial center of the county.**

Major employers & opportunities. Our town has a strong economy ripe with locally owned companies offering good jobs at competitive salaries. Major town employers include manufacturer MSI, Union Bank, Turtle Fur, Concept 2, and Butternut Mountain Farm (Vermont’s leading maple sugar company). With most of those business located in the original industrial park (located on Industrial Park Drive), it is easily discernable how important this facility has been, and continues to be, to the overall economic well-being of our community. The success of the original industrial park reinforces that this plan, and its policies, must ensure that additional industrial zoned land always remains available for new companies to start or grow in our community. **As such, this plan strongly supports for the development of another industrial park and/or more land being set aside for industrial uses. The underutilized, large, and relatively flat, lot located off Gallery Lane (adjacent to Mattress & Sofa Warehouse) is a spot where a new industrial park is both feasible, and supported by this plan. However, due care should be exercised so that any commercial development of this lot does not compete with, or adversely affect, the restaurant options, and remaining retail offerings in downtown Morrisville. This plan also supports any zoning reform needed that bolsters the industrial use of land adjacent to the Truck Route.**

Although not mentioned in the preceding paragraph, Copley Hospital is a major employer of town residents. Businesses that support the hospital also employ countless other local residents. Both the overall health, and the economic well-being of our town, depend on the continued

---

<sup>6</sup><http://www.vtlmi.info/profile2018.pdf>

<sup>7</sup><http://www.vtlmi.info/laus.pdf>

<sup>8</sup><http://www.vtlmi.info/profile2018.pdf>



operation of Copley Hospital. With the State exercising greater regulatory control over hospitals in recent years, small independent hospitals like Copley have been forced to accept no rate increases, while simultaneously spending down days of cash on hand. This is not a sustainable trajectory for our community hospital – a community hospital built largely by charitable gifts and local fundraising. **Efforts by the State or the Green Mountain Care Board to move critical hospital operations like Mansfield Orthopedics out of Morrisville to places like Burlington or Dartmouth shall be strenuously opposed. This plan also vehemently opposes regulatory efforts that undermine the fiscal stability of the hospital, such as additional years with no approved rate increases, or efforts to force the hospital to make less revenue.** *If these issues surface again in the future, the Selectboard shall exercise all the political avenues available to ensure the continued existence of the hospital, with the hospital offering future health care services that are at least on par with current levels.*

The Lamoille Valley Rail Trail, a new local recreational amenity, is it still often overlooked in terms of its economic development potential. The fact that our community is the only town to have the rail trail so prominently cut through its downtown provides the businesses in the village with a tremendous opportunity. **The Planning Council should strategize on how to help the town, especially the downtown, can capitalize on the growing traffic on the rail trail.** Efforts to finish the rail trail throughout our community, and to strengthen its physical and visual connections to Portland and Pleasant Streets in the downtown, is an obvious starting point. Adding more public access points to the rail trail within the community, especially within the village, is strongly supported by this plan. Opportunities to create additional public access points to the rail trail include the village section of Park Street (especially as properties thereon are redeveloped), off Gallery Lane, and by Dunkin Donuts. *The Planning Council should also study if there are creative ways to encourage the creation of ecologically friendly car-free housing that could be built along both the rail trail and the adjacent banks of Lake Lamoille.* **In relation to the rail trail or not, this plan also supports any effort aimed to increase the vitality of downtown Morrisville,** as a community without an economically healthy downtown will not be prosperous long-term.

Infrastructure. Wastewater capacity is critically essential to support existing and new economic development activities through the year 2030. **This plan supports a municipal sewer system with a transparent and competitive rate structure, and management of the plant asset that is adaptable and flexible enough to work with existing businesses, and any new business wishing to locate in our town. It is an unassailable goal of this plan that sewer capacity, or the cost thereof, should never be a limiting factor for locating new residential or commercial development in our community.** While conservation of a resource should always be the first priority, should flow, phosphorous, or BOD levels become problematic at the sewer plant, **this plan supports funding and constructing any needed additional capacity.** It is important to note that this plan also views the existence of sewer service as a common good. Morrisville Water & Light can only spread the cost of sewer plant operation and upgrades

amongst its roughly 800 user accounts. Town residents, even those using well and septic to support their homes, benefit from the existence of a municipal sewer system. Essential parts of our community, such as Copley Hospital, our grocery stores, and even downtown Morrisville, could not exist without municipal sewer service. Because the sewer plant benefits all town residents, and not solely the users of the system, **this plan therefore supports any effort to spread some of the cost of the sewer plant’s operations to these additional non-user beneficiaries. If assented to by both the Selectboard and the Village Trustees, and supported by a cost benefit analysis, that demonstrates that the town acquiring the responsibility for water and sewer service can benefit the users of the system (by legally spreading the cost these water and sewer service costs amongst indirect beneficiaries), this plan supports such a transition. This plan also supports efforts to make sewer charges more equitable across users, such as creating a billing surcharge for users that rely on expensive, and maintenance heavy, pump stations for sewer service.**

Child Care. Many employees in our region must have childcare in order to be able to work. There is currently a shortage of licensed or registered care in both Lamoille County, and in the town. In particular, there is additional need for off-hour childcare for working parents. Several efforts are underway to address this need, and this plan should support them wherever feasible. Adding childcare capacity strengthens our economic opportunities by ensuring that town residents can participate in the local labor force.

