

Cabot Town Plan

Adopted June 22, 2012



Cabot Town Plan 2012

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

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. Purpose of the Plan

A Town Plan identifies goals and strategies for maintaining, improving, and developing a livable community. Although Cabot is not required to adopt a Town Plan, doing so affords it a voice in the way the town grows and develops. An approved Town Plan enables the citizens of Cabot to have a legal say over both private and state land use decisions in the town. State statutes grant the plan great weight in determining whether development projects subject to Act 250 are approved, and the conditions applied to approval.

If a town chooses to plan, it must do so within the framework established by State legislation, which sets standards for the way municipal plans are to be developed, reviewed and adopted. An up-to-date plan is required as a basis for any local land use regulations. Cabot's last Town Plan was adopted in 2003.

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

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

B. Public participation

The Planning Commission recognizes the importance of public participation in the planning process. To this end, the Planning Commission conducted a Town-wide survey at the beginning of the planning process, which was available to Town residents online and in print from June 1 to June 30, 2010. The survey sought to gather opinions on the value of various resources and qualities of Cabot, such as small town character and natural features, historic buildings, and recreational facilities. It was also the first step in identifying the need for improvement in various areas, from Town facilities and services to conservation of resources.

Another major outreach effort was a public visioning session held on September 13, 2010, designed to both develop a vision for the future of Cabot and help prioritize the issues that would be addressed in the Town Plan. About 40 Cabot residents attended the visioning session held at the Willey Building, which was facilitated by a community resource specialist from the University of Vermont extension office.

In February of 2011, a second survey was prepared and mailed to over 30 farming operations in Town, to try to get better insight into agricultural practices in Town.

Summaries of both surveys and a detailed description of the Visioning meeting program are included in Appendix A.

Public work sessions were scheduled throughout 2010 and early 2011 on every section of the Town Plan, and residents were kept apprised of progress through articles in the monthly *Cabot Chronicle*. Residents who provided an email contact to the Planning Commission were also notified by email of all upcoming work sessions.

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

VISION

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

The thoughtful placement of housing, commercial, civic, and recreational spaces in Cabot will strengthen and preserve an active village center, maintain a healthy working landscape, and best steward our natural resources.

The many historic features of the village center serve as a focus point for Cabot's identity, and include our school, library, church, and "main street" district.

Development will be focused in and around the village center, which will be well served by local facilities, services and infrastructure. Development outside the village center will respect and conserve important agricultural lands and natural resources.

C. Historic Overview

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

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

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

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

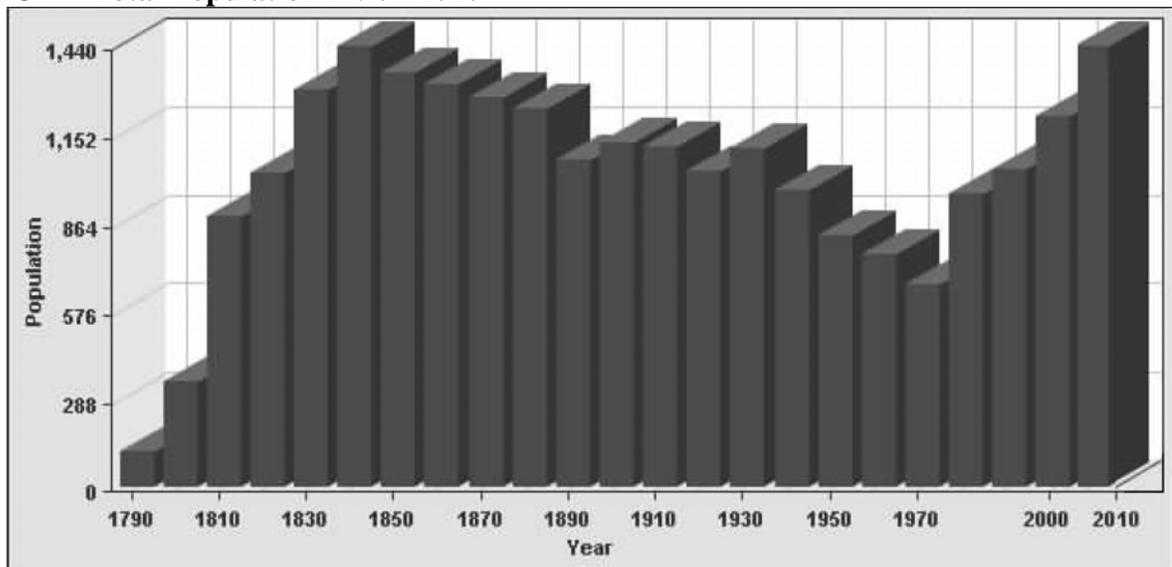
Farm crops at that time included wheat, flax, hay and apple cider. Sheep were among the livestock raised on the newly cleared land in Town, and a large woolen mill was built about 1825 in Lower Cabot. In 1833 a woolen carding mill was built in the upper village which continued in business for 44 years.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

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

Between 1850 and 1880 the demand for wool declined, while the construction of railroads opened up new markets for dairy products and lumber. Apples and maple sugar were also important crops in the last quarter of the 19th century. Butter production increased rapidly during this period, to nearly 160,000 pounds in 1880, and cows began to outnumber sheep on most Cabot farms. Agricultural statistics published at the beginning of the 20th century indicate that Cabot had 675 horses and colts, 3500 cows, 2000 other cattle, and 500 sheep. There were also four lumber mills, and about equal amounts of land were described as "tillable" and "in forestry."

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

CABOT – Total Population 1790 - 2010



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

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

this enterprise, which managed to weather the Great Depression of the 1930s, has provided a convenient outlet for Cabot dairy farmers and a place of employment for many other residents to this day.

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D. Community Snapshot

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

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

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

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

Cabot is approaching the population level that existed during its agricultural heyday of the mid-19th century; the occupation and economic livelihood of its residents are quite different from that time.

According to the American Community Survey 5-year estimates released in 2010, the most prominent occupations in Cabot are educational, health care, and social services (30.4%), construction (14.2%), manufacturing (10.3%), and professional, scientific, management, and administrative services (9.4%). Agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting, and mining occupations comprise 7.2%.

**Table I-1
Employment Status in Cabot, 2009**

	Number	Percent
Employed civilian population 16 years and over	671	100.0%
INDUSTRY		
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	48	7.2%
Construction	95	14.2%
Manufacturing	69	10.3%
Wholesale Trade	10	1.5%
Retail Trade	49	7.3%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	17	2.5%
Information	23	3.4%
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	13	1.9%
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	63	9.4%
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	204	30.4%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	22	3.3%
Other services, except public administration	21	3.1%
Public administration	37	5.5%

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

Although these statistics point to the fact that most residents in Cabot earn their primary income in occupations and industries other than agriculture or forestry, Cabot is nonetheless characterized by its rural and forested areas, and has a population density of only 32.53 persons per square mile (as compared to an overall population density in Vermont of 65.82 persons per square mile). An important indicator of the way land is used in Cabot is the “Current Use” program. In 2010, a total of 13,087 acres of land in Cabot was in this program, representing about 53% of the total land area in town. In addition, 2,109 acres of farmland and open space are permanently conserved through easements and public ownership. So, while only a small percentage of residents are officially classified in the federal census as having farming or forestry occupations, farming and forest management is a pervasive use that defines the character of the Town.

E. Sustainability

Sustainability was a common refrain at the Town-wide visioning session held in Cabot in September 2010. Residents are looking for ways to move forward on the issues of land use, energy production and consumption, and economic development that will be environmentally and economically sustainable well into the future. The following goal of sustainability is was established in Executive Order 13514, “Federal Leadership in Environmental, Energy, and Economic Performance”, which was signed by in 2009:

“To create and maintain conditions under which humans and nature can exist in productive harmony, that permit fulfilling the social, economic, and other requirements of present and future generations.”

Planning for a sustainable future in a time of global climate change is a daunting task: competition, volatility, and uncertainty are factors likely to make long-term planning difficult and costly. The October 2007 Report to the Governor’s Commission on Climate Change notes:

...Our Ability to “keep Vermont, Vermont” is at grave risk. Accordingly, we all – individual citizens, businesses, institutions, and government alike – bear a responsibility to reduce our greenhouse gas contributions to our warming planet.

Among the goals for the 2011 Town Plan update are to acknowledge global climate change as a factor that will impact the cost and quality of life for Cabot residents, recognize our responsibility to consider community, environmental and economic sustainability (including greenhouse gas emission reductions) in the plan, and to clarify local opportunities – goals and plans of action – to mitigate the causes and effects of climate change, however small, through the plan.

F. Compatibility with the Region

According to Vermont statute, a municipal plan is considered to be “compatible” with the plans of its neighboring towns and the region if it “will not significantly reduce the desired effect” of those plans. Cabot, located in Washington County, is served by the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission, which has developed and adopted the *Central Vermont Regional Plan* in 2008.

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

The proposals contained in the 2011 Cabot Town Plan will not reduce the desired effect of the plans of the region or of neighboring Towns. In several instances the Town Plan notes areas in which Cabot has worked or intends to work with other communities or the region

towards goals regarding water quality, transportation, educational facilities, housing and food system development.

II. NATURAL HERITAGE

A. Introduction

Natural heritage refers to all the natural resources Cabot residents and visitors value, including forests, clean waters, clean air, healthy wildlife populations, rare species, significant natural communities¹, scenic vistas, and a working landscape – all of which provide us the opportunity to hike, fish, trap, bird watch, and work the land in a sustainable manner.

