

## **NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**

The Town of Baltimore Planning Commission will hold a public hearing in accordance with 24 V.S.A. §4384 on June 28, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. at the Baltimore Town Office in Baltimore, Vermont to receive comments regarding amendments to the Municipal Plan.

Additional copies of the proposed Municipal Plan can be obtained from the Town Clerk, whose office is located in the Town Office, during normal business hours.

Loreen Billings, Chair

**RECEIVED**

**MAY 31 2016**

Department of Housing  
and Community Development



**Baltimore Planning Commission**  
**Reporting Form for Municipal Plan Adoption**  
**05/23/16**

This report is in accordance with 24 V.S.A. §4384(c) which states:

“When considering an amendment to a plan, the planning commission shall prepare a written report on the proposal. The report shall address the extent to which the plan, as amended, is consistent with the goals established in section 4302 of this title.

*The proposed 2016 Town Plan includes a number of changes required to better address state statutory requirements and existing community conditions. The proposed updates were intended to provide strategic amendments to the 2011 Town Plan. Maps, data and other information were also updated throughout the document. Specific changes include:*

- *Evaluated compatibility with town and regional plans;*
- *Energy Chapter to address required elements and include clear standards for Section 248 proceedings;*
- *Add a flood resiliency element and plan for mitigating local flood and erosion hazard risks;*
- *Education Chapter to address current enrollment considerations; and*
- *Natural Resources Chapter to address state planning goals and update the maps upon which the policies are based.*

If the proposal would alter the designation of any land area, the report should cover the following points:

1. The probable impact on the surrounding area, including the effect of any resulting increase in traffic, and the probable impact on the overall pattern of land use.

*The future land use map was minimally revised. Previously, the scenic area designations included circles roughly drawn on the map. These areas were refined and drawn to better incorporate the on-the-ground reality. These changes will not affect the surrounding area, or result in an increase in traffic. They will maintain the existing pattern of land use in town and preserve an important community resource.*

2. The long-term cost or benefit to the municipality, based consideration of the probable impact on:

(A) the municipal tax base; and

*It is unclear the tax implications of these changes, but it is hoped that these changes will benefit the Town as they encourage maintaining scenic resources.*

- (B) the need for public facilities;

*The changes will not change the need for public facilities within Baltimore.*

- 3. The amount of vacant land which is:

- (A) already subject to the proposed new designation; and

*Most of the future land use categories remain unchanged. However, the scenic resource area was refined in order to better reflect the on-the-ground truth. This has resulted in a very minor increase in land subject to the designation.*

- (B) actually available for that purpose, and the need for additional land for that purpose.

*There is not a need for additional land in the scenic resource area; however, the maintenance of the current land serving this function is very important to the town.*

- 4. The suitability of the area in question for the proposed purpose, after consideration of:

- (A) appropriate alternative locations;
- (B) alternative uses for the area under consideration; and
- (C) the probable impact of the proposed change on other areas similarly designated

*The changes were made in order to improve future land use designations in relation to the development suitability of each area and town priorities.*

- 5. The appropriateness of the size and boundaries of the area proposed for change, with respect to the area required for the proposed use, land capability and existing development in the area.

*The changes were made in order to refine the existing designations and to more appropriately reflect community values and existing development in the areas.*

**Please Note:**

- ❖ The planning commission must hold at least one public hearing within the municipality after public notice on any proposed plan or amendment.
- ❖ At least 30 days prior to the first hearing, a copy of the proposed plan or amendment and the written report must be delivered with proof of the receipt, or mailed by certified mail, return receipt requested, to each of the following:
  1. the chairperson of the planning commission of each abutting municipality, or in the absence of any planning commission in an abutting municipality, to the clerk of that municipality;
  2. the executive director of the regional planning commission of the area in which the municipality is located;
  3. the department of housing and community affairs within the agency of commerce and community development; and
  4. business, conservation, low income advocacy and other community or interest groups or organizations that have requested notice in writing prior to the date the hearing is warned.
- ❖ The planning commission may make revisions to the proposed plan or amendment and to any written report, and must thereafter submit the proposed plan or amendment and any written report to the legislative body of the municipality.
- ❖ If the legislative body changes any part of the proposed plan, the planning commission must submit to the legislative body at or prior to the public hearing a report that analyzes the extent to which the changed proposal, when taken together with the rest of the plan, is consistent with the legislative goals established in 24 V.S.A. §4302.
- ❖ Simultaneously with the submission, the planning commission must file with the clerk of the municipality a copy of the proposed plan or amendment, and any written report, for public review.

## Planning Commission Reporting Form for Municipal Bylaw Amendments

This report is in accordance with 24 V.S.A. §4441 (c) which states:

“When considering an amendment to a bylaw, the planning commission shall prepare and approve a written report on the proposal. A single report may be prepared so as to satisfy the requirements of this subsection concerning bylaw amendments and subsection 4384(c) of this title concerning plan amendments..... The report shall provide(:

(A) brief explanation of the proposed bylaw, amendment, or repeal and ....include a statement of purpose as required for notice under section §4444 of this title,

(A)nd shall include findings regarding how the proposal:

1. Conforms with or furthers the goals and policies contained in the municipal plan, including the effect of the proposal on the availability of safe and affordable housing:
2. Is compatible with the proposed future land uses and densities of the municipal plan:
3. Carries out, as applicable, any specific proposals for any planned community facilities.”

**Please Note:**

- ❖ The planning commission shall hold at least one public hearing within the municipality after public notice on any proposed bylaw, amendment or repeal and;
- ❖ At least **15** days prior to the first hearing, a copy of the proposed plan or amendment and the written report shall be delivered with proof of the receipt, or mailed by certified mail, return receipt requested, to each of the following:
  1. the chairperson of the planning commission of each abutting municipality, or in the absence of any planning commission in an abutting municipality, to the clerk of that abutting municipality;
  2. the executive director of the regional planning commission of the area in which the municipality is located;
  3. the department of housing and community affairs within the agency of commerce and community development.
- ❖ The planning commission may make revisions to the proposed bylaw, amendment, or repeal and to the written report, and shall then submit the proposed bylaw, amendment or repeal and the written report to the legislative body of the municipality.
- ❖ Simultaneously, with the submission, the planning commission shall file with the clerk of the municipality a copy of the proposed bylaw, amendment, or repeal, and the written report for public review.



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# Baltimore Town Plan 2016

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Adopted –  
XX/XX/2016

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Planning Commission Public Hearing –  
xx/xx/2016  
Selectboard Public Hearing –  
Xx/xx/2016

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## **Section I. Introduction**

### **A. Purpose of the Town Plan**

It is the intent of this document to plan a course that will benefit the people of the Town of Baltimore and its future generations by encouraging actions that are in the town's best interest. Vermont law 24 VSA Chapter 117 (the Vermont Municipal and Regional Planning and Development Act) enables any municipality in the state to "prepare, maintain, and implement a plan within its jurisdiction."

The Baltimore Town Plan seeks to:

- Clearly define a vision for future growth and development in Baltimore
- Recommend actions to be taken to secure this vision
- Guide those interested in subdividing and developing land
- Provide a basis for town regulations and standards for Act 250 and Section 248 review
- Provide a source of information about the town
- Provide policies and guidelines for the local, regional, and state decision-makers

### **B. Town Plan Process**

A town plan is developed, and amended as needed, by the Planning Commission, and adopted by the vote of the Selectboard. Town plans expire five years after the date of adoption, at which time they may be re-adopted either with or without changes. Town plans may be amended at any time. The Baltimore Planning Commission believes that public input should guide any town planning process. During May and June of 2015, the Baltimore Planning Commission conducted a scientifically valid survey to gather public opinion on planning related issues. There were 95 surveys mailed to every property owner in Baltimore. There were 40 surveys returned, establishing a 42% response rate for this survey. The Baltimore Town Plan states goals, which are intended to provide a direction for the future. These goals have come directly from the residents and homeowners of Baltimore through their survey responses.

When people were asked in the Baltimore survey what they liked about the town and what they did not want to change, the most frequent answers were: rural atmosphere, peace and quiet, sense of community, a reasonable tax rate and the views. It is clear from the survey that this small mountain town has plenty to offer its residents.

When people were asked to name the top three things that they did not like about Baltimore and wanted to change, the most frequent responses were: better road maintenance, slow down the traffic, better internet access, have a town gathering, and nothing.

The results of the Baltimore Survey of 2015 have been incorporated in this 2015 update of the Town Plan. The information derived from the survey is a highly relevant tool to inform and guide the planning and vision for the town.

## Section II. Community Profile

### A. *Background Information and History*

The towns of Weathersfield, Springfield, Chester, and Cavendish surround the town of Baltimore. The town consists of approximately 3,000 acres of woodland, pasture, homes, and rural farms. The land that is now the town of Baltimore was once part of the town of Cavendish. Hawks Mountain created a natural division between the two parts of town. Baltimore broke away from Cavendish by an act of the legislature in 1793. Several times in the history of Baltimore, the residents desired to expand the town's boundaries. In 1797, the town "...voted to receive the northeast corner of Chester to be annexed to the Town of Baltimore with all the privileges equal with the Town of Baltimore." In 1826, Baltimore residents voted to annex parts of Springfield, Weathersfield, and Chester. Baltimore's petitions to annex land were not favorably received by neighboring towns. In 1835, another attempt was made by Baltimore residents to increase the town's size by approximately 6,000 acres. The entire area of North Springfield would have become part of Baltimore, but once again, Springfield refused the petition. Baltimore is destined to remain a small town.