Broadband, technology, co-working, and maker spaces. Both Morristown and Morrisville are filled with artists and creative individuals. Often, the artists’ mediums are too large, too expensive, or too unwieldy to accomplish in a private residence. The town’s community arts center is tight on available space, and it cannot accommodate a full-time maker space (River Arts’ dirty arts maker space is at capacity with just four pottery wheels). As such, **this plan supports any efforts, public or private, to create a public or private maker space in our town that acts as a business and/or arts incubator.** Similarly, **this plan also supports any effort, public or private, to create a co-working space.** Reliable internet, cell coverage, and even fiber availability, should attract people from surrounding towns without these amenities to a co-working located within the downtown, or uptown business districts. It is very important for our community to grow its existing base of technology jobs. Without available technology jobs, our community will not be able to attract a young, vibrant, and creative workforce. **This plan strongly supports additional broadband reach, and the extension of fiber lines within in our community to accommodate younger residents that want to live in a rural setting, but still need to be able to work from home or work remotely.**

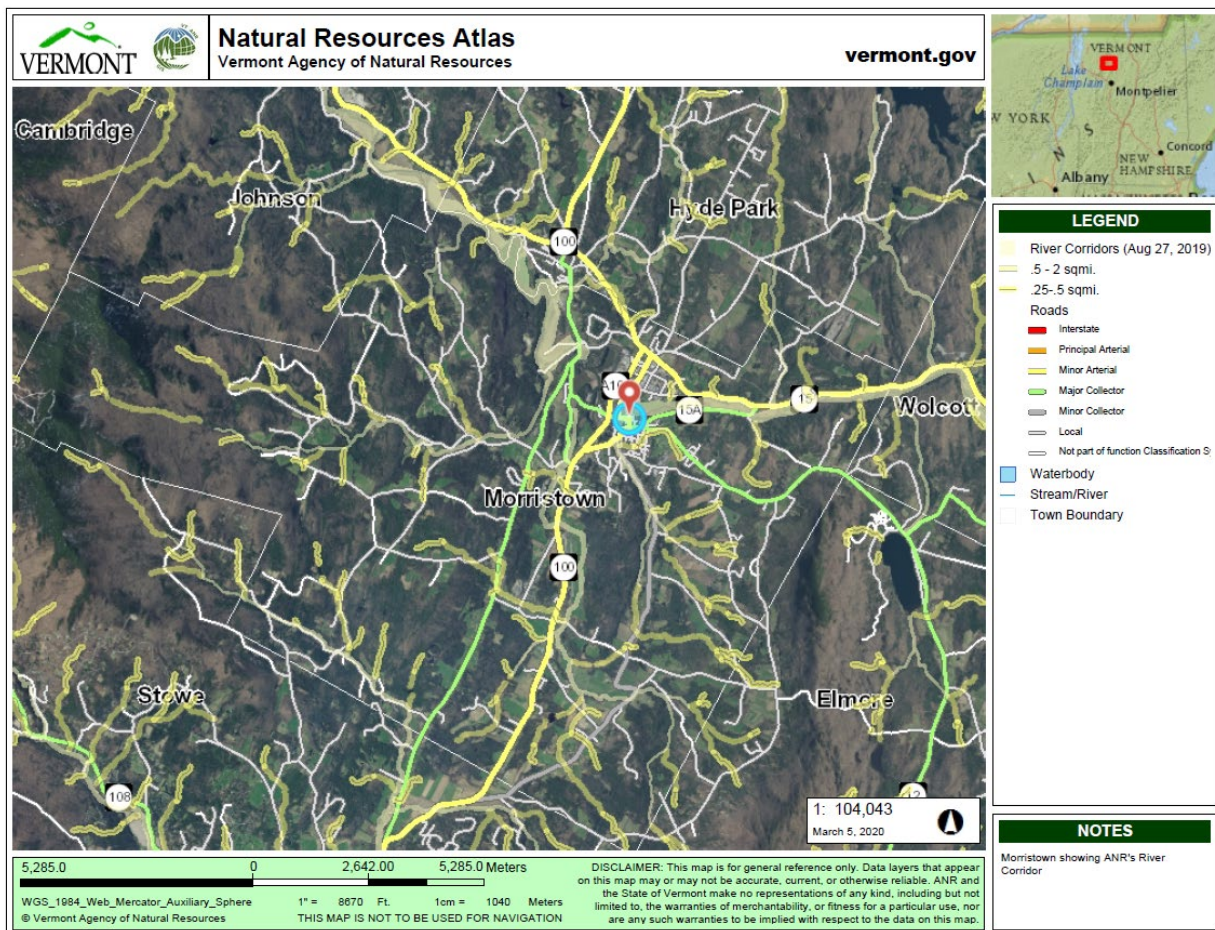
# Chapter 12: Flood Resiliency

Flood Risk and flood resiliency. Morristown and Morrisville, although having significant land areas susceptible to flooding, are lucky to have the vast majority of their structures located out of harm's way. In fact, Morristown is believed to have only 22 e911 structures located in a Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA). Morrisville is believed to have 10 e911 structures located in a SFHA. Exact numbers will not be known though until FEMA releases its digital flood zone maps in the coming year or two. These new FEMA digital floodplain maps, once approved, shall be considered to be incorporated into this plan. Compared to similarly sized communities in Vermont, especially neighboring communities like Johnson and Cambridge, where flooding from the Lamoille River is a real community concern, our community is flood resilient. In an effort to ensure that investments made in properties in the SFHA always increases the flood resiliency of our community, **structures located in SFHA that are substantially damaged, or substantially improved, should have their lowest floor elevated at least 2 feet above the base flood elevation. This plan supports avoiding new construction in identified flood hazard, fluvial erosion, and river corridor protection areas when a Floodway has not be determined.**