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

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

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

B. Existing Conditions

Geology – Topography

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

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

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

The highest point in Cabot is Danville Hill (2246 feet), followed by Joe's Hill (2198 feet), Burbank Hill (1980 feet) and Thistle Hill (1909 feet). The lowest part of town is 880 feet at the point where the Winooski River exits the town at the Marshfield border. Most of Cabot lies within the Winooski River drainage basin, and Coits Pond is considered to be the headwaters of the Winooski. A small portion of the eastern section of town drains to Joe's Pond, a part of the Connecticut River drainage basin.

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

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

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

NRCS has classified Vermont's soils into twelve categories, called Agricultural Value Groups, according to their limitations, management requirements, and potential for crop production. Soil map units in Group 1 have the most potential for crop production, while units in Groups 11 and 12 have the least potential. Soils in Groups 1 and 3 are rated prime, and those in Groups 2 and 4-7 are rated as statewide important. Designations of prime and statewide important soils are used both in a regulatory context (i.e., as a potential trigger for Vermont's statewide land use law, Act 250, criterion 9(b), and as a key criteria in determining which farmland should be permanently protected. There are 725 acres of prime agricultural soils and 6757 acres of statewide soils in Cabot, representing about 30% of the town's total land area.

NRCS has rated most soils in Cabot for their forest productivity. Given the desire of the Town to conserve forest land, soils with good forestry potential should be considered in development proposals. However, NRCS ratings only reflect physical and chemical compositions of the soils and do not consider location, current land use, parcel size or other

relevant factors. A geographic information system (GIS) study could include other criteria for determining the conservation potential of important forest land in the Town such as potential natural community and erosion potential. When prime forest lands are thus identified, the Town could take steps to ensure the land remains productive. If large parcels of forest are fragmented through subdivision, the natural and economic value of the forest decreases.

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

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

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

Climate

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

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

Global climate change predictions and scientific models suggest temperature changes in the next 50-100 years, an increase as high as 5 to 9 degrees Fahrenheit. Northeast average annual temperature has increased by 2 degrees Fahrenheit since 1970. Such an increase would reduce the number of months with average low temperatures below freezing from the current six to four, and increase the number of months with average highs above 80 degrees from two to three or four.

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

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

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

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

Air Quality

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

Illegal residential burning of trash, including agricultural plastics, can be a significant source of toxic air pollutants and exposure in any part of town, but especially in higher density

areas, and in areas where temperature inversions occur. Young children and the elderly can be particularly sensitive to air pollutants, including particulates and airborne toxic materials. In recent years, restrictions against trash burning have been enforced by the Cabot Health Officer as a public health hazard and public nuisance.

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

Hydrology

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

Lakes and Ponds

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

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

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

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

lowering of the water level, the pond is not always fishable. There is a high percentage of farmland within the watershed.

Molly's Falls Reservoir (Marshfield Reservoir): An artificial, mesotrophic lake (medium productivity and nutrient levels), rich in wildlife (including loons and migratory birds), covers about 400 acres, with a maximum depth of thirty-five feet. Its outlet and shoreline are in Cabot, with the watershed extending into Marshfield and Peacham. Ninety-eight percent of the land within its watershed is undeveloped. The reservoir is a power supply source operated by Green Mountain Power, which also owns a significant proportion of the shoreline. Warm water and cold water fishing are permitted, albeit impaired due to water level fluctuations (between one and six feet in summer and ten to twelve feet in the winter) and turbidity. The State owns some public land around the reservoir with no developed access, and the Vermont Land Trust holds easements over a tract of land to the southwest of the reservoir. There is a state boating access; gas motors and jet skis are allowed.

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

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

Several issues of concern were noted in the 2003 plan concerning Cabot's lakes and ponds, and these issues remain relevant today. They include:

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

- Rare, threatened or endangered species have been identified on all of these bodies of water. Most notably, loons are present on Molly's Falls Reservoir and Joe's Pond.
- Public access to Cabot's lakes and ponds is very limited.
- Cabot's lakes and ponds are threatened by close proximity to other bodies of water that are infested with Eurasian milfoil, a nuisance aquatic plant. Eurasian milfoil has been reported in Marshfield Reservoir. At Molly's Pond, nutrient levels are high; periphyton and plant growth have been noted adjacent to unbuffered farmland (*1990 Lake Assessment*, Vermont, Dept. of Environmental Conservation)
- Due to development density Joe's Pond is considered to be vulnerable to water quality degradation.
- Molly's Falls Reservoir has a largely undeveloped shoreline which is owned by Green Mountain Power Corporation. In the future, there may be development pressures on the shoreline that have not been anticipated or assessed.

Wetlands

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

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

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

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

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

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

Rivers and Streams

Cabot has over 40 miles of upland streams and rivers. Most streams are small but some of the larger streams support recreational trout fishing. Little information is available on upland streams in Cabot. Some water quality information is available on the Winooski River. Until recently the Winooski was affected by failed and discharging septic systems and occasional straight pipes to the river in the village. With the construction of a community wastewater treatment facility, water quality should improve significantly for recreational uses such as fishing and swimming. Vegetative buffer strips along farmland adjacent to the river are sparse or non-existent.

In 2006, the Cabot Conservation Committee completed a geomorphic assessment of the main stem of the Winooski River and a few tributaries with funding obtained through the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources. A River Corridor Management Plan was developed to identify and prioritize areas of significant stream bank instability. Many problem areas were identified, particularly along the main stem of the Winooski River. Non-vegetated, eroding stream banks degrade fish habitat, increase water temperature, and add excessive silt and nutrients that degrade water quality. The towns of Cabot, Marshfield, and Plainfield have formed the Winooski Headwaters Community Project, and with funding and assistance from various groups, including Cabot Creamery, Friends of the Winooski, and the Winooski Natural Resources Conservation District, several restoration projects are underway. Several riverfront properties have been assessed for stream bank stabilization projects, and four sites

have undergone extensive tree plantings to stabilize banks. The Project has also continues to do extensive water quality monitoring for physical, chemical, and bacteriological parameters to assess water quality health. Effort to improve rivers and streams is a long-term project that requires adequate funding for research, technical studies, and project implementation; landowner education and cooperation; and committed volunteers. The geomorphic assessment work and the formation of the Winooski Headwaters Community Project are the foundation for moving forward and improving river and stream water quality and habitat for fish and wildlife.

Floodplains, Flood Hazards and Fluvial Erosion

Floodplains are low lying areas of land adjacent to a streams and rivers that are frequently inundated by water. While these places serve important ecological functions, including floodwater storage, sediment trapping, nutrient filtering and aquifer recharge, they can be hazardous locations for people and property. Flooding (and flood related events), arising from a variety of causes, including heavy rain, melting snow, ice jams, poor drainage and dam breaks, is the most frequent, damaging and costly type of natural disaster experienced in the State and Region. In fact, over the last 50 years flood recovery costs have averaged \$14 million per year (not adjusted for inflation) statewide. Unfortunately, it appears that Vermont can anticipate more frequent flooding occurrences in the years ahead as climate change models predict wetter summers with more intense rainfall events.

High water causes damage in two distinct, but related, ways. *Inundation* can fill structures with water and cause property damage and drowning. It is a great concern for those living in or near Flood Hazard Zones (the area inundated by water during a flood with a statistical probability of occurring once every 100 years – i.e., the “One Hundred Year Flood”). Surprisingly, however, erosion from flash flooding (i.e. *fluvial erosion*) actually causes greater damage. Within the area of a stream or river’s active channel movement, known as the Fluvial Erosion Hazard Zone (or FEH), bank failures and changes in river channel courses during floods can undermine buildings, roads, farm fields, and utility infrastructure.

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

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

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

Washington County recently underwent a FEMA-directed “map modernization process” and the Town was provided with draft updated digital maps of Cabot’s Flood Hazard Zones. (Note: Finalized maps for Washington County are expected in late 2012 or early 2013.) Because the new maps use ortho-photographs as a base, they may be more accurate and easier to interpret. In 2009, the Cabot Selectboard adopted a Flood Hazard Ordinance consistent with federal standards, and has since readopted the ordinance twice as an interim bylaw.

While the FEMA Flood Hazard Zones are important maps for town planning and for mortgage lenders in deciding which properties need flood insurance protection, they do not address fluvial erosion hazards. Accordingly, the Department of Environmental Conservation and many Regional Planning Commissions have been busy conducting fluvial erosion hazard assessments for many river and stream segments statewide. Cabot has been a beneficiary of this effort. Using field surveys and GIS technology, CVRPC has completed (or will soon complete) erosion hazard maps for sections of the main stem of the Winooski River. Cabot can use this information to help avoid future life and property damage by allowing rivers and streams the area they need to maintain or re-establish their natural “equilibrium” (or stability) thereby avoiding the need for costly, and potentially environmentally damaging stream channelization and bank stabilization measures. While Flood Hazard and Fluvial Erosion Hazard (FEH) Zones typically have large areas of coincidence, they are seldom, if ever, identical.

Even if Cabot were to restrict new development from flood hazard and FEH zones, it would not solve every problem. Historically, the Town has also witnessed damage from upland streams that have not been mapped by either of the above programs. Mountainous or hilly areas tend to have narrow, confined channels through which flood water move rapidly and travel downstream more quickly than in flat areas. Even though a building is not located in a valley where a rising river could overflow its banks and inundate the structure, it is not necessarily safe from flood damage. Cabot’s zoning regulations have not historically identified upland stream corridors as areas needing protective setbacks for development. That may need to change. By establishing setbacks in its zoning regulations, the Town can prevent people from building structures too close to rivers, such that the structures could be flooded or swept away by strong currents in a storm.