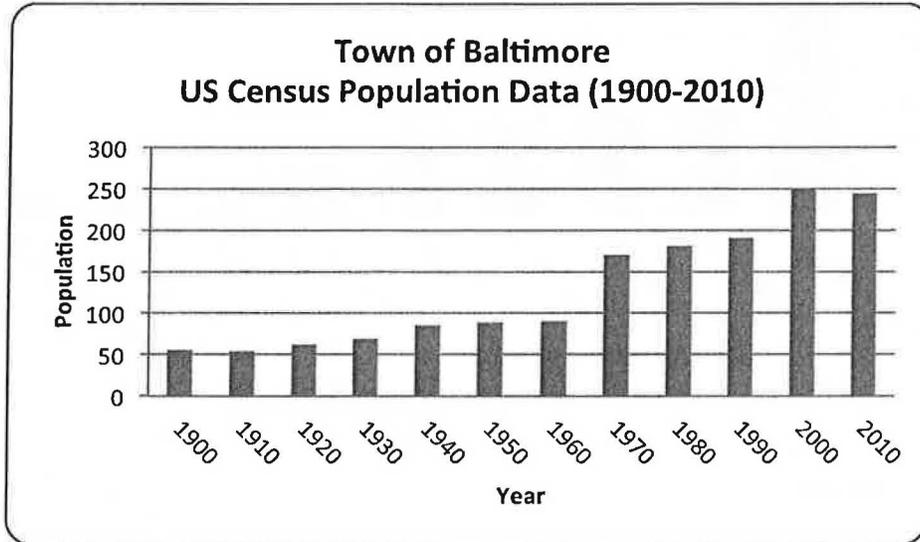
In 1795 there was no road connecting the northern and southern parts of the Town. Baltimore currently has only dirt roads, with one main road called Baltimore Road. The town is nestled in the southeastern face of Hawks Mountain. The land is a mix of open pastures, woodland, and residential development.

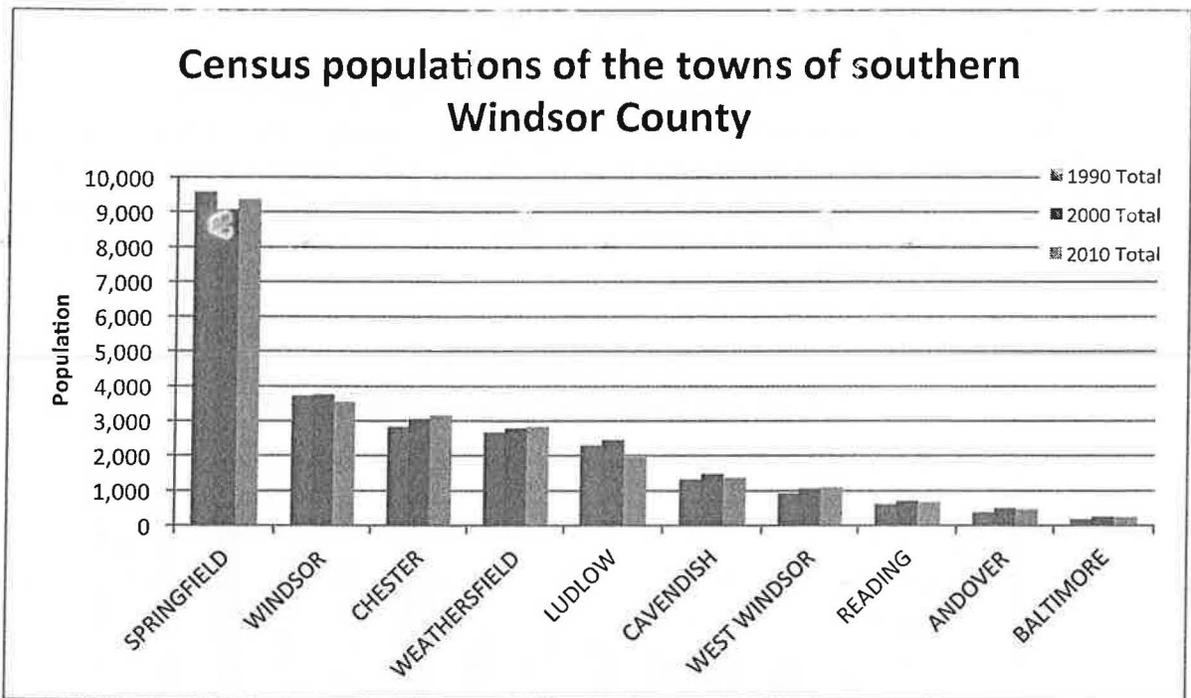
This poem composed by Annie M. Pollard, a resident of Baltimore, captures the feelings residents have for Baltimore:

*"Close to the side of Hawks Mountain  
Where the sun's rays brightly fall,  
Nestles a town  
of some renown  
Because of its areas small.  
A three-cornered clipping from Eden,  
A haunt for the birds and flowers,  
No place is more blest  
In all east and west  
Than this land that we love and call ours."*

**B. Population**

The population chart below shows that Baltimore's population steadily increased between 1910 and 2000. After a high population of 207 in 1810, farmers moving to the Midwest caused the population to drop dramatically to a low of 54 in 1910. U.S. Census figures indicate that population growth between 1990 and 2000 was 31.6% while that figure decreased from 2000-2010 to -2.4%. As of the 2010 U.S Census, Baltimore ranked 234<sup>th</sup> out of 237 in population size among all towns within Vermont.





### C. Economy

Over the years, farming and forestry have played an important role in Baltimore’s land use and local economy. Many farms have ceased to operate and today Baltimore serves as a residential community relying on the commerce and industry of surrounding towns such as Springfield, Cavendish, Chester, and Ludlow. Due to the lack infrastructure, e.g. water and sewer lines it is unlikely that new business will choose to locate in Baltimore. However, the town can support and encourage home-based businesses. Unfortunately, this means the majority of the tax base is limited to the residential properties. According to the 2014 Annual Town Report, residential tax rate distribution allocates 75% for education, 13% for highway maintenance and costs and the remaining 12% for town operating costs.

Farming, logging, mining and home-based businesses are the types of income generation most likely to take place in Baltimore. According to the Baltimore Survey, 82% of respondents did not want to encourage mining or mineral extraction and 64% did not want to encourage commercial logging or wood processing.

The 2012 U.S. Census Bureau Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (LODES) reported that of the 159 Baltimore residents age 16 and over that were employed; only 12 worked in the town itself. This is an indication of Baltimore residents’ dependence on outside towns for employment. The chart below outlines the towns to which Baltimore residents commute.

Where Baltimore Residents Work (top six towns)	Number of workers
Springfield	19
Cavendish	11
Ludlow	11
Chester	9
Rockingham	8
Burlington	7

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, LODES

North Springfield has an industrial area about a 15-minute drive from Baltimore. An increase in jobs in the North Springfield area might increase the demand for housing in Baltimore. Springfield has a long history of precision tool manufacturing. While most Baltimore residents are employed in Springfield, other surrounding towns offer a number of jobs to Baltimore residents. The Mack Molding plant in Cavendish offers manufacturing jobs and the region's top employer, Okemo Mountain Resort, is located in Ludlow. Since most residents work outside of town, regional economic prosperity is important to Baltimore. The table below demonstrates the type of jobs available in the area by showing employment numbers and percentages by industry sector.

#### Jobs by NAICS Industry Sector (2012)

Industry	Number	Percentage
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	2	1.3%
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	1	0.6%
Utilities	0	0.0%
Construction	11	6.9%
Manufacturing	18	11.3%
Wholesale Trade	6	3.8%
Retail Trade	13	8.2%
Transportation and Warehousing	8	5.0%
Information	6	3.8%
Finance and Insurance	1	0.6%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	3	1.9%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	6	3.8%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	1	0.6%
Administration & Support, Waste Management and Remediation	7	4.4%
Educational Services	21	13.2%
Health Care and Social Assistance	19	11.9%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	0	0.0%
Accommodation and Food Services	18	11.3%
Other Services (excluding Public Administration)	5	3.1%
Public Administration	13	8.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, LODES

In 2010, according to the American Community Survey, Baltimore had a median family income of 70,625. Of the towns in the southern Windsor County region, only West Windsor had a

higher median family income.

*Economic Goal:*

1. Encourage farming, small-scale forestry, home-based business and other types of economic development in Baltimore that maintains Baltimore's rural character and lessens the need for commuting and dependence on jobs sources from surrounding towns.

*Economic Policies:*

1. Encourage home occupations, as defined by the Unified Bylaw.
2. Support home-based businesses through zoning, subdivision regulations, and incentive programs.
3. Support farming and small-scale forestry activities that meet Vermont Accepted Agricultural Practices.

*Economic Recommendations:*

1. Review surrounding towns' economic status and job availability to ensure there is an adequate local job market.
2. Encourage people to ride-share when commuting to work; create a ride-share sign up.

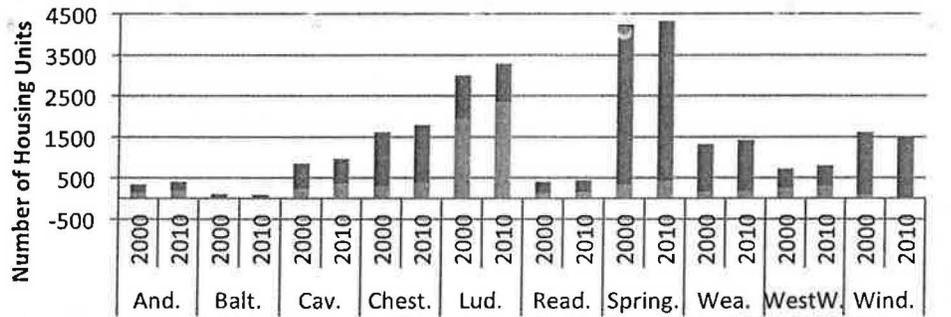
### **Section III. Housing**

When asked about which types of housing the Town should encourage under the Baltimore Survey in 2015 the majority of respondents (90%) felt that single family homes should be encouraged. The majority of respondents do not want to encourage the other types of housing included in the survey. Of the other housing options, multi family units received the strongest support with 33% wishing to encourage; however, 51% do not want to encourage multifamily housing. 80%, 82%, and 85% of respondents do not want to encourage apartments, townhouses, and condominiums, respectively. Additionally, 64% of respondents do not wish to encourage mobile home units.