Programmatic means to increase flood resiliency. While the vast majority of structures in our town are reasonably safe from flooding, our community is not immune to flood damage. As an example, Morrisville has 3 repetitive loss sites from flooding, and there are 2 additional sites in Morristown. To ensure continued flood resiliency, **the town must continue to enforce the Flood Hazard Regulations found in §320 of its zoning bylaws to maintain participation in the National Flood Insurance Program. This plan strongly supports FEMA studying and mapping the undetermined flood zones in Morristown (including the re-study of the Ward Pond area where a dam was long ago breached), as better flood data equals better flood protection. Because only 13% of the assumed structures in the SFHA carry insurance, this plan supports greater participation from property owners.** *As such, the Planning Council should reach out to the residences at 416 Bridge Street, 965 Cadys Falls Road, 48, 51, & 69 North River Street that are believed to be in the flood zone to discuss the benefits of carrying flood insurance.* It should be noted that structures located outside the SFHA can still flood in major storm events, so carrying flood insurance, which is much less expensive outside of the SFHA, is recommended by this plan for any property that might experience flooding.

Structural means to increase flood resiliency. In addition to the aforementioned programmatic means of making the town more flood resilient, there are also structural means available to protect people, and property, from flooding. In the southern part of the USA, elevating structures on pilings, and the use of louvers to equalize hydrostatic pressure (by allowing floodwaters to flow through fully enclosed areas), are much more prevalent than where we live in Vermont. Unfortunately, these proven flood resiliency applications (which allow development to happen safely in the SFHA), are far less practical in a cold weather climate. Therefore, the use of fill placed in the fringe of studied floodzones (i.e. outside the floodway) is the best weapon we have