Finally, it is important to consider how land use within a watershed impacts flooding. Impervious surfaces, such as roads, driveways, parking areas and buildings prevent water from soaking into the ground, increasing runoff and erosion potential. Any disturbance of the soil or any change in topography may increase erosion potential. Building development and soil tillage are two primary causes of soil disturbance in Cabot. Logging is another. Excessive logging can leave hillsides open to erosion, removing the forest canopy that would have absorbed and retained much of the water. Improperly constructed logging roads may lead to increased erosion, particularly on poorly drained soils. Private driveway culverts are often undersized, causing washouts and road damage during intense storms.

Driveways which are improperly graded and ditched can direct water onto the main road, increasing highway maintenance costs. Improper maintenance of Town roads and roadway culverts can lead to washouts. Soil and vegetation allowed to build up on the edges of roads will prevent water from running into ditches. Clogged culverts restrict water flow. Inadequate municipal infrastructure can result in problems such as undersized (or too few) culverts, inadequate ditches, or the lack of headwalls on culverts.

Land Use History

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

Wildlife Resources

Wildlife Natural Heritage Elements

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

Conserving our natural communities is one way to ensure that we retain most of our native wildlife species. But conserving natural communities in isolation is not enough. To ensure

the proper functioning of these communities and to provide habitat for wide-ranging and reclusive species, we must conserve and foster the stewardship of larger landscapes and areas of undeveloped land, with all of their component species, habitats, and natural communities.

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

Landscape Level: Contiguous Forests and Connecting Land

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

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

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

Connecting habitat is important because it does the following:

- Allows animals to move freely across their range;
- Allows plants and animals to colonize new habitat as climate change, succession, or other ecological processes force them to migrate;
- Reduces the risk of population isolation and provides for the exchange of genetic information among populations;
- Allows seasonal movements (migrations) to essential range or habitat; and
- Allows young adult animals to access new range.

Community Level: Natural Communities

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

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

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

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

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

The Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department recommends that town conservation planning processes consider the following additional species level elements because they are not

necessarily protected or properly represented through either landscape level or natural community level conservation.

- Rare, threatened and endangered species – Rare species such as the loon, which is found in Cabot, are important conservation challenges of our time and will serve as indicators of whether we can create sustainable economies and lifestyles, locally and beyond.
- Deer Winter Habitat – Deer yards can vary in size from a few acres to hundreds of acres, consisting of mature or maturing softwood cover that provides protection from deep snow, cold temperatures, and wind. A variety of other wildlife species also benefit from dense softwood stands, including snowshoe hare, coyote, fox, fisher, bobcats, crows, ravens, and many others. Logging can be either beneficial or detrimental to the habitat depending on harvest method, and education on management practices is important. Cabot’s mapped deer yards can be found on Map 2a. About 24% of Cabot’s land area is considered deer winter habitat.
- Mast Stands – The seeds of shrubs and trees serve as important wildlife food for numerous species including mammals, birds, amphibians and reptiles. Beech and oak stands are absolutely essential for the survival of black bears in Vermont. Mapping significant mast stands and encouraging their protection through education will protect wildlife diversity.
- Important Turtle Habitats – Turtles are a long-lived group of animals that face many threats from human activities. Seven species occur in Vermont and nearly all spend most of their time in aquatic environments. The greatest challenge facing turtles is their ability to produce young by finding suitable nesting habitat where young hatchlings safely make it to an aquatic environment.
- Grassland and Bird Habitat – There are several birds, including rare and endangered species that rely on grassland habitat for their survival in Vermont. Populations of grassland birds have declined due to loss of habitat. Although Cabot has limited grassland habitat that would allow for reproductive success, there are management opportunities, such as mowing practices that could increase the amount of grassland habitat.
- Early Successional Forest and Shrub Habitat – Many species of wildlife require early successional forest and shrub habitat, including ruffed grouse, American woodcock, New England cottontail rabbit, and songbirds such as the golden-winged warbler. It appears that Cabot and the Northern Piedmont region of the state as a whole have an adequate amount of this habitat type.

Wildlife Data for Cabot

Species-level data for Cabot is documented to various degrees through state and regional surveys, such as the Breeding Bird Atlas, Small Mammal Atlas, Herptile Atlas (reptiles and amphibians) as well as harvest data from hunting which is compiled by the Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife. Harvest data from hunting shows that the following species are regularly harvested in relatively small numbers: black bear, bobcat, fisher, otter, mink, raccoon, muskrat, skunk, weasel, coyote, red fox, and beaver. Turkey hunting became legal in Cabot in 1997, and the harvest ranged from a low of one in 1997 to a high of 90 in 2008. In 2008, Cabot had the fifth highest total of turkey for the spring hunting season. Deer harvest over the last 20 years has totaled 701 bucks and 1580 total deer. There are 5,400 acres mapped as deeryard in Cabot, totaling 24% of Cabot's land area. Although there have been no legal harvests of moose in Cabot, moose are abundant near the periphery of town, which is more forested and less developed than the center of town. Ten incidental mortality reports for moose were filed from 1997-2008 in the vicinity of Route 2, most of which were road kills. Moose have been legally harvested in adjacent towns, including Woodbury, Walden, Marshfield, and Peacham. Fish & Wildlife's Natural Heritage Program maintains information on rare and endangered plants and animals. Cabot has five mapped vernal pools – small temporary wetlands typically found in upland forests over a relatively impermeable substrate layer.

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

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

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

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

C. Planning and Land Use Considerations

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

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

Direct Loss of Diversity

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

Destruction of Habitat

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

Habitat Fragmentation

One consequence of human settlement of the landscape is fragmentation of habitat into smaller and smaller areas. The creation of gaps in the forest and barriers to wildlife

movement such as housing and commercial development, roads, and power lines results in the direct loss or inaccessibility of important habitat. The reduction in size of forest patches can render the forests and other habitats unsuitable for certain species of native plants and animals. The smaller the habitat patch, the smaller the number of species that can occupy the habitat. Fragmentation of a forested area affects species composition, favoring species like raccoons that are more tolerant of human activities and more general in their habitat requirements. Furthermore, these tolerant species may out-compete native species for the same resources, like food, leading to further native species decline. Fragmentation disrupts connections between habitats that are essential for movement, and ultimately the survival, of many species of large, wide-ranging carnivores such as black bears, bobcats, and fishers.

Disruption of Movement, Migration, and Behavior

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

Introduction of Invasive Species

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

Degradation of Water Quality and Aquatic Habitat

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

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

An ammonia spill and discharge at the Cabot Creamery in 2005 resulted in a complete fish kill (all species/life stages) for 5.5 miles downstream. Much of the fishery has now recovered.

Loss of Public Appreciation for the Natural Environment

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

D. Goals and Implementation Strategies

Goal	Implementation Strategy	Key Implementer(s)	Future Measures of Progress
<p>II.1 Conserve and provide stewardship for existing patches of forest and connecting habitat (corridors) and minimize subdivision and parcelization of this habitat.</p>	<p>II.1 (a) Develop a map of contiguous forest patches in Cabot and their potential connecting habitat.</p> <p>II.1 (b) Identify benchmark acreage of contiguous forest in consultation with VT Agency of Natural Resources and other conservation organizations.</p> <p>II.1 (c) Minimize the subdivision of large forested areas by encouraging cluster development and tools such as Planned Unit Developments (PUD).</p> <p>II.1 (d) Provide landowner education on the importance of contiguous forests and connecting habitat and promote voluntary methods to protect these.</p> <p>II.1 (e) Consider establishment of a <i>conservation reserve fund</i> for acquisition and perpetual protection of critical agricultural, forest and open land, including wildlife migration corridors, wetlands, and riparian buffers. Consider tax incentives for conservation easements.</p>	<p>Conservation Committee</p> <p>Conservation Committee</p> <p>Planning Commission</p> <p>Conservation Committee / Planning Commission</p> <p>Conservation Committee / Planning Commission</p>	<p>Map created</p> <p>Benchmarks identified</p> <p>Subdivision regulations in place and increased use of cluster development</p> <p>Education materials developed and distributed</p> <p>Conservation fund proposal developed</p>
<p>II.2 Encourage</p>	<p>II.2 (a) Conduct a natural</p>	<p>Conservation</p>	<p>Natural</p>

Goal	Implementation Strategy	Key Implementer(s)	Future Measures of Progress
<p>the conservation and/or proper stewardship of significant natural communities and species including deer wintering areas, mast stands, turtle nesting sites, and grass lands and other critical wildlife habitat.</p>	<p>community mapping project and map areas with extensive invasive plant species.</p> <p>II.2 (b) Develop a significant natural community overlay district and provisions in the zoning regulations that will conserve them.</p> <p>II.2 (c) Provide public and landowner education on significant natural communities.</p>	<p>Committee/Naturalist</p> <p>Planning Commission</p> <p>Conservation Committee / Planning Commission</p>	<p>Community Map developed</p> <p>Overlay district identified and zoning regulation adopted</p> <p>Education materials produced distributed</p>
<p>II.3 Reduce damage from future flooding events; prevent changes to the landscape which could increase hazardous flooding.</p>	<p>II.3 (a) Maintain Cabot’s Flood Hazard Ordinance, consistent with the National Flood Insurance Program. Consider zoning regulations more restrictive than federal flood insurance program eligibility requirements.</p> <p>II.3 (b) Complete mapping of Cabot’s fluvial erosion hazard (FEH) risk areas. Develop a unified flood hazard overlay district that incorporates FEH and NFIP maps.</p> <p>II.3 (c) Maintain development set back distances (at least 50 feet) from smaller streams (those for which an FEH zone has not been mapped) to minimize the potential for flash flood damage.</p>	<p>Planning Commission/ Selectboard</p> <p>Planning Commission with ANR and CVRPC assistance</p> <p>Planning Commission</p>	<p>Flood Hazard Ordinance maintained and enhanced</p> <p>Map and overlay district created.</p> <p>Setbacks developed.</p>
<p>II.4 Prevent degradation of water resources</p>	<p>II.4 (a) Implement zoning and voluntary conservation measures that will protect</p>	<p>Planning Commission/ Conservation</p>	<p>Measures implemented</p>