However, Vermont statutes identify a significant planning goal for housing: "to insure the availability of safe and affordable housing for all Vermonters." The recent changes (2004) to the statutes as part of the revisions to Chapter 117 strengthen this goal by providing for housing accessory dwelling units and requiring towns to include zoning that allows for multi-family housing units and mobile home parks in their plans.

According to the 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates, there are a total of 89 housing units in Baltimore with 80 occupied and 9 vacant. There were 15 mobile homes in Baltimore, accounting for 16.9% of the total housing units, compared to 25% in 1990. Mobile homes help to address affordable housing by providing lower cost alternatives to traditional single-family residential housing.

## Housing units in the towns of southern Windsor County according to the 2000 and 2010 Census



The U.S. and Vermont State Housing goals for affordable housing include the achievement of housing costs at or below 30% of household income for households at or below the county median income level. For rental housing this includes rent and utilities (fuel for heat, hot water, and cooking; electricity for lights; water and sewer charges; and trash removal). For home ownership housing, this includes mortgage (principal and interest), taxes, and property insurance. Thus, in Baltimore at the 2010 median family income of \$70,625, no more than \$1,766 per month would go toward mortgage payments or rent, heat, electricity, water, housing related taxes or fees, and other similar housing expenses.

### 2011 Estimated Fair Market Values for residential properties

Place	R-1		R-2		MHU		MHL		V-1		V-2	
	Count	FMV										

SWC Region	6,755	\$173,964	2,441	\$337,324	452	\$20,541	518	\$97,983	965	\$469,174	329	\$367,680
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Andover	156	\$258,333	207	\$422,625	8	\$3,505	6	\$97,267	3	\$51,644	7	\$114,091
Baltimore	40	\$141,648	36	\$213,354	1	\$50,448	10	\$63,194	1	\$137,720	4	\$142,575
Cavendish	463	\$171,941	227	\$327,910	52	\$6,535	58	\$83,367	17	\$144,940	16	\$141,028
Chester	849	\$194,349	427	\$316,694	15	\$16,955	122	\$107,444	17	\$61,493	27	\$119,674
Ludlow	634	\$262,330	154	\$449,271	90	\$26,363	46	\$123,788	829	\$525,663	181	\$514,528
Reading	149	\$171,79	197	\$395,59	0		9	\$81,032	17	\$51,171	24	\$114,18

		3		8							9	
Springfield	2,584	\$137,882	37%	\$238,184	100	\$11,516	85	\$78,509	56	\$148,462	49	\$283,939
Weathersfield	615	\$179,264	414	\$287,308	147	\$30,291	142	\$96,430	14	\$127,962	12	\$134,622
West Windsor	316	\$232,020	306	\$149,300	0		10	\$201,235	2	\$135,542	1	\$181,571
Windsor	949	\$160,989	95	\$263,107	39	\$16,272	30	\$93,130	9	\$214,446	8	\$316,242

Source: Figures based on Form 411 data submittal to the Division of Property Valuation and Review

**\*Property definitions are as follows:**

R1 - Residential on less than 6 acres

R2 - Residential on greater than 6 acres, not including working farms

MHU - Mobile home - unlanded (set up on land not owned by the owner of the mobile home, as in mobile home parks)

MHL - Mobile home - landed (set up on land owned by the owner of the mobile home)

V-1 - Vacation property with less than 6 acres

V-2 - Vacation property with 6 or more acres

In 2011, there were 40 residential homes on less than six acres in Baltimore that averaged \$141,648 in Fair Market Value, according to the Division of Property Valuation and Review. There were 10 landed mobile homes (located on land owned by the owner of the mobile home) that averaged \$63,194 in Fair Market Value. There was one mobile home located on land not owned by the owner of the mobile home valued at \$50,448. Based on the FMV figures above, it appears that Baltimore's moderately priced mobile homes and residential homes on less than six acres offer housing that is affordable to low and moderate income residents. However, these figures do not take into account the transportation costs associated with living in a rural community such as Baltimore. In 2012, the Southern Windsor County Regional Planning Commission completed a housing and transportation affordability study for its ten-town region. That study found the town to be "very unaffordable" meaning 55% or more of a household's income is spent on housing and transportation costs. It is important to note that the study used 80% of the County's median household income as its basis for comparison.

*Housing Goal:*

1. To guide housing development in Baltimore to meet the needs of residents of all income levels and meets State and Federal standards of quality and livability.

*Housing Policies:*

1. Allow for mobile home parks, multi-family housing and higher density development of single family housing, such as accessory apartments, to provide for the housing needs of low and moderate-income residents.
2. Continue to monitor and review the housing needs of Baltimore.

*Housing Recommendations:*

1. Continue to review surrounding towns' job market and economy.
2. Support housing that is consistent with the goals of 24 V.S.A., Chapter 117.

## **Section IV. Energy**

There are a variety of home heating fuels utilized by residents of Baltimore. Many residents use wood stoves as their primary or secondary source of heat. Heating oil and propane are readily available from dealers in Springfield; however, high costs for fuel oil, propane, and electricity make it increasingly difficult for many families to afford to heat their homes in the winter. Home heating costs can be reduced utilizing modern construction and insulation techniques, and through careful siting of buildings.

Most Baltimore residents travel to surrounding towns for employment. High fuel costs have increased the cost of transportation for commuters. Residents may wish to investigate carpooling as an option for reducing the cost of transportation.

Green Mountain Power provides electricity in town. Baltimore is a small, rural town that is primarily forested. Open lands that do exist are either used for agricultural purposes or serve as important scenic resources and help define Baltimore's rural character. As such, utility or commercial scale solar arrays do not make sense and are discouraged from locating in the town. However, residential scale solar is encouraged in order to help residents increase their energy independence.



**Figure 1: View from Harris Road, an Example of the Type of Scenic Resources the Town Would Like to**

### **Protect**

During calendar year 2009, the Town of Baltimore spent \$2,616.33 on energy. \$1,237.95 (47%) was for the 354 gallons of heating oil, \$440 (17%) was spent on 1,562 KWH of electricity, and \$938 (36%) was spent on fuel for road operations. During the calendar year of 2014, the town spent \$3,892.28 on energy. \$1,981.51 (51%) was spent on heating oil for the Town Hall, \$630.11 (16%) was spent on electricity at the Town Hall, and \$1,280.66 (33%) was spent on fuel for the grader. Each area of expenditure has seen an increase over the 2009 numbers.

Currently, there are no needs, scarcities, or problems within town.

### **Energy Goal:**

1. To reduce local demand for non-renewable energy resources.
2. Encourage the use of residential scale renewable energy resources such as wood, solar, and wind for both new homes and homes being renovated or enlarged.
3. Encourage land development patterns likely to result in the conservation of energy.

### **Energy Policy:**

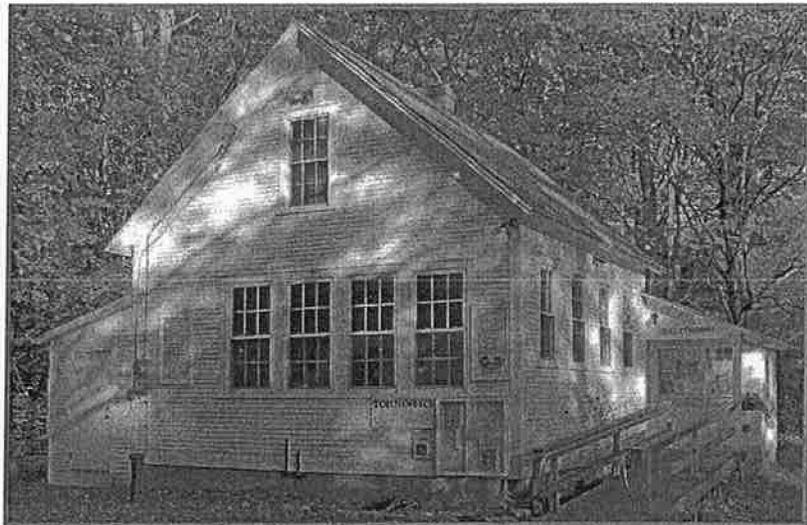
1. Encourage new home construction and additional construction to use modern building materials and techniques in order to conserve energy and lower home heating costs.
2. Builders of new homes shall complete a Vermont Residential Building Energy Standards Certificate. Standards for new construction should specify insulation, lighting, heating, and appliance performance levels.

### **Energy Recommendations:**

1. Amend subdivision regulations and/or adopt site plan review procedures for review of the building and insulation materials, and the siting of new homes (for passive solar).
2. Increase awareness among residents about incentives for energy conservation through programs such as Efficiency Vermont, which promote energy audits, weatherization, and upgrades to energy efficient appliances to reduce consumption.
3. Consider density bonuses for energy efficient building construction (LEED, Energy Star).

## **Section V. Utilities and Facilities**

The siting of electrical facilities and transmissions lines, telecommunication and broadcasting towers



**Figure 2: Baltimore's Town Office**

involve health, safety and aesthetic issues. These structures can alter mountaintops and ridgelines in ways that negatively affect scenic resources vital to Baltimore's economic and cultural future. In addition, there are unanswered questions about health effects from the electromagnetic fields generated by these facilities on the people and animals living near them. Any proposed wireless communications facilities must utilize existing facilities before new sites are considered. New sites should blend into the surrounding landscape in both size and appearance. As less intrusive designs evolve through technological advances, those designs should be utilized.