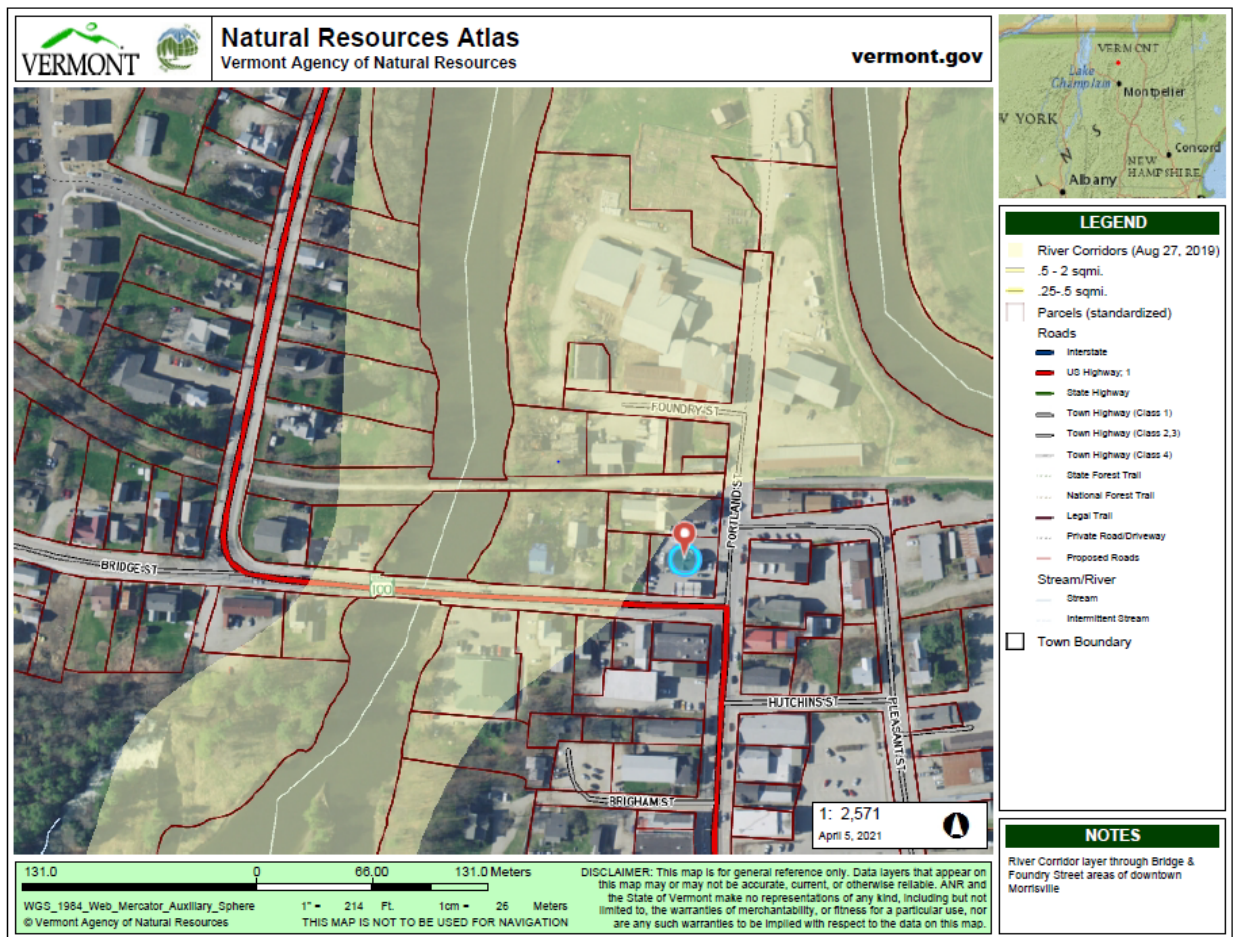
in Vermont to keep people and property safe from flooding. Our town is very lucky that FEMA studied the entirety of the village, and the vast majority of the town's low areas, streams, and rivers. The flood studies that FEMA undertook include the calculation and delineation of a Floodway, which is a very important tool when determining which land area within the SFHA needs to remain free of fill and structures to allow the base flood to discharge without increasing flood the height by more than one foot. **This plan is categorically opposed to the use of fill in Floodway, unless compensatory storage is provided on more than a 1:1 basis (in addition to the FEMA required hydrological and hydraulic studies).** However, having a delineated Floodway also determines what areas inside the SFHA can be safely filled, and developed, since the calculation and delineation of a Floodway assumes that the entire area outside the floodway is already completely filled. As such, **this plan supports the use of fill inside the SFHA to protect people and property from floodwaters, when said fill is placed outside the adjacent Floodway. However this plan does not support the use of fill in a SFHA where a Floodway has not been determined, unless there is an accompanying requirement for compensatory storage on at least a 2:1 basis (which will improve flood readiness by increasing the area's capacity to store and attenuate flood waters).** This plan is firmly opposed to any body or agency requiring compensatory storage outside the floodway in a studied SFHA.





Fluvial Erosion. The Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) has mapped areas of the town that may be subject to fluvial erosion. The map included above this paragraph shows this river corridor area via a light green fill pursuant to 10 VSA §1428(a).

Upon closer examination of ANR’s river corridor mapping, every property on Bridge Street, between Portland Street and the Bridge Street Bridge (with the exception of 29 Bridge Street), is located within the State’s River Corridor layer area (including all of Foundry Street which is currently seeing more than a dozen new housing units constructed where the ruins of the old foundry sat for years). The intent of the River Corridor is to prohibit development within that designated area to allow the river to meander naturally over time. In no future scenario will the Lamoille River ever be allowed to permanently reclaim this section of Route 100 / downtown Morrisville, and the housing and businesses located thereon (as shown in the below map where Bridge Street & Foundry Street are centered).