Goal	Implementation Strategy	Key Implementer(s)	Future Measures of Progress
<p>and their associated habitats, and improve water quality.</p>	<p>Marshfield Reservoir from impacts of shoreline development.</p> <p>II.4 (b) Enhance riparian buffers and stream bank stabilization along the Winooski River and its major tributaries through landowner cooperation and education using the River Corridor Management Plan and other resources.</p> <p>II.4 (c) Enhance water quality and habitat in the Winooski River system by continuing to be an active participant in the Winooski Headwaters Community Project.</p>	<p>Committee</p> <p>Conservation Committee</p> <p>Conservation Committee</p>	<p>Increased miles of stream bank protection with vegetated riparian buffers</p> <p>Continued participation and projects implemented</p>

III. HISTORIC RESOURCES

A. Introduction

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

B. Existing Conditions

Properties in Cabot listed on State Register of Historic Places

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

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

Figure II-1 is a reproduction of the location map included in the State's 1979 survey. It identifies the locations of historic resources in Cabot by numbers next to circled structures. The two historic districts are identified by shading on the map. The list of resources in the subsection entitled "Locally Identified Historically Significant Buildings and Sites" (below) are labeled with the corresponding number assigned it in the State survey. The inventory forms for all structures and sites in the State survey are available on disk at the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation (the "Division").

It is noted that a comprehensive inventory of Cabot's historic resources has not been undertaken in over 30 years, so it is possible that some of the resources described in the state survey are no longer extant.

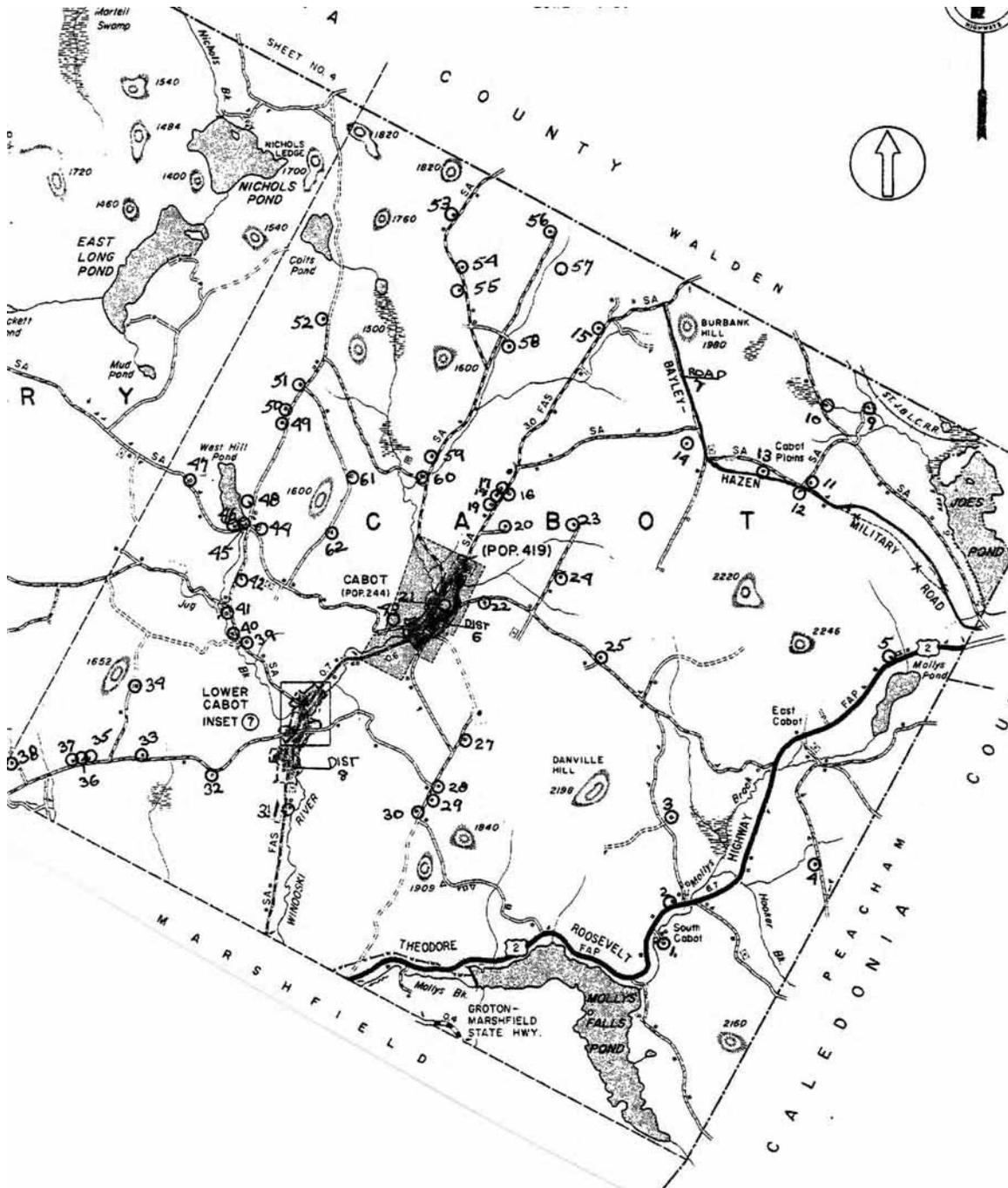


Figure III-1
 Historic Resources identified in
 1979 Historic Sites and Structures Survey
 Prepared by
 Vermont Division for Historic Preservation

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

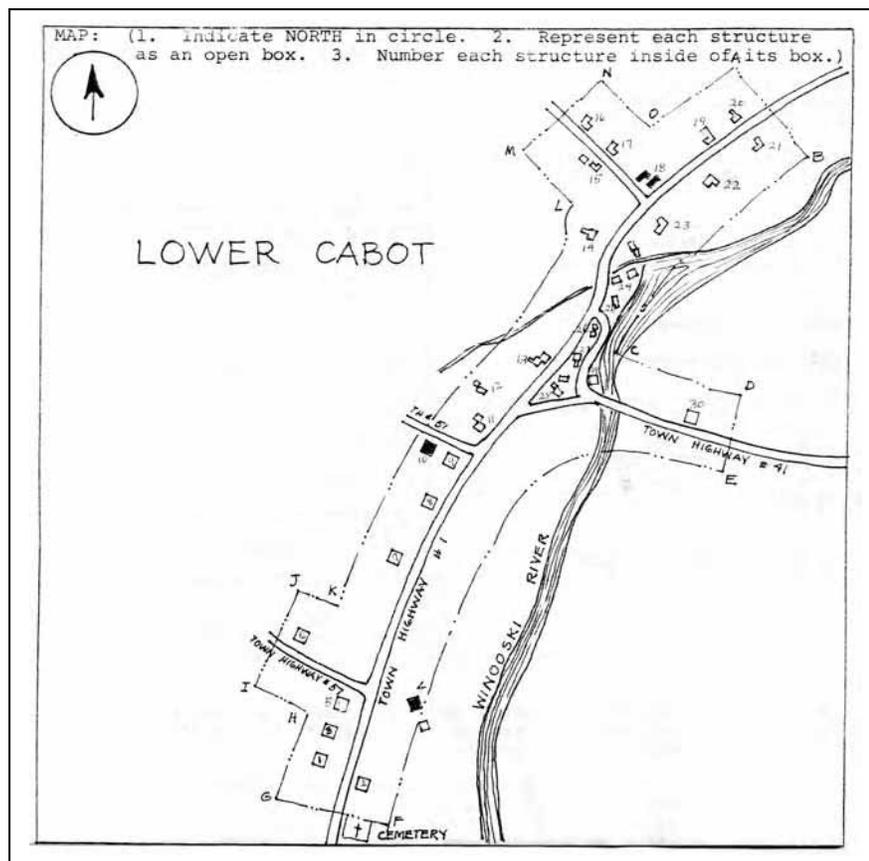
Lower Cabot Historic District

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

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

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

Figure III-2
Lower Cabot Historic District
As depicted on 1979 Historic Sites and Structures Survey