Electric service is available to Baltimore residents through Green Mountain Power. Local telephone service is available through TDS Telecom.

Baltimore conducts its business from its Town Office, formerly the old Baltimore School. The Town Office is the only town-owned facility. There is one cemetery and no recreational fields or town-maintained walking trails. All residents rely on private wells for drinking water and private septic systems.

Baltimore is one of thirteen member towns in the Southern Windsor/Windham Counties Solid Waste Management District (SW/WCSWMD). SW/WCSWMD is a union municipal district dedicated to providing solid waste management authority, services, and planning to its member towns. The District was chartered in 1982 and serves: Andover, Baltimore, Cavendish, Chester, Grafton, Ludlow, Plymouth, Reading, Rockingham, Springfield, Weathersfield, West Windsor, and Windsor.

Most Baltimore residents use the Springfield Transfer Station for disposing of their recyclables. They may also pay to dispose of their trash at the Transfer Station using a ticket system. Household hazardous waste collections are held in on the second Saturdays in May and September at the Transfer Station for District residents. For more information, visit [www.vtsolidwastedistrict.org](http://www.vtsolidwastedistrict.org).

There are no registered childcare facilities in Baltimore. Residents rely on informal childcare arrangements in town or in surrounding towns or on regional resources that are either licensed or registered. The childcare resource and referral agency for Baltimore is the Springfield Area Parent Child Center, which is located in North Springfield.

*Utilities and Facilities Goal:*

1. Accommodate the necessity of utilities and telecommunication towers while minimizing the economic, aesthetic and environmental impact upon the town.

*Utilities and Facilities Policies:*

1. Allow new facilities only as necessary to meet the changing needs of residents and businesses.
2. New utility lines shall be planned along existing roads whenever possible and should not detract from the important scenic resources.
3. Telecommunication towers and antennas should be placed on existing structures whenever possible. No tower should be placed on Hawks Mountain.

4. Continue routine maintenance on town hall.

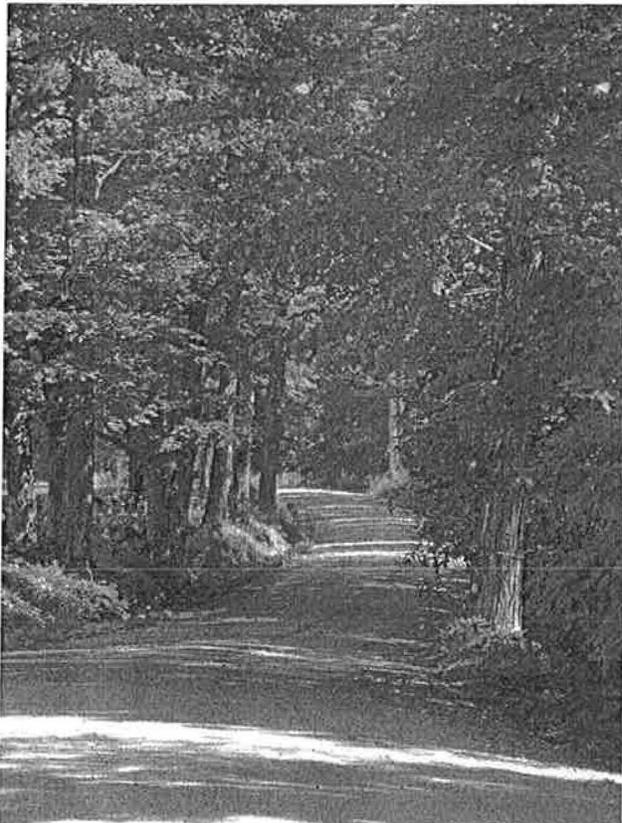
*Utilities and Facilities Recommendation:*

1. Consult the Baltimore Zoning Regulations and Future Land Use Map for the specific conditions of siting and construction of any electrical, telecommunication or broadcasting tower or facility (commercial or private).
2. The town should plan for the future demand for childcare services that are safe and affordable and integrate childcare issues into the planning process as appropriate.
3. The town should work to achieve the goals and action steps outlined in the District's Solid Waste Implementation Plan.

## **Section VI. Transportation**

There are no state routes in Baltimore, the closest state routes are VT Route 131 to the north, VT Route 106 to the east, VT Route 10 to the south, and VT Route 103 to the west of Town. 2011 Vermont Agency of Transportation highway mileage reports for Baltimore include:

- 4.36 miles of Class 2 Town Highways;
- 2.81 miles of Class 3 Town Highways;
- 0.15 miles of Class 4 Town Highways;



**Figure 3: Baltimore Road**

The Baltimore Selectboard adopted road and bridge standards in 2013. An inventory of Town bridges and culverts was conducted in 2002 and most recently updated in 2014. Additionally, a road inventory was completed in 2014 and a road erosion inventory was completed in April of 2016. Currently the road network in Baltimore is sufficient with no additional roads needed.

The Baltimore Survey results indicated that most people would like to keep the roads unpaved and many improvements to road condition and drainage have been made in the last few years. No additional roads are needed at this time in Baltimore. The Town does not maintain class 4 Town Highways and trails. They are valued for hiking, bicycling, snowmobiling, and other recreational uses.

There are no airports in Baltimore, however, the Hartness State Airport is located in North Springfield and provides access for

corporate jets, flight instruction and gliding opportunities.

Connecticut River Transit (CRT) offers on-demand public transportation services in Baltimore with at least 48 hours' notice. According to CRT this service was utilized only once in 2014 and not at all during 2015 (these numbers are based on CRT's fiscal years).

During the 2015 legislative session, the Vermont legislature passed Act 64, the Vermont Clean Water Act. Act 64 will have significant transportation implications as it created a permit system aimed at addressing stormwater runoff from unpaved roads. Under the DEC Municipal Roads General Permit, Baltimore will need to develop and implement a stormwater management plan. Some of the possible implementation strategies include completing an inventory of municipal roads and their connections to surface waters, upgrading ditches, ensuring roads are correctly crowned, and upgrading culverts. The deadline for application for the municipal roads stormwater permit is July 1, 2021. The Vermont Clean Water act will also regulate areas of impervious surfaces greater than 3 acres, increase the role of Tactical Basin Plans, and regulate agricultural runoff through the Required Agricultural Practices.

*Transportation Goal:*

1. Provide safe and adequate town roads.

*Transportation Policies:*

1. Keep the roads in Baltimore unpaved.
2. Preserve public rights-of-way on Class 4 Town Highways and trails for recreational uses.
3. Do not accept new roads under Town ownership unless they clearly meet the public interest.

*Transportation Recommendations:*

1. Seek funding sources for a new grader (possibly grants).
2. Seek funding sources to improve the emergency preparedness conditions of the roads.
3. Start planning for compliance with the Vermont Clean Water Act (Act 64).

## **Section VII. Education**

In 1894 the Baltimore School House was built. Not much money was spent on education back then. The teachers were boarded out into houses of families that bid for them. In the earlier days, school only met for two months in the winter and two months in the summer. Grades 1-8 were offered in the Baltimore School until the late 1960's. Grades 7-8 were sent to Springfield Junior High School and Green Mountain High School. The Baltimore School closed in June of 1988, and in March of 1989 the Town of Baltimore was granted possession of the schoolhouse from the Baltimore School Board. Most of the students in Baltimore make use of the Springfield school systems; as an alternative some have chosen the Chester/Andover school systems. The school systems receive a tuition reimbursement from the Town of Baltimore. The tuition dues

are generated from the Town tax revenues. A large percentage (72%) of respondents to the Baltimore Year 2015 Survey were either neutral or have indicated there are adequate educational resources in the area.

A number of schools in the area offer a wide range of educational services. The River Valley Technical Center in Springfield offers high school students from the region the chance to learn a technical trade. Vermont Community College in Springfield and New Hampshire Technical College in Claremont, NH offer college level courses, associates degrees and adult continuing education.

The Vermont Legislature passed act 46 in 2015. It provides various incentives for school districts to voluntarily merge. In 2018 unmerged districts may be realigned provided the realignment is necessary, possible, and practicable for the area.

*Education Goal:*

1. To provide and maintain adequate educational services and, when possible, provide more educational opportunities for the residents of Baltimore.

*Education Policies:*

1. Ensure all residents have access to traditional and non-traditional educational resources.
2. Continue ongoing dialogue with the Springfield schools to negotiate for the lowest possible tuition rates.

*Education Recommendation:*

1. Monitor the ongoing implementation of Act 46.
2. Inform residents about educational opportunities in the area.

## **Section VIII. Emergency Preparedness**

Vermont Emergency Management has requested that all towns fill out a Local Emergency Operations Plan in order to provide a more informed state response to local disasters. The Local Emergency Operations Plan (LEOP) provides contact information for those involved in local emergency response. Also included are shelter locations, pre-designated local emergency operations centers, and Incident Command System flow charts. The most recent adopted LEOP is adopted by reference as part of this town plan. The LEOP is updated yearly, after town meeting day, and submitted to Vermont Emergency Management by May 1, 2015.

In 2014, the Southern Windsor County Regional Planning Commission received FEMA approval of its Multi-Jurisdictional All-Hazard Mitigation Plan. The Selectboard approved the Baltimore annex on March 5th, 2014. This appendix, when used with the appropriate sections of the SWCRPC Multi-Jurisdictional All Hazard Mitigation Plan, is an All-Hazard Mitigation Plan for the Town of Baltimore. This plan made Baltimore eligible to join the National Flood Insurance Program and eligible to apply for mitigation project grants. Baltimore was admitted to the NFIP in 2014, but has no Special Flood Hazard Areas identified.