Therefore this plan does not support limiting development by adopting river corridors in areas with existing roads, and development, for a future meandering of the river, because the river will never permanently be allowed to assume these areas. Likewise, this plan does not support the adoption of river corridors where the accompanying SFHA has an established Floodway since, the science behind the calculation of the Floodway assumes the

area outside of it, but still within the SFHA, is already filled. This plan is also opposed to the creation of any development restrictions by any agency or body for areas inside the mapped river corridor area, but outside the SFHA, that are already commercially developed. With that being said, there is merit to adopting river corridor regulations in the rural sections of town where the base flood level of an SFHA has not been determined. Fill is not recommended in areas without a base flood elevation, and these floodplains should be preserved to allow for flood attenuation, fluvial erosion, and the actual meandering of the river over time. *The Planning Council should evaluate these remote SFHAs in the town that have not been studied to determine in which areas it is actually logical to adopt the river corridor layer, and to develop companion zoning restrictions.*

Flood resiliency of the town's road network. A discussion regarding the town's flood resiliency is not complete without examining the roadway system. Morristown's roadway system has experienced two recent loss events during federally declared disasters. The first and most significant loss event was the spring floods of 2011, which were caused by heavy rains coming down atop a late and substantial mountain snowpack. The second loss event was the Halloween storm of 2019 that washed out various roads and caused over \$250,000 in damages. Outside of these two recent events, one would have to go back to the 1990s, and then the 1980s, to find comparable loss events. Given the relative lack of loss events, it can be assumed that the town's roadway system is relatively flood resilient. **Maintaining drainage run-outs, and the installation of check dams in drainage ditches with steep slopes, are strategies that the town's road crew should look to employ more often in order to increase the resiliency of the town's rural gravel roads.**

It should be noted that the town's roadway system remains flood resilient despite its refusal to adopt to the State's 2019 Town Road and Bridge Standards. The State Town Road and Bridge Standards are better matched to Chittenden County, and they are not well equipped to deal with the reality of the steep rural mountain roads that we have in our town. Fully adopting the State's Town Road and Bridge Standards would drive the town's highway budget to unsustainable levels, and potentially put the ability of the town to harvest gravel from its Duhamel Gravel Pit at risk. As such, **this plan is opposed to the adoption of the State's Town Road and Bridge Standards, especially if the argument to do so is based upon flood resiliency.**

#### Local Hazard Mitigation Plan

FEMA approved the most recent version of the town's Hazard Mitigation Plan in 2014. The purpose of this plan is to identify all hazards facing the community, and develop strategies to begin reducing risks from these identified hazards. In the spring of 2021, the Selectboard awarded a bid to update this plan. **The town supports the pending update of the town's Hazard Mitigation Plan, as continued flood emergency preparedness, and response planning, should always be encouraged.** The town's Hazard Mitigation Plan, as most recently revised, is hereby incorporated into this Flood Resiliency Chapter.

# Chapter 13: Wellness

## Access to Healthy Foods and Choices

- Encourage local agricultural, and forest based, product production from local sources.
- Show support for local agribusinesses, and agricultural land-use.
- Show support for the farmers' market, local farm stands, and community gardens.
- Encourage and support community led health campaigns that increase consumer awareness of healthy lifestyles.

## Bicycle, multi-modal, and pedestrian-friendly community

- Support efforts aimed to improve the wellness of the community, including using this plan as a resource for grant writing opportunities.
- *Draft zoning bylaw changes that require major development and redevelopment projects in the core of the village to provide pedestrian and bicycle amenities, such as sidewalks, bike lanes, bicycle parking, and/or other streetscape improvements.*
- Encourage the addition of more pedestrian amenities in the village (such as benches, seats, water fountains, shade/street trees) that enhance the pedestrian experience, especially in the downtown.
- Ensure that adequate and appropriate lighting exists for streets, parks, recreation facilities, sidewalks, bike paths, and bike lanes to promote their use during non-daylight hours, especially during the short winter days.
- Plan for the routine maintenance of municipally designated bike lanes/routes (to the extent permitted by town & village funding).
- Fund health and wellness related infrastructure improvements equally with both private funding and municipal funding, when feasible, including ongoing maintenance.
- Provide key design concepts to building a healthy community, offer policy suggestions for improving and supporting the health of residents.
- Support the conservation or protection of commonly-used cross country ski-trails, such as the Catamount Trail, VAST Trails, the trails around Bliss Hill, and the trails on private land abutting the school property.
- Support the Rail Trail as an important pedestrian, transportation, and wellness amenity.
- Increase access to park and recreation opportunities for all.
- Highlight the important, but often overlooked, link between the built environment and health by requiring a health impact assessment be conducted before any decision is made about the purchase or disposition of public land, and the relocation of public buildings.
- Create spaces that are accessible for anyone, including people with disabilities, in order to create a healthier community, and instill a sense of belonging for all in the community.
- Abide by the principals of the Americans with Disabilities Act to ensure that all residents have access to healthy activities, wellness opportunities, and can thrive.

## Community Wellness Committee

- Support the Selectboard creating a creating a sub-committee of the Parks and Recreation Committee, or an independent committee, charged with creating a community vision for

health and wellness, and to support the implementation of that vision through measurable goals, and achievable objectives, that includes representation from the entire community.

- Identify a vision for community wellness, and create a wellness and healthy community expanded document that focuses on increasing protective factors, and decreasing risk factors for all.