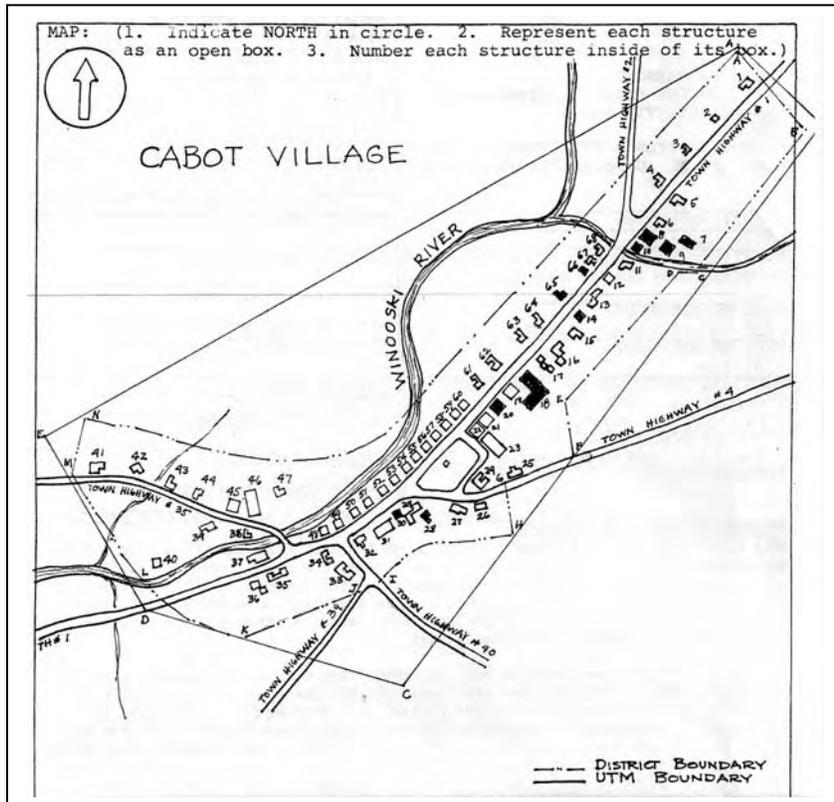
Cabot Village Historic District

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

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

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

Figure III-3
Cabot Village Historic District
As depicted on 1979 Historic Sites and Structures Survey



Locally Identified Historically Significant Buildings and Sites

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

The Hazen Road and Markers (Site No. 7)

The Bayley-Hazen Road was built in two phases, the first in 1776, financed by Colonel Jacob Bayley, from the present village of Wells River in Newbury to Cabot Plains, the second in 1779 by General Moses Hazen from Cabot Plains to Hazen's Notch in Lowell. It was intended as a supply route for American Revolutionary forces in Quebec, but later proved useful as a route for settlers. As shown on the reference map, the Bayley-Hazen Road cut through the northeastern section of Town, from Peacham north of Molly's Pond.

Seven small granite markers were placed beside the road in about 1901 by the Old Home Days Committee (precursor of the Cabot Historical Society). From south to north:

- 1) Bearing the words "Hazen Camp," it marks the probable site where General Hazen began the second phase of the road;
- 2) Near the Plains Cemetery at the junction of the roads is a marker worded simply "Hazen Road" ;
- 3) A hundred yards to the north on the western side of the road is a marker, "Smuggler's House," locating a house that was used as a smuggler's haven during the War of 1812;
- 4) A hundred yards to the north on the same side of the road a marker designates "First School" ;
- 5) A hundred feet to the north on the eastern side of the road is a marker near the site of the "Yellow House," the first frame building in the town, built around 1792. It was operated as an inn serving travelers and locals on the Bayley-Hazen Road;
- 6) One-half mile to the north on the southern side of the road, a marker reading "First Settler" marks the location of the home of Benjamin Webster, who came to Cabot with his family in 1783;
- 7) Approximately one mile to the north on a portion of the road that is now abandoned is a marker with the words "Gordon Shot," a reference to the death of a British General during the Revolutionary War, who was shot in an attempt to get his boots.

The Center Cemetery, Pound, and Markers

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

the site which is opened and replenished on every fiftieth anniversary of the Congregational Church. The most recent opening took place in 2001.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The South Cabot School Houses. Both are historic sites now in private ownership. Mid-19th century school located on a 0.1 acre parcel on Route 2 near Last Road (parcel 9003388); and 1930s school located on Ennis Road. (Sites No. 1 and 2)

Old Village School or Brimblecombe Shop. The second Cabot Village school, built in 1845 in the Greek Revival style. (Note: the first village school was on the present church site.) The building was bought by the Independent Order of Good Templars, a temperance organization, which converted it from a tenement into a meeting hall in 1898, with a paneled auditorium and stage upstairs. On the ground floor were a kitchen, cloakroom, and dining

hall. The Good Templars also introduced to the deed the proviso “no dancing in the building” which remains on the deed today. Later, the Morrill Women’s Relief Corps and the Modern Woodsmen had their meetings there. Bob Brimblecombe bought and used the building as a plumbing shop for a number of years before it was purchased by the Cabot Historical Society, which has been working to restore the building as a meeting hall and museum. (Cabot Village Historic District Site No. 21)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Cemeteries

There are eight cemeteries in Town that are historically significant. Seven are still active and maintained by the Cemetery Commissioners. They are:

Center Cemetery - Established in 1799; the town's first cemetery;

Durant Cemetery - Established in 1813 in Lower Cabot;

Cabot Village Cemetery (Elm Street) - established in 1820;

Kimball Cemetery - Established in 1814 (not maintained as a town cemetery);

West Hill Cemetery - Established in 1817;

Cabot Plains Cemetery - Established in 1825;

South Cabot Cemetery - Established in 1834;

East Cabot Cemetery - Established around 1847

(See section IX Community Facilities, Utilities and Services, for a discussion of the projects of the Cabot Historical Society)

C. Historic Preservation Statutes and Programs

Local Statute

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

State and Federal statutes

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

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

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

Village Center Designation

The purpose of Village Center Designation by the State is to recognize and encourage local efforts to revitalize Vermont's traditional village centers. Benefits include various tax credits that are designed to assist with rehabilitation and code improvements for older and historic buildings located within the designated center. Application is made to the Vermont Downtown Program. (see the Economic Development section for more information on this program)

D. Planning Considerations

Inventory

The first step in assessing and mitigating potential impacts to historic resources is to undertake a complete inventory and assessment of Cabot's historic resources. The last comprehensive inventory conducted by the State, referenced in this section, was completed over 30 years ago so it is likely that some of the resources are no longer extant or have been significantly modified over the years.

Design Guidelines

Cabot's historic buildings evoke a unique sense of place. In the areas of Cabot Village and Lower Cabot Village, the architectural features and orientation of these historic buildings provide the context for new construction, and should be a starting point for the development of design guidelines for new development in the proposed "Village Center District" (see Land Use section of Plan).

Village Center Designation

Village Center designation by the State would help forward the goal of revitalizing Cabot's downtown commercial areas while preserving Cabot's historic fabric, through the provision of financial incentives to owners of income-producing properties in the village center area.

E. Goals and Implementation Strategies

E. Goals and Implementation Strategies	Implementation Strategy	Key implementer(s)	Future Measures of Progress
<p>III.1 Provide a means to identify and interpret Cabot’s existing historic resources.</p>	<p>III.1(a) Create an up-to-date inventory of historic structures and sites in Town (including photographic documentation) using the State Register listings as a starting point.</p> <p>III.1(b) Match an E-911 address or coordinate with each site to enable GIS mapping of resources.</p>	<p>Cabot Planning Commission/ Cabot Historical Society in consultation with State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)</p> <p>Planning Commission with assistance of Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission (CVRPC)</p>	<p>Historic Resources inventory updated</p> <p>Historic resources mapped</p>
<p>III.2 Retain historic resources Town-wide that provide a physical connection to Cabot’s past and provide a unique sense of place.</p>	<p>III.2(a) Educate residents on the location and value of historic resources in Cabot.</p> <p>III.2(b) Educate owners of historic properties on weatherization and energy retrofits that can significantly reduce operating costs and energy use in historic buildings while retaining historic features.</p> <p>III.2(c) Clarify standards for site plan review of historic sites/structures contained in existing section 3.11 of Cabot’s zoning regulations.</p>	<p>Cabot Historical Society</p> <p>Ad hoc Energy Team with assistance of SHPO</p> <p>Planning Commission/ Selectboard</p>	<p>Educational programs scheduled</p> <p>Educational programs scheduled</p> <p>Site Plan standards created</p>
<p>III.3 Retain the historic character of Cabot’s downtown areas.</p>	<p>III.3(a) Investigate “Village Center” designation through the Vermont Downtown program.</p>	<p>Planning Commission/ Selectboard</p>	<p>Meeting scheduled to discuss Village Center designation</p>

IV. HOUSING and POPULATION

A. Introduction

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



B. Existing Conditions

Population and Housing Counts

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

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

	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010
Population	663	958	1,043	1,213	1,433
Total Households	195	323	365	452	570
Total Housing Units	257	449	496	634	771
Source of 1970 to 2000 data: U.S. Census Bureau – Census of Population and Housing, Summary File 1; Source of 2010 data: VT State Data Center release February 2011					

As shown in Table IV-1 above, the population from 1970 to 2010 more than doubled (116% increase), while the number of housing units tripled. The difference in the rate of growth of population vs. housing units is due partly to changes in household size during that time period, and partly due to the greater number of seasonal houses built in Cabot since 1970.

In the last 10 years, the rate of housing and population growth has been more closely aligned although the percent growth in housing units still exceeded growth in population during this period. 137 housing units were added from 2000 to 2010 representing growth of about 22%; comparatively, population increased during this period by about 18%. However, it is noted that the percent growth in number of households in Town from 2000 to 2010 increased by 26%, indicating that a higher percentage of the houses in Cabot are occupied year-round than 10 years ago.

Housing and Household Characteristics

As shown on Table IV-2, a majority of householders in Cabot in 2000 owned their home, with owner-occupied units accounting for 84.3% of all occupied housing units that year (2010 data on home-ownership is not yet available.) This percentage has remained basically unchanged since 1990. There were 71 renter-occupied housing units in 2000, representing 15.7% of all occupied housing units.