In February 2015 Vermont Emergency Management notified the town of its successful grant application for a new single jurisdictional hazard mitigation plan. The grant period of performance end date for the award is February 4, 2018. The goal of a stand-alone Hazard

Mitigation Plan is to help identify risks and provide local mitigation strategies the community can take to become more disaster resilient.

Baltimore relies heavily on the surrounding towns for medical and fire assistance. The closest hospital is Springfield Hospital (about 20 minutes away). The closest full time fire station is the Springfield Fire Department (also about 20 minutes away). The closest volunteer fire station is West Weathersfield Volunteer Fire Station, located at Downers Corners in Weathersfield (15 minutes north on Route 106). For Baltimore residents, Riverside Middle School in Springfield serves as the local shelter and the Baltimore Town Hall is equipped with a back-up generator to continue service during a power outage and serve as the local Emergency Operations Center. There is no town water source and if the town lost power, most residents would have to rely on privately owned generators to power their water pumps.

*Emergency Preparedness Goal:*

1. To ensure that the community can respond to a local emergency.

*Emergency Preparedness Policy:*

1. Review and correct the Local Emergency Operations Plan on an annual basis.
2. Work with surrounding towns to complete mutual aid agreements.

*Emergency Preparedness Recommendations:*

1. Have the road commissioner identify road sections, bridges, and culverts that need maintenance or replacement.
2. Work with the Regional Planning Commission to seek funding for emergency preparedness in Baltimore.
3. Maintain enrollment in the National Flood Insurance Program.

## **Section IX. Natural and Cultural Resources**

### ***A. Water Resources***

Wetlands are defined in VSA 24, Section 4303 as, "...those areas that are inundated by surface or groundwater with a frequency sufficient to support vegetation or aquatic life that depend on saturated or seasonally saturated soils for growth and reproduction." Wetland benefits include fish and wildlife habitat, flood and erosion protection, nutrient and pollution filtration, groundwater recharge, and sites for educational activities, recreation and scenic enjoyment. Wetlands over three acres in size are identified by the National Wetland Inventory.

The largest bodies of surface water in Baltimore are brooks, including Beaver Meadow Brook and Chandler Meadow Brook. Baltimore residents are aware of the importance of their water resources. In the Baltimore Year 2015 Survey, 100% of the respondents agree or strongly agree with the statement, "Protection of our water resources is important."

### ***B. Forest and Wildlife Habitat***

The majority of land in Baltimore is woodland or forest. Early colonialists have deforested Vermont and the rest of the New England states three times since the settlement of America.

The predominant canopy species has changed since pre-settlement. The forest and woodlands of Baltimore are currently a mix of broadleaves and conifers. The age of the trees are typically 50 years old or younger, with some older trees mixed in (usually left because of the poor lumber quality or remote location). Sugar Maple, Red Maple, Red Oak, White Oak, Black Oak, Eastern Red Cedar, Eastern Hemlock, Ash, Willow, Cottonwood, Beech, White Birch, Yellow Birch, Cherry, Buckthorn, White Pine, Red Spruce, and Black Spruce can be found throughout the Town. Red and Black Oak are generally the most valuable timber in the region but other species such as White Pine and Yellow Birch can be valuable if they are large and straight enough.

The sap from the Sugar Maples is boiled down to make maple syrup, an important source of food, income, and identity to the residents of Baltimore. Sugar Maples have been reported to be declining in the United States due to warming annual temperatures.

According to the Baltimore Survey, 97% of the respondents agree or strongly agree that protection of our forests is important. A number of animal species depend on the forest and woodland for their habitat requirements. Forests provide shelter and food for a variety of mammals, reptiles, amphibians, and birds. Whitetail deer, fisher cats, porcupines, black bear, rabbits, skunks, and wild turkey are a few of the animals that can be found in Baltimore.

### ***C. Agriculture***

The days of when Vermont had many working farms are over. There are only a few small farms currently operating in Baltimore. Farms provide open space and the rural atmosphere that people enjoy about Baltimore. There are a number of people with rural properties that resemble farms but they are not “working farms.” A working farm is one where the farm is the owner/operator’s primary source of income. Open fields and agricultural lands are important scenic resources in Baltimore. Haying of open fields continues to leave these lands open.

### ***D. Earth and Mineral Resources***

The bedrock of the area is identified as pegmatite, granite, and granite gneiss and represents some of the oldest rock in the Northeast. Overlying the bedrock is a dense basal till of low permeability, with particle sizes ranging from the fine silts and clays to boulders. The depth of the till varies from zero to possibly ten feet. There are a few exceptions to this, as isolated deposits of sands and gravels with a higher permeability than the tills exist. These are probably of glacial-fluvial origin.

Mining impacts the environment, peace and quiet, and aesthetics of a community. Most of the respondents to the survey felt that mining or mineral extraction should not be encouraged (82% of respondents).

### ***E. Outdoor Recreation***

There is ample opportunity to enjoy the outdoors in Baltimore. A number of residents enjoy hunting and take part in whitetail deer and turkey hunting seasons (wild turkey have been successfully reintroduced to New England). Hiking, biking, horse riding, and walking can be done on town roads or trails located throughout the town. Snowmobiles are also popular

during the winter months.

New England has historically supported the English Common Law concept of allowing hunting and recreational use on private property unless posted as “no trespassing”.

### ***F. Historic Resources***

The Town Hall was formerly the old school built in 1894. There are a number of homes in Baltimore that were built in the 1800s. Currently, the Loomis House is the only structure in Baltimore listed on the State Register of Historic Places. This building is built with the Sneaked Ashlar construction technique, a form of stone masonry believed to have been brought to the area by masons from Scotland in the 1800s.

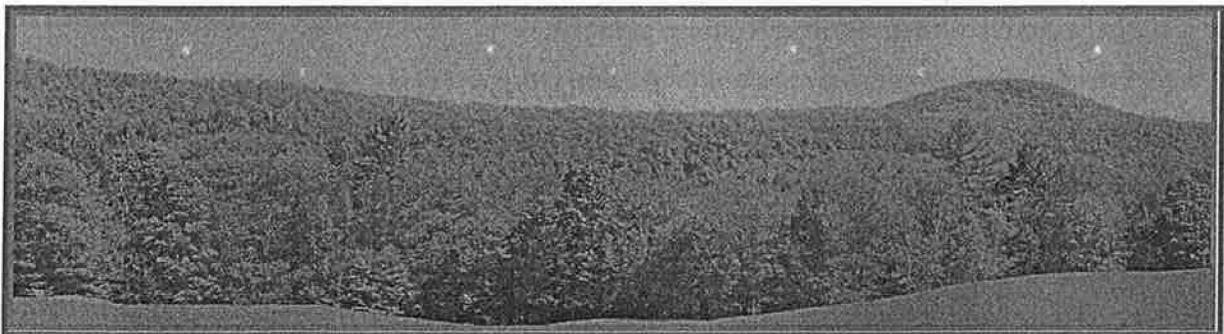
The preservation of historic resources was identified in the survey as being a positive and worthwhile Town effort. Eighty percent (80%) of respondents agreed with the statement that historic buildings should be preserved.

### ***G. Scenic Resources***

Baltimore possesses landscape features that are extremely important to the rural character, which the residents have defined as one of the top ten things that “should not change.” The maintenance of these scenic resources is important to the people of Baltimore. A wide range of questions was asked in the survey to gather public opinion about the importance of the natural aesthetics in Baltimore. Town residents overwhelmingly support the preservation of existing scenic resources. As such, land in the scenic view areas identified on the Future Land Use Map shall only be used for single-family residences or agricultural purposes.

Open fields and working farms help to define the rural landscape of Baltimore. The protection of farming and open agricultural land will help preserve the scenic and cultural resources of Baltimore.

Open space, natural areas, and wildlife habitat are other rural characteristics that residents of Baltimore would like to protect. Baltimore is located on the side of Hawks Mountain, giving residents beautiful views of the Connecticut River Valley. Hawks Mountain itself is also valued as a scenic resource to Baltimore residents. A majority of survey respondents said there should be no development and no telecommunication towers on Hawks Mountain.



**Figure 4: Example of a Scenic View of Hawks Mountain**

*Natural and Cultural Resources Goals:*

1. To protect the land uses and natural features which define Baltimore's rural character by preserving agricultural land, forest and woodland, wildlife habitat, wetlands, water resources, steep slopes, good air quality, natural and scenic areas.
2. To encourage and promote the preservation of agricultural land for open space and scenic views.
3. To foster an environment and habitat where wildlife can thrive.
4. To encourage the continued use of agricultural lands for farming.
5. To protect and preserve historic and cultural resources for future generations to enjoy.
6. To protect against loss of peace and privacy in the community.
7. To maintain access to important recreational resources.

*Natural and Cultural Resources Policies:*

1. Protect existing water resources and wetlands from contamination or disruption from development.
2. Ensure that the use, storage, and disposal of hazardous materials (junk cars, batteries, trash, used oil, etc.) is done in such a manner that it does not have an adverse effect on the water resources in the Town.
3. Ensure that streams, brooks, and watercourses are maintained in a natural state.
4. Ensure that any new water supply system or waste water system does not deplete or contaminate the existing water supply.
5. Deter development from Class I and II wetlands, as identified by the VT Agency of Natural Resources.
6. Natural and manmade features which contribute to the scenic beauty of Baltimore should be protected.
7. Scenic views should be considered when planning location of development. Additionally, land in the scenic view areas identified on the Future Land Use Map shall only be used for single-family residences or agricultural purposes.
8. Telecommunication towers shall not be constructed on Hawks Mountain.
9. Residential development on or near Hawks Mountain shall not be clearly visible.
10. There shall not be any development on the ridgeline of Hawks Mountain.
11. Plan development to minimize the impact on fish and wildlife habitat.
12. New or existing developments are encouraged to avoid clear-cutting large acreage (large acreage is defined for the purposes of this Town Plan as over ten acres).
13. Maple sugaring should be encouraged as a long-standing Vermont and Baltimore tradition.
14. Encourage working farms to stay in operation.