### Environmental Quality

- Evaluate the additional cost associated with building and maintaining safe, pleasant streets for walking and biking, paying particular attention to high traffic areas by schools. Pedestrian and bike oriented transportation options provide residents with the option to walk/bike rather than drive, lessening traffic congestion, and improving our air quality.
- Encourage the remediation of noise impacts from new development on properties located directly on the boundary of residential zones and Industrial Zones 1-5.
- Plant street trees in the core of the village, particularly in the Central Business Zone (Pleasant St., Portland St., Main St. & Bridge St.).
- Investigate and encourage environmentally conscious municipal practices.
- Prioritize protection and use of municipally owned recreational and natural spaces, including the Town Forest, Oxbow Riverfront Park, and the portions of the Clark property that can be safely accessed by the public (in relation to the active hydro facility, and the sensitive ecological integrity of this area).
- Improve and expand the existing trail system that accesses Oxbow Riverfront Park, including formalizing the footpath that connects the park to the terminus of Foundry St.
- Add an access point, or footpath, connecting Foundry Street to the Rail Trail, which would formalize Rail Trail access at each side of the Oxbow park peninsula, and also create a small walking loop through Oxbow Park that is accessed from the Rail Trail.
- Encourage the purchase of natural areas for recreational purposes and wildlife corridors.
- Incorporate healthy homes principals into all public housing development ([www.healthvermont.gov/environment/home](http://www.healthvermont.gov/environment/home)).
- Explore signing on as a partner with the Vermont Department of Health as a 3-4-50 Healthy Community. The Vermont Department of Health 3-4-50 Campaign identifies 3 behaviors (lack of physical activity, poor nutrition and tobacco use) that lead to four chronic diseases (cancer, heart disease and stroke, type 2 diabetes, and lung disease) which cause the deaths of over half of Vermonters. Promoting healthy activities through the built environment supports overall good health.

### Mixed Use Development

- Evaluate additional opportunities in the zoning bylaws for mixed-use development allowances in the village, and within the commercialized areas of the town.
- Incentivize infill mixed use development and additional density in downtown Morrisville.

### Rescue

- Support a 24/7 staffed community located, patient centered, Emergency Medical Service.
- Support community education related to emergency medical situations such as, CPR/AED training, and Stop the Bleed Programming



- Support community wide AED signage and recognition programs
- Continue support of the Heartsafe community designation
- Support Morristown Emergency Medical Service in its application to achieve the Vermont Pediatric Safe Agency designation
- Offer Narcan response kits to at risk populations

Substance Misuse Prevention, Treatment, Recovery, Decrease Tobacco Use, Alcohol & Drugs.

- Engage a workgroup for the purpose of engaging in a strategic planning process related to substance misuse prevention, treatment, and recovery that will identify action items that could include policy changes or enhancements.

## CHAPTER 7: IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The objectives identified in each chapter of the town plan are repeated below with an indication of when the action is anticipated to occur, and the parties responsible for that action.

Chapter #	Objective	Time Period	Responsible Party
1	<u>Create and charge a board with studying the dual town name issue, with the goal of initiating a Selectboard, Village Trustee, or Town Meeting action that results in a binding vote on adopting a singular name for our community.</u>	1 year	Selectboard & Village Trustees
1	<u>This plan supports studying what it would entail to update the Village Charter, as there is like some benefit to be had by expanding the village boundary lines into developed sections of town.</u>	2 years	Selectboard & Village Trustees
2	<u>Current efforts to expand the Pleasant St. parking lot should be supported and funded by the Selectboard within the next 2 budget years.</u>	2 years	Selectboard
2 & 4	<u>The Selectboard should also create and begin to fund a capital account that, as the balance grows over the years, could eventually be used to create a deck of parking accessed from Hutchins Street, located above, but preferably beneath, the surface of the existing municipal parking lot on Pleasant Street.</u>	1 year	Selectboard
2	<u>The Planning Council should work with the Selectboard to help spur the redevelopment of both the Nepvue Building on Portland Street, and the Sunoco gas station at our main downtown intersection</u>	When either property comes onto the market	Planning Council
2	<u>The Planning Council should work with the Copley Trust to see if there is an appetite for funding a boardwalk along the Lamoille River that parallels Portland Street (linking Lower Main Street to Bridge Street), that includes lighting, benches, etc., with a purpose of relinking downtown Morrisville to its riverfront.</u>	When the owner of 90 Lower Main St. agrees to boardwalk location	Planning Council
2	<u>The Planning Council should open up a dialogue with the Bishop Marshall School Board about rezoning the school's land.</u>	1 year	Planning Council
3	<u>The Selectboard should allocate funding to update the North End Circulation Study so it contains post Truck Route traffic data. The</u>	4 years	Selectboard