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

Cabot	1990	2000	2010
Total housing units	496	634	771
Total occupied housing units	363	452	570
Owner occupied	305	381	N.A.
Renter occupied	58	71	N.A.
Total Vacant	131	182	201
For seasonal, recreational or occasional use	84	158	N.A.
For rent	4	1	N.A.
For sale	5	5	N.A.

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

The number of housing units identified for seasonal, occasional or recreational use rose by 74 units from 1990 to 2000, from 84 to 158. In 1990, 16.9% of housing units were used seasonally; in 2000, 24.9 % of all housing units were identified as seasonal, indicating a growth trend in vacation homes in Cabot during this period.

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

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

Cabot	1990	2000	2010
Total Housing Units	496	634	771
Single-family houses	422	554	602
Apartments in multi-unit buildings	21	35	16
Mobile homes	41	38	52
Other	9	7	

Source: U.S. Census Bureau – 2000 Census of Population and Housing, Summary File 3 Tables H32 and H31, and 2005-2009 American Community Survey

There were no significant changes in the percentages of housing types in Town from 1990 to 2000, although the percentage of apartments in multi-unit buildings rose slightly during this period while the percentage of mobile homes decreased slightly. In 2000 these housing types each represented approximately 6% of the total housing stock.

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

Special needs housing

Cabot has eight affordable housing units dedicated to seniors in the Cabot Commons development on Glinka Road. These 8 units represent about 1% of the total housing unit count in Cabot in 2000. In comparison, the 2000 Census counted 35 households in Cabot with one or more people 75 years or older, representing 7.7% of all households in Cabot. As the general trend statewide is an aging population, it is expected that there will be a need for additional senior housing in the future.

Housing Demand and Affordability

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

price state-wide for this type of property. However, the median price of a mobile home with land in Cabot (for which there were three sales in 2010) was \$54,700, as compared to \$68,000 county-wide, and \$66,572 state-wide.

**Table IV-4
Property Transfers 2010**

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

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

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

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

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

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

Although 2010 data are not yet available on median monthly costs for housing, data compiled by *Vermont Housing Data* in 2000 indicates that Cabot residents who owned their home were less stressed financially than those who rented their home. The median monthly owner costs in Cabot in 2000 represented only 19.2% of household income, although median gross rents accounted for 41.9% of renters’ income that year. Housing costs are considered “affordable” if they do not exceed 30% of household income. Based on sample data from the 2000 census, 54% of renters in Cabot paid 30% or more of their income on housing costs, while 26% of homeowners spent 30% or more of their income on housing.

The rental vacancy rate for Cabot according to the 2000 census was 1.4%. The *Vermont Housing Needs Assessment Guide* notes that, in general, a rental vacancy rate is considered “healthy” when it is approximately 5 percent. A vacancy rate below that indicates that there may be a need for additional rental housing. (Data regarding rental vacancy rates in Cabot for 2010 were not available as of the preparation of this draft).

Community Perceptions

While the Cabot Community Planning Survey did not get a strong response from respondents regarding specific housing needs (see annotated survey results in Appendix A1), one theme that surfaced was a concern about property taxes. The following table illustrates both the homestead and non-residential education tax rates in Cabot for fiscal year 2011, as compared to surrounding towns.

**Table IV- 5
Education Tax Rates FY 2011**

TOWN	CLA*	HOMESTEAD PROPERTY TAX RATE	NON-RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY TAX RATE
Cabot	95.34%	1.3743	1.4160
Danville	94.81%	1.2525	1.4744
Hardwick	87.77%	1.4460	1.5381
Marshfield	82.71%	1.4183	1.6322
Peacham	99.50%	1.4200	1.3568
Walden	90.26%	1.1891	1.4957
Woodbury	101.65%	1.2754	1.3281

Source: Vermont Department of Taxes;

*The common level of appraisal (CLA) is used to equalize education taxes statewide to ensure that properties of equal value pay equal taxes. The CLA adjusts the listed value of the property to fair market value.

Housing affordability was recognized as an important issue by several respondents to the Cabot Community Planning survey, but the manner in which it should be addressed was varied. While property taxes were often cited as an impediment to affordable living, some respondents acknowledged the need for well-planned, attractive affordable housing. Also noted was the need to renovate existing structures in town for housing.

Patterns of residential development

A variety of factors, including lack of motorized vehicles, telephones, and the expense and difficulty of creating new roads, led the growing population in nineteenth century Cabot to locate housing in clusters along existing roads, close to places of commerce and community facilities.

Today, in part due to technology (e.g., cars, telecommunications) and land use regulations, new residential development tends to be more dispersed. However, if such dispersed residential growth, also known as sprawl, continues there can be trade-offs. These could include increased roads and infrastructure maintenance, increased vehicular traffic, and fragmentation of open space and wildlife habitat.

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

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

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

Housing and the Regional Plan

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

- A detailed map of Cabot showing the preferred location for future housing units, consistent with current or proposed zoning, for 80 percent of the anticipated 10 to 15 year housing demand.

- Mapping updates that identify the locations and numbers of housing units created in Cabot since 2003, the year of the previous Town Plan adoption.

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

**Table IV- 6
2008 CVRPC Housing Distribution Plan for Cabot**

New Units	2003-2004	2005-2009	2010-2014	2015-2020	Total projected (2010-2020)
Projected	--	43	23	57	80
Actual	26	50	--	--	--

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

As shown in Table IV-6, CVRPC’s projection for new housing units in Cabot for the years 2005-2009 were exceeded by 7 units, with the actual count of new housing during this period being 50 units. It is noted that a majority (approximately 86%) of these new housing units has occurred outside the central village areas. The number of housing units projected by CVRPC to be constructed in Cabot from 2010 to 2020 is 80 units. Therefore, the required Housing Distribution Plan for Cabot needs to show where 80% of these units (64) can best be accommodated in Town.

Map 3 included in Appendix B shows the locations of existing housing units in Cabot. According to the federal census, the total number of housing units in Cabot was 771 in 2010, representing an increase of 137 housing units (22%) from 2000 to 2010. However, since CVRPC’s count is based on satellite imagery and E-911 addresses, there is a slight disparity in the total number of housing units. The existing housing unit count used in CVRPC’s analysis is 754 units.

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

The three build out scenarios described in the “Town of Cabot Build Out and Village Sampling Report” prepared in March 2011 by CVRPC is shown on Maps 7a – 7c in Appendix B of this Plan. For additional discussion of the build out analysis, refer to the Land Use section of this Plan.

C. Planning Considerations for Future Housing Development

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

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

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

Sixty-five percent (65%) of the projected housing growth through 2020 (42 housing units) is projected to occur within the Low Density Residential and Agricultural District. A proposed reduction in permitted residential density coupled with a reduction in minimum lot size will enable better protection of resources in this district. A Planned Unit Development on Coits Pond Road in this district was approved by the Planning Commission in 2011, providing for 4 of the 42 projected new housing units in this district. This proposed development includes the conservation of open and forested land.

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

Since it is likely that some residents of Cabot may choose to develop new homes outside the village center area, the Planning Commission is proposing measures to make housing more affordable in these outlying areas, while protecting important agricultural and natural resources.

Directing the location of future development to existing centers served by transportation arteries and public water and wastewater facilities is known as “smart growth.” By incorporating smart growth principles into local land use regulations, Cabot can plan for a more sustainable future. See Section V Land Use for further discussion of smart growth.

D. Goals and Implementation Strategies

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

Compact development patterns:			
<p>IV.3 A greater percentage of new housing is concentrated in the downtown village area close to existing infrastructure and community facilities, to the extent practicable.</p>	<p>IV.3(a) Prepare a wastewater allocation schedule to ensure that sewer capacity will be available for balanced growth of residential, commercial and public uses, consistent with the goals of the Town Plan.</p>	<p>Selectboard in consultation with Planning Commission</p>	<p>Wastewater Allocation Plan prepared</p>

Goal	Implementation Strategy	Key implementer(s)	Future Measures of Progress
<p>IV.4 Planned residential developments will be encouraged in the areas outside the center of town, for the maximum preservation of farmland and forested areas and the most efficient use of land.</p>	<p>IV.4(a) Review provisions of the Town’s zoning regulations, including those pertaining to planned residential developments, and revise as necessary to maximize preservation of farmland and forested areas in locations outside the village core.</p>	<p>Planning Commission</p>	<p>Track the locations of new residential units as they occur to compare actual development to desired patterns of growth.</p>

V. LAND USE

A. Introduction

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

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

The Community Planning Survey undertaken in June 2010 indicated that Cabot residents highly value working farms, natural areas and historic resources and wished to protect them from adverse impacts when development occurs. (See survey results in Appendix A) According to the Vermont Council on Rural Development, the number of farms statewide has declined by a third in the last ten years, and the wood products industry has declined by 40 percent. At the same time, small farm enterprises (with sales less than \$2500 per year) have begun to proliferate. Many hope that new farm enterprises can form an economic nucleus for small towns like Cabot. The Vermont Food Venture Center in Hardwick is an incubator to serve farmers and food-related businesses. Examples like these lend hope to reviving and maintaining a working landscape in the region and in shaping a new local economy.