15. Discourage the conversion of quality farmland and agricultural soil to other uses through zoning and subdivision regulations.
16. Discourage the development of mining operations that would negatively impact the environment, peace and quiet, or aesthetics of the community.
17. The recreational use of the land shall be encouraged, providing that private property and natural resources are not negatively impacted, and permission for use is granted where required.
18. Residents and non-residents should ask the owners first before hunting or using motorized vehicles on private property.

*Natural and Cultural Resources Recommendations:*

1. Support the local Health Officer's enforcement of State and Federal regulations for the protection of surface and ground waters.
2. Commercial wood harvesters are encouraged to leave buffer strips of trees and vegetation near the borders of roads, wetlands, and streams to deter negative impacts to aesthetics and water quality.
3. Encourage conservation of forest and woodlands for recreation, wildlife habitat, wood products, maple sugaring, scenery, and important recreation areas.
4. Encourage roadside farm stands in order to provide a local means of food distribution.
5. Utilize the Regional Planning Commission to record and apply to the National and State Registers of Historic Places.
6. Seek grant-funding sources, such as Municipal Planning Grants made available by the State of Vermont to Towns with approved Town Plans, to help in the identification and recognition of historic buildings and structures.
7. Work with proposed mining operations to minimize impacts to residential property and the environment.
8. People who hunt, trap, and fish are advised to read and understand all of the State of Vermont's Laws pertaining to hunting and fishing.

## **Section X. Land Use Planning**

### ***A. Existing Land Use***

Baltimore is a rural town with much of the land in forest or brush (approximately 2,606 acres). Forests provide wildlife habitat and variety of scenic, recreational, and economic resources (such as timber and maple sugaring). The next largest land use is agriculture, covering approximately 303 acres of land (pastures and hayfields are included in this estimate). The third largest use of land in Baltimore is residential, covering approximately 75 acres. Baltimore does not fit into the typical historic settlement pattern of Vermont. There are no villages or hamlets (a small area of concentrated development with one or more commercial establishments) in Baltimore.

### **B. Future Land Use**

The village of North Springfield and the areas surrounding the North Springfield Industrial Park and Hartness State Airport are anticipated to grow over the next several years. Easy access to Routes 106 and 10, the proximity of a major employment center and the availability of municipal services are variables that could stimulate growth in Baltimore. There currently are no growth centers in Baltimore and the existing homes are fairly spread apart.

According to the Baltimore survey, the qualities of Baltimore that residents would like to maintain are peace and quiet, the rural atmosphere, a sense of community, the reasonable tax rate, and views. The greatest threats to these qualities are rapid and widespread residential development that could fragment large areas of undeveloped forest land and open fields, and detract from the scenic views that help to define Baltimore's rural character. In light of Baltimore residents' desire to maintain the rural, scenic nature of their town, a future land use map was developed.

The definitions of land use categories that follow are descriptions of areas shown on the Future Land Use Map. They are meant to serve as a guide to the types and intensities of uses appropriate to each area by describing the values that each category provides for the Town. The definitions do not prescribe or prohibit a specific use or set of uses for any category; the actual uses of the land will have some overlap between categories. For example, forest/wildlife or agricultural land can continue to support rural residential development, as long as that development does not negatively impact the primary values or functions attributed to the forest/wildlife or agricultural land uses. Development is inappropriate in any one category if, whether alone or combined with other uses in the area, it threatens the values described below.

The Future Land Use Map is general in nature, and the boundaries of different categories were drawn with this in mind. They are not meant to be detailed representations of present conditions, nor are they intended to be precisely bounded areas of completely segregated land uses in the future.

#### **Forest/Wildlife**

The majority of undeveloped land in Baltimore is forested. The contiguity of large areas of forestland is important for many types of wildlife, especially for large mammals such as deer, bear, and moose. The State Agency of Natural Resources has identified several large areas within the town as deer wintering areas and bear habitat. Any development that occurs in forest areas should be designed so that these important habitat areas and their functions are maintained wherever possible. Forest areas are also important for their recreational, aesthetic, and economic resource values. The ability of Forest areas to provide these benefits should not be significantly impaired. Development in these areas should be undertaken in ways that protect their value and ensure the continued presence of healthy forest ecosystems in the Town, e.g. siting building lots to minimize forest fragmentation and habitat impacts.

#### **Agriculture**

Agricultural land has historically been important to the Town's economy, food supply, and cultural heritage. It contributes to the land use patterns and aesthetic qualities that make the Town a desirable place to live. Land in agricultural use, and idle open land with agricultural

potential both possess these values. The potential for agricultural use and production should not be impaired in designated agricultural areas. As such, land in this area shall only be used for residential or agricultural purposes. Residential development may be considered in these areas as long as the scenic qualities of the open fields and farmland are not impaired, and the overall density remains low.

#### **Rural Residential**

Rural Residential areas can support a number of different uses, including low density residential, forest, agricultural (including tree farms and other horticultural uses), open, and transitional (scrub/shrub). They have been designated based on their current uses and accessibility from existing roads. The primary concern in rural areas shall be to discourage sprawl and strip development, and to maintain existing settlement patterns. Cluster development is encouraged wherever possible, as long as the overall density remains low. Access to open space and recreational resources should be preserved wherever possible. New residential development may occur in Rural Residential areas only where accessible by existing town roads.

#### **Residential**

Residential areas can support a higher density of residential development than areas designated "Rural Residential." These areas have been designated based on their current development pattern and accessibility from existing roads. The primary concern in Residential areas shall be to discourage sprawl and strip development, and to maintain existing settlement patterns. Access to open space and recreational resources should be preserved wherever possible. New residential development may occur in Residential areas only where accessible by existing town roads.

#### **Conservation**

Conservation areas are lands that possess outstanding value or potential as wildlife habitat, recreation areas, educational resources, fragile natural areas, or aesthetic resources. Conservation lands represent relatively pristine areas of the Town that residents wish to preserve in their natural state for future generations, and shall receive the highest level of protection from development. Special care shall be taken in any resource management or extraction plans to maintain the character and value of these areas. Conservation areas are especially beneficial when surrounded by compatible uses such as forest and agriculture.

The Conservation area on the Baltimore Future Land Use Map covers the ridgeline and steep slopes of Hawk's Mountain. These areas are important because of their scenic qualities and fragile soils, and because they are difficult to access without destroying some of the qualities that make them valuable to the town. This area also abuts State Forest land that makes up the northwest slope of Hawk's mountain in the town of Cavendish. Much of this State land is harvested; however, the land is managed for wildlife and the area provides trails for recreational use.

#### **Special Considerations**

There are several important resources that may occur within any of the land use categories above, and which merit special attention and protection. They include: vegetated areas next to surface waters; wetlands; Natural Heritage Inventory sites; critical deer wintering habitat and bear habitat as defined by the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources; significant historic sites;

and other locally defined sensitive natural areas and scenic resources. Development should avoid and minimize negative impacts to these resources. In addition, special considerations should be observed in the following areas:

**High elevations and steep slopes** — At high elevations (greater than 1,500 feet) the soil tends to be thinner, cooler, and less able to support a wide range of plant life. If areas are disturbed the potential for severe erosion is great. Land at 1,500 feet and above as well as lands with steep slopes (greater than 25%) shall be protected from any development that could reasonably be expected to cause soil erosion.

**Ridgelines** — Any development proposed at higher elevations should demonstrate that every measure has been taken to ensure the development is not visually obtrusive to surrounding neighbors or from public roadways.

While residential development may be expected in almost all land use categories, higher densities should be concentrated in existing residential areas. Residential development should be compatible with the land use and housing goals of this plan, and should not conflict with the values defined in the land use categories of this plan.

#### **Timing of Development**

Baltimore is a rural community that has historically seen family-by-family growth. Baltimore residents wish to continue this steady and well-paced pattern of growth, and to the extent possible, prevent sudden large increases in population which would place undue stress on Town services and rural character.

#### *Land Use Goal:*

1. To encourage development that is compatible with the existing rural character of Baltimore.

#### *Land Use Policies:*

1. Protect the residential areas from incompatible industrial activity.
2. Subdivisions and new development shall not detract from the scenic views, disrupt wetlands, or negatively impact surface water.
3. Special consideration should be given to any development or subdivision on Hawks Mountain for its impacts on the scenic views, wildlife habitat, and water resources.
4. Encourage agricultural and forestland use through zoning, subdivision bylaws, and tax incentives.
5. Discourage the conversion of agricultural and forestland to other uses.
6. Protect against loss of peace and privacy in the community.
7. Development above 1,500 feet or on a slope greater than 25% shall be prohibited.
8. Commercial development along major transportation routes (i.e., strip development) is discouraged. Innovative commercial development that maintains the rural nature of the town may be considered.
9. Home occupations are encouraged as long as they are appropriate to adjoining land uses, and do not adversely affect air, water, or scenic resources or cause noise, dust, or traffic

that is offensive to surrounding neighbors.

10. Development adjacent to significant natural resources (waterways, large forested areas, wildlife habitat, etc) should be compatible with the value of those resources and should be mitigated with buffer strips or visual screening if necessary.
11. Programs that help owners of farm and forestland bear the financial responsibility of resource protection should be supported, e.g. the Current Use Program.
12. Land in the Scenic View and Agriculture areas identified on the Future Land Use Map shall only be used for single-family residences or agricultural purposes.