	<u>Selectboard should also entertain if a similar study should be undertaken for the roads in downtown Morrisville given the recent growth in housing units therein.</u>		
3	<u>The Selectboard, with assistance with the Planning Council, should also work with the School Board and nearby property owners to open up a new access driveway to the school that obviates the need for all the traffic that comes down Elmore and Upper Main Streets from driving down past the fire station just to reverse direction up Copley Avenue.</u>	2 years	Selectboard
4	<u>The Selectboard should develop a permit process for all future point connections to the stormwater system on Brooklyn Street, with said permit process designed to protect the capacity of the system by slowing the rate that stormwater arrives at the swirl separator.</u>	2 years	Selectboard
4	<u>The Selectboard should look to acquire any adjacent properties that come on the market to ensure that there is ample room to expand the fire station, if needed, at a later date.</u>	Ongoing	Selectboard
4	<u>This plan supports continuing the current ½ penny on the Grandlist of annual funding from Town Meeting through the 2030 lifecycle of this plan (but terminating said funding in 2031), plus sourcing other grant funds, to help ensure the preservation of what is believed to be the 2<sup>nd</sup> oldest home in Morrisville.</u>	Ongoing	Selectboard
4	<u>To support awareness, and the accessibility of recreational amenities in our community, the Selectboard should look to employ someone part-time to staff the recently resurrected Parks &amp; Recreation Committee.</u>	1 year	Selectboard
4	<u>The Committee should create an online calendar, and list of recreational amenities in the community, including: tennis and basketball courts, groomed Nordic ski trails, athletic fields, fitness and nature trails, the running track, the school gyms, and the 2 playgrounds.</u>	1 year	Recreation Committee
4	<u>If allowed by the pending state and federal relicensing permits for MW&amp;L's hydro-electric facility on B Street, the Selectboard should open a dialogue with the Village Trustees regarding adding recreational opportunities</u>	2 years	Recreation Committee

	<u>within a leased, or acquired, portion of the Clark property that surrounds the dam.</u>		
4	<u>The Planning Council should work with the Mt. Vernon Lodge at 65 Portland Street on a plan to turn the south facing side lawn of that building into angled parked.</u>	2 years	Planning Council
4	<u>The Planning Council should plan when a level of parking might need to be created above, or preferably beneath, the Copley Municipal Parking lot (with a Hutchins Street entrance to the lower parking level located behind the Nepveu Building, and with the existing parking surface becoming the top deck parking elevation, or the site of a community building).</u>	8 years	Planning Council
4	<u>The Selectboard should secure the old rail car loading area lease at the bottom of Pleasant St, from VTrans when it expires in 2031 so a proper parking lot can be built that services the downtown, and rail trail users at the kiosk. The Selectboard should reach out to VTrans in the interim to try to take over the lease before 2031.</u>	Prior to 2031	Selectboard
4	<u>The current status with the village paying property taxes to the town for property, including light poles, located outside the village for non-revenue producing properties (with most of the money being sent to Montpelier for education) should come to an end, either via the sale of the subject properties, or the possible expansion of the village line, so most of these properties can be located inside the village limits, and thereby become tax exempt.</u>	2 years	Village Trustees
5	<u>The Planning Council, in consultation with the Historical Society, should immediately evaluate if a demolition delay provision belongs in the town's zoning bylaw for contributing structures in Morrisville's original 1983 historic district.</u>	1 year	Planning Council
5	<u>The Planning Council, with an assist from the Historical Society, should evaluate if the historic district should be enlarged again to the south down E. High Street, Congress Street, Summer Street, Court Street, and Maple Street, as there are many largely intact historic homes in this primary residential section of the village</u>	3-5 years	Planning Council



	<u>that will be nearing 200 years in age by the time the 2022-2030 town plan expires.</u>		
5	<u>The Planning Council should also examine if zoning per 24 VSA, §4414(f) should be adopted for the downtown's initial historic district</u>	2 years	Planning Council
5	<u>The Morristown Historical Society should help preserve the Civil War Bell hanging on the corner of Upper Main and Maple Streets by allocating the time, and resources, needed to help the owners of the bell, the Lamoille Valley Grace Brethren Church, preserve it, and make it available for public viewing.</u>	2 years	Planning Council & Historical Society
5	<u>The Morristown Historical Society, with backing from the Planning Council, should investigate the steps needed to designate the Grace Brethren Church, with the Civil War bell hanging in its spire, as a State and potentially even a National Historic Landmark.</u>	1 year	Historical Society
5	<u>The Conservation Commission, and the Selectboard, should work towards the purchase and conservation of the 82 acre "Bugby Springs" property (and creating recreational opportunities thereon).</u>	1 year	Conservation Commission
5	<u>The Planning Council, and Conservation Commission, should work to see if preserving the natural areas and existing scenery on our side of Elmore Mountain is attainable via instituting a design review district, or adopting an elevation limitation for new development.</u>	5 years	Planning Council
5	<u>The Planning Council should evaluate if wildlife and forest connectivity should be designated as §340 Environmental Resource Areas in the zoning bylaws to promote the health, viability, and ecological function of these important areas.</u>	3 years	Planning Council
5	<u>The Planning Council, and the Conservation Commission, should evaluate what zoning tools might be available to help better protect Molly's Bog, and Joe's Pond.</u>	3 years	Planning Council
5	<u>The Conservation Commission should also work towards conserving the private lands that encroach upon Molly's Bog, and Joe's Pond.</u>	Ongoing	Conservation Commission
6	<u>The School Board should evaluate the construction of a larger field house. Concurrent</u>	2-3 years	School District