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

The visual beauty and charm of our community and other surrounding communities is not a luxury and cannot survive as a picture postcard or museum piece. It only survives if life on and near the land is a working proposition. Fields do not stay as fields of their own accord. When a rural economy loses its vitality, fields get sold off, grow up to brush, or get sold off for building lots. Once our prime agricultural soils are split up and put to such uses, they are lost to this and future generations, and in the process, the visual beauty is lost. We begin to look much of the rest of America that has succumbed to urban and suburban sprawl. It is often said that sprawl is quiet and insidious – you don't know you have it until it may be too late. Land is a core asset to our community. How we choose to use land and the steps we take to retain desirable characteristics of land use will make all the difference in the future. It has become clear to Cabot Planning Commission members that land use planning and community and economic development planning are key to maintaining and enhancing the

desirability of Cabot as a place to live and work. We are at a turning point with a new economy as well as continuing growth pressures, with Cabot’s population doubling and housing units tripling since 1970. Traditional zoning regulations, and Cabot’s current zoning regulations as an example of that, will not lead us to our vision of a retaining a working landscape if growth in population and housing continues. Some of the work reported on later in this section, regarding build-out analyses, point to some of the shortcomings.

This has led the Planning Commission to some of the newer concepts of land use development and regulation known as Smart Growth strategies. We are by no means experts on Smart Growth strategies, but we are convinced that Cabot as a community can begin to gradually implement some of these strategies in planning and zoning to maintain our historic patterns of land use that so many find desirable. The Smart Growth Principles in the table below are flexible and adaptable and have been successfully applied in cities, suburbs, small towns, and rural areas.

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

B. Existing Conditions

Land Use/Land Cover

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

Today, agriculture and forestry figure significantly in the Town’s land use: in 2010, a total of 13,087 acres in Cabot were enrolled in the “Current Use” program, representing approximately 53% of the total area of the Town. Although land currently enrolled in the current use program does not ensure that this land will not be developed with other uses in the future, 2,033 acres of land in Cabot are permanently preserved through easements held by the Vermont Land Trust. (See Maps 1 and 2 in Appendix B)

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

**Table V-1
Land Use/Land Cover**

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

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

Natural Features

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

Scenic Resources

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

Recreational use of open lands

Open and forested lands in town provide recreational opportunities, particularly in the winter months when farming and forestry operations are limited. Through permission secured from a number of private property-owners for seasonal use through farm fields and wooded areas, Cabot's recreation committee has delineated and maintained a winter trail system, used for hiking, snowshoeing and cross-country skiing. (See also the "Recreation" subsection of the "Facilities, Utilities and Services" section IX of this Plan.)

Development Patterns

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

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

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

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

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

Existing Utilities Affecting Land Use

The Town of Cabot has a sewer system with a wastewater treatment facility located on Sawmill Road, and a public water system supplied by two public wells. Currently, the

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

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

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

C. Existing Local Land Use Regulations and Planning Considerations

Cabot's existing zoning predates the last Town Plan of 2003, although a considerable amount of work was done since 2003 towards the drafting of revised land use regulations based on the 2003 Plan.

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

Site Plan Review

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

Conditional Use Review

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

Planned Residential Developments

Planned residential developments (PRDs), are permitted in all districts except the Shoreland district. This provision of the Cabot land use regulations allows the Planning Commission to modify general requirements of the zoning district related to lot size and setbacks, in order to

better preserve open space and facilitate better planning. Dwelling units are permitted to be single family or multi-family within these developments.

Flood Hazard Area

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

Zoning Districts

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

Medium Density Developed District

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

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

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

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

Undeveloped Village District

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

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

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

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

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

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

Smart growth principles, which could be promoted by design guidelines, work particularly well for both an aging population and for children. Design guidelines in this district can help ensure that new development accommodates both strollers and wheelchairs, supports walking rather than driving, and fosters connectivity to new and existing public parking areas and public transportation options, while protecting the character of the historic village center areas.

Design standards can also be achieved more indirectly through the dimensional and density standards² of the village center district. The new district regulations should take into consideration the existing pattern of development, including lot sizes and setbacks, and the goals of encouraging increased residential density and economic revitalization in these areas. It is acknowledged that since the Winooski River and its tributaries run through the center of the “Village Center District,” the associated flood hazard area will continue to pose development constraints within this district (see delineation of flood hazard areas on Map 6).

In order to give the most flexibility in siting new development, while still retaining traditional building patterns, the elimination of a minimum lot size, coupled with the establishment of a maximum density (number of residential units per acre), and the re-evaluation of minimum setbacks and maximum lot coverage will be considered. The lot size “sampling” and build-out analyses conducted by The Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission at the request of the Cabot Planning Commission will help to guide the revision of the boundaries and dimensional and density standards for a new “Village Center” district. Permitted and conditional uses in the district should contribute to the continued development of these areas as centers of civic and commercial life. The district regulations should reflect the goals developed by the Planning Commission (with the input of Town residents) of protecting natural resources, fostering economic development, and encouraging new retail businesses.

Additional standards regarding permitted uses and development may be needed for the areas that fall within the source protection areas of the Danville Hill Well and the Bond Hill Well, located in the northern part of the existing “Medium Density Developed District.” This may be accomplished through the creation of a source protection overlay district. Areas currently zoned “Undeveloped Village District” that are outside of the area served by public sewer and water and which have land characteristics not suitable to denser development could be incorporated into the adjacent “Low Density Residential and Agricultural District.”

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

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

² Common dimensional and density standards include: minimum lot size; maximum use density; minimum frontage; minimum front, side, and rear setbacks; maximum height; and maximum building or lot coverage.

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

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

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

Shoreland District

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

Planning Considerations: Guidelines for the siting of structures within this district, and dimensional standards such as maximum building height and lot coverage, will need to be re-examined to assure that the goals of maintaining high water quality, maintaining vegetative buffers along shorelines, retaining scenic views, and improving public access are realized. It is noted that the areas currently included in the “Shoreland District” classification vary greatly in regard to existing development and resource value (see discussion of these resources in Section II of this Plan, “Natural Resources”). While existing development on the shore of Joe’s Pond is quite dense (almost 2 units per acre), residential development around other water bodies in Town are considerably less dense. The varying recreational and natural resource value of lands around these water bodies should be acknowledged and varying levels of review should be considered through the creation of more than one category of Shoreland District (e.g., “Shoreland District I,” “Shoreland District II,” etc.).

Dimensional and density standards would be tailored to protect the unique features of the resource, and residential density and/or maximum lot size would vary in each district.

Low Density Residential and Agricultural District

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

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

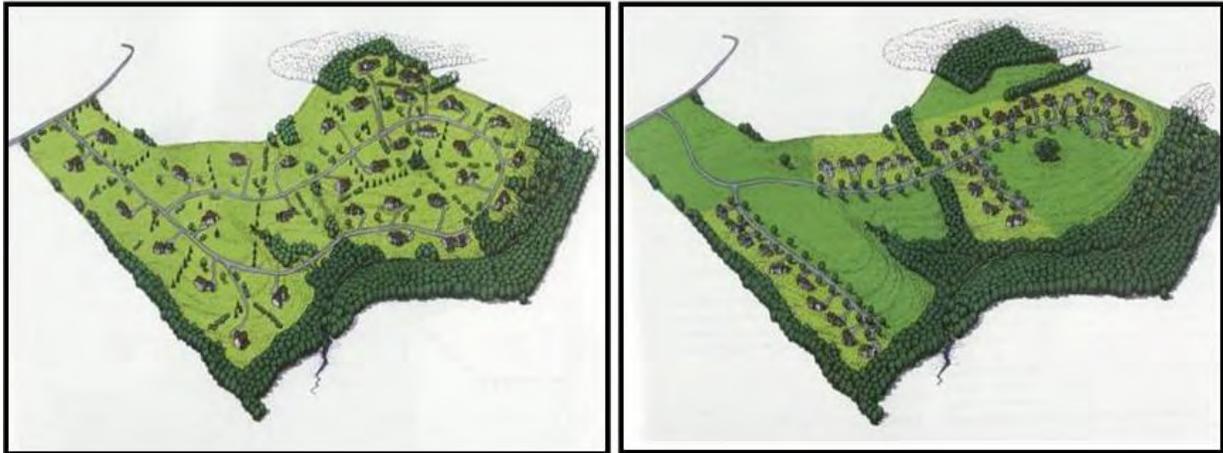
Planning Considerations: A re-examination of the permitted and conditional uses within this district, as well as permitted residential density, is necessary to ensure that the land use regulations do not present barriers to the agricultural use of the land into the future, and that the district regulations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

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

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

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

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



(Photo source: www.resourcefulcommunities.org)

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

Other Planning Considerations for All Districts

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

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

D. Buildout Analysis

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

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

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

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

E. Goals and Implementation Strategies

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

Goal	Implementation Strategy	Key implementer(s)	Future Measures of Progress
<p>V.3 Land is used and developed in a way that retains working farms and productive forest land as major land uses in the Town, and protects natural, historic and scenic resources.</p>	<p>V.3(a) Consider establishing a lower maximum residential density and a lower minimum house lot size in the Low Density Residential and Agricultural District so as not to impede the continued and additional development of farming/ animal husbandry and forestry uses.</p>	<p>Planning Commission/ Selectboard/</p>	<p>Land characterized as agricultural and forested would continue to predominate over residential and commercial uses in Town</p>
	<p>V.3(b) Inventory and map critically important agricultural, open and forested land in Town to serve as an information base in the review of site plans and subdivisions, and in land conservation decisions.</p>	<p>Planning Commission, with assistance of Vermont Land Trust and CVRPC</p>	<p>Inventory created</p>
	<p>V.3(c) Create an Agricultural Overlay District based on the location of prime Vermont agricultural soils, with lower maximum density provisions and heightened review standards.</p>	<p>Planning Commission/ Selectboard</p>	<p>District regulations drafted</p>
	<p>V.3(d) Strengthen PRD/PUD regulations to specify a percentage of land to be conserved as part of the</p>	<p>Planning Commission/ Selectboard</p>	<p>PUD regulations revised</p>