*Future Land Use Recommendations:*

1. Encourage citizen participation in local decisions, making local government accessible through a continuous planning program.
2. Review the subdivision and zoning regulations for their ability to implement the goals of the Town Plan.
3. Initiate the development of a Conservation Commission in order to protect significant cultural resources, farmland, forestland, and significant plant and animal species and their habitat.

## **Section XI Flood Resilience**

In order to encourage towns to prepare for future flood events, the Vermont legislature passed Act 16 in 2013, which requires town plans to include a “flood resilience” element. Act 16 also added a new State planning goal “to encourage flood resilient communities” and the following sub-goals:

1. New development in identified flood hazard, fluvial erosion, and river corridor protection areas should be avoided. If new development is to be built in such areas, it should not exacerbate flooding and fluvial erosion.
2. The protection and restoration of floodplains and upland forested areas that attenuate and moderate flooding and fluvial erosion should be encouraged.
3. Flood emergency preparedness and response planning should be encouraged.

Generally speaking there are two types of flooding seen in Vermont, inundation and fluvial erosion. Inundation occurs when water rises onto low-lying land. Fluvial erosion occurs when a river wears down its banks – sometimes gradually, sometimes suddenly - undermining or sweeping away adjacent development in the process. The National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) addresses inundation hazards while the Vermont ANR’s River Corridor and Floodplain Management Program addresses fluvial erosion hazards.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has not designated any special flood hazard areas within Baltimore and the only Vermont Agency of Natural Resources designated river corridor area within town results from a 50’ top of bank setback included on those streams too small to have mapped river corridor areas. However, flooding is identified in

Baltimore's All-Hazard Mitigation Plan as a significant natural hazard facing the town. As a result, the town has mapped flood prone areas and regulates development within these areas thus allowing residents to participate in the NFIP.

### **Baltimore Flood-Prone Areas**

The flood-prone areas designated by the Town of Baltimore are as follows and are shown on the Natural Resources Map:

1. Beaver Pond, Beaver Pond wetland and the area of land within fifty (50) feet of the high water mark surrounding these waters;
2. The area of land within fifty (50) feet from the center line of the stream on both sides of Beaver Brook, Chandler Meadow Brook, Converse Brook and its branches and Hammonds Brook and its northerly and westerly branches; and
3. The high water mark of other unnamed ponds and wetlands in the community, and stream bank limits of other unnamed streams in the community.

### **Natural Protection From Flooding And Fluvial Erosion**

Baltimore primarily consists of upland forests and small, steep headwater streams. These upland forests along with wetlands and vegetated stream buffers help protect from damage caused by flooding and fluvial erosion. These natural features also protect our downstream neighbor, the town of Springfield. To minimize the risk of flooding upland forests and wetlands shall be preserved and vegetated stream buffers shall be maintained.

### **Encroachments That Contribute To Flooding And Fluvial Erosion**

Impervious surfaces and armored stream banks can contribute to flooding, fluvial erosion, and surface water pollution, with harmful effects both upstream and down. Because impervious surfaces, such as paved roads and driveways, do not allow water to soak into the soil, they can increase flood levels if storm water is not properly managed through Low Impact Development or other best management practices. There is currently very little impervious surface in Baltimore and residents want to keep it that way. While berms and stream bank armoring can protect existing development (homes, businesses, transportation infrastructure) from flood damage, such encroachments typically transfer flood water, stream sediments, and erosive energy to another location, increasing flood elevations and velocities and triggering channel adjustments and erosion downstream. Because of their potentially damaging impacts, berms and stream bank armoring projects cannot be constructed without a Stream Alteration Permit issued by the State of Vermont.

The Emergency Relief and Assistance Fund (ERAF) provides State funding to match Federal Public Assistance after federally declared disasters. Federal taxpayers reimburse eligible public costs at 75%. For disasters after October 23, 2014, the State of Vermont will contribute an additional 7.5% toward the costs. For communities that take specific steps to reduce flood damage the State will contribute up to 17.5% of the total cost, depending upon the number and level of steps taken. Baltimore currently has taken the necessary steps to reach the 17.5% level, but will need to adopt river corridor regulations in the near future to maintain that level.

## Goals

1. To encourage a flood resilient community.

## Policies

1. Encourage the protection of river corridors, flood plains, wetlands and upland forest areas that attenuate and moderate flooding and erosion.
2. Discourage the removal of in-stream debris except as necessary to protect public safety or prevent property damage.
3. Structural deficiencies in transportation infrastructure should be addressed as soon as possible.
4. Potential impacts on neighboring towns should be considered before new plans or regulations are adopted and before major projects are approved.
5. Encourage on-going emergency preparedness and response planning.

## Recommendations

1. Review and update emergency response and hazard mitigation plans.
2. Encourage property owners to review the Natural Resources map and consider flood proofing their property, implementing storm water management techniques, and/or purchasing flood insurance.
3. Request hydraulic studies, estimate costs, and seek funding for the replacement of all undersized culverts.

## **Section XII Plan Implementation and Relationship to Other Plans**

### ***A. Plan Implementation***

Implementation of the goals, policies and recommendations outlined in this Plan depends on the combined efforts of Town residents and local officials, as well as the resources of the Southern Windsor County Regional Planning Commission, and other regional, state, federal and private entities involved in land use planning activities.

At the state and federal levels, the Plan can be used to justify and prioritize the use of federal funds for community development, transportation improvements, natural resource protection and management, and other investments. In addition, Act 250 and Section 248 require that developers show that projects conform to local and regional plans and due consideration is given to the local and regional plans, respectively.

At the regional level, the Regional Planning Commission can review the Town Plan for compliance with the requirements of Act 200. Act 200 approval makes the Town eligible to apply for implementation funding from the State in the form of Municipal Planning Grants.

At the local level, the Town may take some of the following actions to implement the goals of this Plan:

1. Update zoning bylaws and subdivision regulations so that they are based on the goals, policies, and recommendations outlined in the Town Plan.
2. Refer to the Town Plan when planning additions and improvements to local infrastructure such as local roads and public utilities. Such additions or improvements should be used to plan for appropriate growth and development.
3. Work with public and private entities to help them design development or resource management plans in ways that will further the goals of this Plan.
4. Work with area land trusts to develop a plan for conservation of important resource lands.

### ***B. Relationship to Local and Regional Plans***

In order for the Town of Baltimore to carry out its land use planning goals, the Town must evaluate the Town Plan in relation to plans of neighboring towns and the region. Baltimore is bordered by the towns of Cavendish, Weathersfield, and Chester, and meets at the southeast corner with northwest corner of the town of Springfield. Baltimore is located in the center of the Southern Windsor County Regional Planning Commission's 10-town region, is served by the District 2 Environmental Commission, and is located in Vermont Agency of Transportation District 2.

#### ***Neighboring Towns***

Baltimore is surrounded by towns, which are faced with varying degrees of development pressure. All of the towns surrounding Baltimore have town plans, and all have zoning bylaws and subdivision regulations with the exception of the town of Cavendish. A brief analysis of the existing and future land uses for each of these towns along their border with Baltimore is included below.

#### ***Weathersfield***

Baltimore shares its eastern border with the town of Weathersfield. Future land uses include ridgeline/steep slopes (along Hawks Mountain), agricultural, and forest/wildlife habitat. Future land uses along the border in Weathersfield include rural and open/agriculture. Based on these designations the uses appear to be consistent.

#### ***Cavendish***

Baltimore shares its northern border with the town of Cavendish. Baltimore's future land use along the border is ridgeline/steep slopes. Future land uses along the border in Cavendish include conservation and forest. Based on these designations the uses appear to be consistent.

#### ***Chester***

Baltimore shares its southern border with the town of Chester. Future land uses in Baltimore along the border include agricultural and forest/wildlife habitat. Future land uses along the border in Chester include rural and forest/recreational/low-density. Based on these designations the uses appear to be consistent.

### ***Southern Windsor County Region***

The Southern Windsor County Regional Plan provides broad guidelines for planning, coordination and review of the natural, cultural, social and economic features of the Southern Windsor County region. The 2014 Southern Windsor County Regional Plan, which also includes the Regional Transportation Plan, are companion documents to the Baltimore Town Plan, providing a broader framework and context for local planning efforts. The Town Plan should support and complement the land use and development goals of these regional planning documents.

The Future Land Use map of the 2014 Regional Plan shows much of land with access to the main roads in the town as being "Rural." Rural areas, in the Regional Plan, are defined as follows:

*"These areas are rural in character and are generally valued for environmental and recreational uses as well as for the primary purpose as a working landscape, which includes agricultural, forestry and earth extraction uses. These working landscape activities contribute to the economy by providing jobs in the natural resource sector as well as attracting tourists who want to take advantage of the recreational opportunities."*

The ridgeline of Hawk's Mountain is designated as conservation land, and the land between Hawk's and the Rural area is identified as "Forest." These land use designations are all compatible with those in Baltimore's Future Land Use map.