	<u>with the construction of the new field house, the school's outdoor recreational facilities are also in need of attention. In order to allow that a regulation-sized track be rebuilt, it is recommended that the baseball field be repositioned, the tennis courts be replaced.</u>		
6	<u>To alleviate a longstanding traffic problem, the Selectboard, or the School Board, should purchase a right-of-way to connect Upper Main Street to Copley Avenue</u>	1-2 years	School District & Selectboard
8	<u>Direct new housing into the core of the village and adjacent parts of the town, support business growth in areas zoned for such, and reinforce the rural character of our town via the continued existence of the agricultural, low density residential, and open land in the rural parts of the town that create the sweeping and cherished views of our countryside.</u>	Ongoing	Planning Council
9	<u>An overarching objective for our community is to encourage the protection and use of local renewable energy resources, to reduce reliance on out-of-state energy resources, and to especially reduce reliance on expensive out-of-state nonrenewable energy resources</u>	Ongoing	Selectboard & Village Trustee
9	<u>Encouraging greater efficiency, affordability, and energy conservation is a primary objective that must be kept in the forefront of all energy related decision making.</u>	Ongoing	Selectboard & Village Trustee
9	<u>The Planning Council should study if it would be worthwhile to develop thermal energy standards, or more simply, to offer a density bonus to encourage developers to use heat pumps within new townhouses and new multi-family construction, so efficient heat and air conditioning can be readily available for these new households.</u>	1 year	Planning Council
9	<u>Given the town's significant fuel use, the Selectboard should make fuel efficiency a leading component in the decision-making process when municipal vehicles are purchased. The Selectboard should also consider setting a generous fixed fuel budget every year with the goal of spending unused funds when fuel prices are low on improving the efficiency of the town's energy use.</u>	Ongoing	Selectboard

9	<u>The Selectboard should immediately look to convert the interior lighting in town owned buildings to LED bulbs to create additional energy and cost savings.</u>	1 year	Selectboard
9	<u>The Selectboard should evaluate the town's daily energy costs of \$665 to operate to find savings through achieving greater efficiencies.</u>	Ongoing	Selectboard
10	<u>This plan therefore supports the Selectboard creating a housing committee that is charged with promoting the creation of all forms of new housing, including new affordable housing, and suggesting what incentives might be offered to help developers create more housing.</u>	1 year	Selectboard & Planning Council
11	<u>The Selectboard shall exercise all the political avenues available if the Green Mountain Care Board attempts to move critical hospital operations, like Mansfield Orthopedics, out of Morrisville, to ensure the continued existence of the hospital, with the hospital offering future health care services that are at least on par with current levels.</u>	Ongoing	Selectboard
11	<u>The Planning Council should also study if there are creative ways to encourage the creation of ecologically friendly car-free housing that could be built along both the rail trail and the adjacent banks of Lake Lamoille.</u>	3 years	Planning Council
12	<u>The Planning Council should reach out to the residences at 416 Bridge Street, 965 Cadys Falls Road, 48, 51, &amp; 69 North River Street that are believed to be in the flood zone to discuss the benefits of carrying flood insurance.</u>	3-5 years	Planning Council
12	<u>The Planning Council should study the remote Special Flood Hazard areas in the town that have not had a flood study to determine if it is logical to adopt the river corridor layer, and to develop companion zoning restrictions.</u>	3-5 years	Planning Council
13	<u>Draft zoning bylaw changes that require major development and redevelopment projects in the downtown to provide pedestrian and bicycle amenities, such as sidewalks, bike lanes, bicycle parking, and other streetscape improvements.</u>		Planning Council
13	<u>Improve and expand the existing trail system that accesses Oxbow Riverfront Park, including formalizing the footpath that connects the park to the terminus of Foundry St.</u>		Conservation Commission

<p><b>13</b></p>	<p><u>Add an access point, or footpath, connecting Foundry Street to the Rail Trail, which would formalize Rail Trail access at each side of the Oxbow park peninsula, and also create a small walking loop through Oxbow Park that is accessed from the Rail Trail.</u></p>		<p>Conservation Commission</p>
------------------	--	--	------------------------------------