*The Baltimore Planning Commission would like to thank the participants in the survey of 2015 for their input, time, and devotion to the community.*



# Future Land Use Map

## Baltimore Town Plan 2016 - Effective Date: DRAFT

- Building
- Future Land Use
  - Agriculture
  - Forest/ Wildlife Habitat
  - Residential
  - Ridgeline/ Steep Slopes
  - Scenic Views
- ~ VT State Highway
- ~ Class 2 & 3 Town Highway
- - - Class 4 Town Highway
- - - Legal Trail
- Private Road
- ~ Rivers and Streams
- ~ Lakes and Ponds
- ~ Town Boundary

**DRAFT**

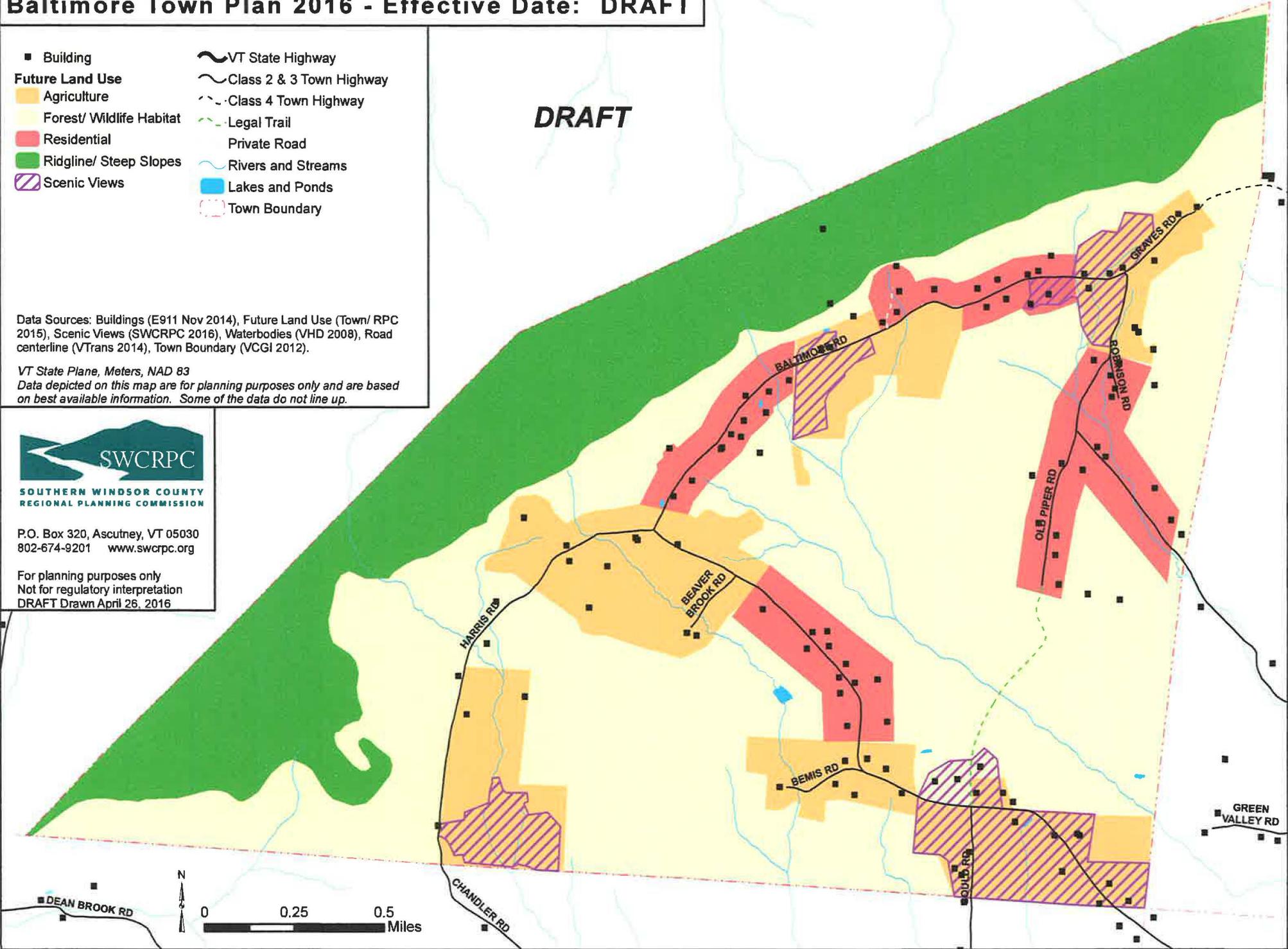
Data Sources: Buildings (E911 Nov 2014), Future Land Use (Town/ RPC 2015), Scenic Views (SWCRPC 2016), Waterbodies (VHD 2008), Road centerline (VTTrans 2014), Town Boundary (VCGI 2012).

VT State Plane, Meters, NAD 83  
 Data depicted on this map are for planning purposes only and are based on best available information. Some of the data do not line up.



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# Natural Resources Map

## Baltimore Town Plan 2015 - Effective Date: DRAFT

■ Building	~ Rivers and Streams	~ VT State Highway
▲ Hill/ Mountain Summit	☉ Lakes and Ponds	~ Class 2 & 3 Town Highway
~ 100ft Contour Line	■ Floodplain (Town defined)	
■ Prime Agricultural Soils	☉ Wetland	
■ Agricultural Soils of Statewide Importance	■ Conserved Lands	
☉ Deer Wintering Area	☐ Town Boundary	

Notes: The town does not have any FEMA defined Floodway or Floodway Fringe (Floodplain), River Corridor Area, Groundwater Protection Area, Surface Water Protection Area, or Rare, Threatened and Endangered Species.

This is not the official map for regulatory flood hazards.

Data Sources: Building (E911 Nov 2014), Threatened and Endangered Species (ANR 2015), Wetlands (VSWI, ANR 2010), Floodway and Floodplain (FEMA 2008 and Town - see note), River Corridor (ANR 1/2/2015), Groundwater Protection Area (ANR 2011), Surface Water Protection Area (ANR 2010), Agricultural Soils (NRCS 2011), Conserved Lands (ANR 2012), Waterbodies (VHD 2008), Contours (20ft, USGS/VCGI 2012), Hill/Mountain Summit (Unknown source), Road centerline (VTrans 2014), Town Boundary (VCGI 2012).

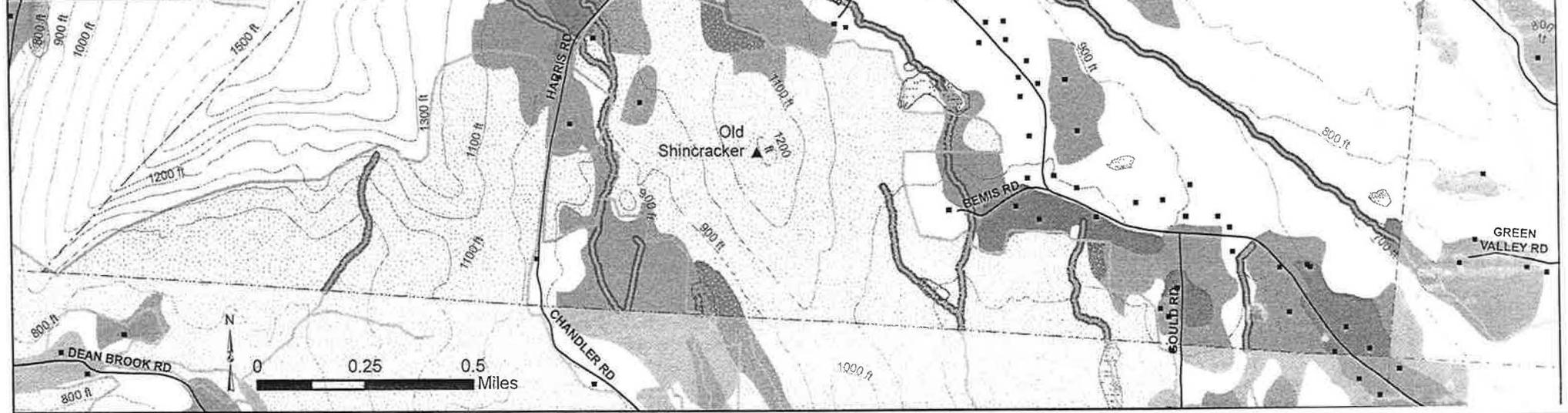
This map shows the town defined floodplain as 50ft buffer from streams in the VT Hydrographic Dataset. Some town maps show different stream locations. VT State Plane, Meters, NAD 83  
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# Current Land Use and Facilities Map

## Baltimore Town Plan 2015 - Effective Date: DRAFT

- ☒ Town Office
- ☐ Residential
- Camp
- ◆ Farm
- Commercial
- Other
- ✚ Cemetery
- ▲ Hill/ Mountain Summit
- ~ VT State Highway
- ~ Class 2 & 3 Town Highway
- ~ Class 4 Town Highway
- ~ Legal Trail
- ~ Private Road
- ~ Rivers and Streams
- Lakes and Ponds
- Conserved Lands
- Town Boundary

Notes: There are no transmission lines, telecommunication tower or state highways in town.

Data Sources: Buildings (E911 July 2015 and Town/RPC 2015), Cemeteries (Town/ RPC 2015), Transmission Lines (VCGI 2003 and RPC 2013), Telecommunications Towers (Natural Resources Board 2007 and RPC 2015), Conserved Lands (ANR 2012), Waterbodies (VHD 2008), Hill/Mountain Summit (Unknown source), Road centerline (VTTrans 2014), Town Boundary (VCGI 2012), Aerial (NAIP 2014).

VT State Plane, Meters, NAD 83  
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# Transportation Map

## Baltimore Town Plan 2015 - Effective Date: DRAFT

-  Culvert
-  VT State Highway
-  Class 2 Town Highway
-  Class 3 Town Highway
-  Class 4 Town Highway
-  Legal Trail
-  Private Road
-  Rivers and Streams
-  Lakes and Ponds

Notes: The town does not have any state highways, railroad, transit routes or bridges.

Data Sources: Culverts (RPC 2014), Railroad (VTrans 2014), Road centerline (VTrans 2014), Town Boundary (VCGI 2012).

VT State Plane, Meters, NAD 83  
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