Goal	Implementation Strategy	Key implementer(s)	Future Measures of Progress
	<p>development (e.g., 60%); and provide for buffer areas between residential development and adjacent residential and agricultural uses.</p> <p>V.3(e) Adopt Subdivision regulations to better guide land use development throughout town.</p> <p>V.3(f) Educate land owners about options regarding conservation easements – coordinate with statewide database of farmland.</p>	<p>Planning Commission/ Selectboard</p> <p>Planning Commission/State and Regional agencies and non-profits (e.g., Vermont Land Trust)</p>	<p>Subdivision regulations adopted</p> <p>Acreage permanently conserved through easements increases.</p>
<p>V.4 Encourage new development in areas served by existing infrastructure, including utilities and roads, while ensuring that the uses and the rate and scale of development is in keeping with Cabot’s existing character, and that property values are preserved.</p>	<p>V.4(a) Revise existing performance standards for uses in all districts (section 3.15 of Cabot Zoning ordinance) and create specific standards for the siting of residences in the Low Density Residential and Agricultural and Shoreland Districts.</p> <p>V.4(b) Modify regulations for signs , as necessary, to preserve community character.</p>	<p>Planning Commission/ Selectboard</p> <p>Planning Commission/ Selectboard</p>	<p>Regulations revised</p> <p>Regulations revised</p>

Goal	Implementation Strategy	Key implementer(s)	Future Measures of Progress
<p>V.5 Promote pedestrian access for all development in village centers.</p>	<p>V.5(a) Develop a capital improvement plan that includes the development of new sidewalks/paths.</p> <p>V.5(b) Seek grant funds to accomplish pedestrian infrastructure improvements.</p>	<p>Planning Commission/ Selectboard/UDAG Committee/Cabot Worx</p> <p>Planning Commission/ Selectboard/UDAG Committee/Cabot Worx</p>	<p>Plan created, improvements to infrastructure made</p> <p>Grants secured</p>
<p>V.6 Retain important scenic resources.</p>	<p>V.6(a) Prepare an inventory of scenic views, vistas and roads in Town and map them to serve as an information base in the review of site plans and subdivisions, and in land conservation decisions.</p> <p>V.6(b) Examine existing land use regulations, including those regarding telecommunication facilities, to ensure that the siting of structures avoids, to the extent practicable, adverse impacts to scenic views.</p>	<p>Planning Commission</p> <p>Planning Commission</p>	<p>Inventory created</p> <p>Review completed</p>
<p>V.7 The land use goals articulated in this Plan are forwarded by administering the Town’s Land Use Regulations in a fair and consistent</p>	<p>V.7(a) Review the land use regulations to ensure that regulations clearly state all referenced provisions of the State enabling legislation (for example, procedures</p>	<p>Planning Commission/ Selectboard/Town Zoning Administrator/Zoning Board of Adjustment</p>	<p>Revisions to land use regulations completed</p>

Goal	Implementation Strategy	Key implementer(s)	Future Measures of Progress
manner.	<p>for the appeal of decisions) and that they incorporate fire safety, building maintenance, and other safety measures.</p> <p>V.7(b) Establish the requirement for a Certificate of Zoning Compliance to ensure these safety and use standards have been met, and that the regulations are consistently enforced.</p> <p>V.7(c) Include language in the zoning regulations that sets clear standards for temporary structures and uses of land.</p>	<p>Selectboard/Zoning Administrator</p> <p>Planning Commission/Selectboard</p>	<p>Provision included in Town Zoning regulations</p> <p>Zoning regulations revised</p>

VI. ENERGY

A. Introduction

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

- 1) The price and price stability of energy resources are impacted by events far away and out of our control. These events can occur with little advance notice but the changes can be dramatic and occur almost instantly.
- 2) Energy supplies may become less reliable due to global shortages of oil and other fossil fuel sources and the increasing demand for these resources in the developing world. This problem will only become more severe over time as non-renewable energy sources are depleted and global demand grows.
- 3) Global climate change, due in part to the release of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere from the combustion of fossil fuels, are likely to impact global, national, and local environments and economies. The magnitude and scope of the changes are unknown, and the impacts on agriculture and wild plant and animal populations (including our ability to rely on distant food sources) could be profound.

By acknowledging these issues, Cabot can promote policies to mitigate their environmental and economic impacts. Energy does not stand alone as an isolated concern. In our current system, combustion of non-renewable energy sources such as oil, coal, natural gas, propane, gasoline, and diesel fuel are used as an input. Our goals should reflect a desire to provide energy without the consumption of non-renewable energy inputs or the use of any energy source that leads to long term degradation of the environment.

Our vision is that Cabot residents will meet their needs for food, materials, shelter, and transportation using resources managed in a sustainable and renewable manner.

B. Existing Conditions

Energy Use Statewide

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

Although analyses of energy demand by fuel and by sector are not available for Cabot, data generated for the State as a whole is included below:

Table VI - 1
Statewide Energy Demand - All Sectors, by Fuel
 (KW/year)

	Fossil Fuels	Electric	Biomass	Solar
1980	2112	427	344	.3
	73.2%	14.8%	12.0%	0.0%
1990	2406	567	263	.2
	74.3%	17.5%	8.1%	0.1%
2010 (estimated)	3623	817	292	.7
	76.5%	17.3%	6.1%	0.1%

Table VI - 2
Statewide Energy Demand- All Fuels, by Sector
 (KW/year)

	Residential	Commercial	Industrial	Transportation
1980	1000	364	387	1134
	35%	13%	13%	39%
1990	962	393	440	1444
	29.7%	12.1%	14%	44.6%
2010 (estimated)	1339	568	601	2229
	28.3%	12.0%	12.7%	47.0%

(Source: Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission)

Since 1980, fossil fuels have continued to account for the bulk of energy use in the State, and transportation has continued to be the sector that uses the most energy. In 2010 it was estimated that the transportation sector accounted for 47% of all energy use.

Potential Local Energy Sources

**Table VI – 3
HOUSE HEATING FUEL
CABOT AND WASHINGTON COUNTY**

	CABOT		WASHINGTON CTY	
	Total	Percent	Total	Percent
Occupied housing units	543	100.0%	24,275	100.0%
Utility gas	0	0.0%	636	2.6%
Bottled, tank, or LP gas	90	16.6%	5,013	20.7%
Electricity	18	3.3%	1,161	4.8%
Fuel oil, kerosene, etc.	212	39.0%	14,227	58.6%
Coal or coke	8	1.5%	54	0.2%
Wood	207	38.1%	2,849	11.7%
Solar energy	0	0.0%	15	0.1%
Other fuel	6	1.1%	267	1.1%
No fuel used	2	0.4%	53	0.2%

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

As shown on Table VI – 3 above, the main sources of heat for homes in Cabot are fuel oil and wood. The percentage of Cabot homes that are heated with fuel oil is estimated at 39%, which is notably lower than the 58.6% of homes county-wide that use fuel oil for heat. An estimated 38.1% of homes in Cabot use wood for heating fuel, as compared to only 11.7% county-wide.

After fuel oil and wood, bottled, tank or LP gas is the next most-used fuel for heating homes in Cabot. An estimated 16.6% of homes in Cabot utilize this source for heating, as compared to 20.7% County-wide.

Biomass

Forest and shrub land cover almost three-quarters of Cabot's total land area. The generation of heat (and even electricity) from biomass is a strategy that may hold potential to benefit the Town. Estimates show that approximately 80% of each dollar spent on wood remains in the state while only 20% of each dollar spent on nonrenewable energy sources remains in the state.

New technology is expanding the potential of high-efficiency wood burning in buildings as a primary heat source. While wood burning does contribute a large proportion of atmospheric particulate pollution (pollution directly associated with respiratory damage) new wood burning technology and stricter EPA emissions standards are resulting in increased efficiency and reduced particulate emissions.

Vegetable Biofuels

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

Wind Power

Wind power is one of the oldest and most environmentally benign sources of energy. In recent years it has experienced a resurgence as the fastest growing energy source in the world. Wind turbines are among the most economical renewable energy technologies and have become cost competitive with most conventional electricity sources.

Although Vermont has potential for wind power, it is estimated that only 10 to 15% of Vermont's electrical power could be generated by wind because of its intermittent nature. Furthermore, Cabot probably does not have viable sites for industrial scale wind generation (generally at elevations between 2,500 and 3,500 feet). Advances in small scale wind turbine technology figure to make it an increasingly viable option for private individuals or groups of individuals. State law restricts the regulation through zoning of turbines with blades less than 20 feet in diameter. Furthermore, any small scale turbine that returns energy to the power grid is exempt from local bylaws and is instead reviewed by the Public Service Board under Act 248.

Solar Power

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

The application of active (systems which collect, store and distribute solar energy within a building) and passive (systems which utilize a building's structure to trap sunlight and store it as heat) solar technologies have demonstrated their cost effectiveness in Vermont. Solar-tempered buildings are buildings that have their long axis oriented within 30 degrees of true south and have an unobstructed net south facing window area equal to at least 7% of the total floor area. Solar-tempering coupled with proper insulating can offset heat costs in a building by 40%. Although solar-tempering at initial construction generally requires no additional investment, experts suggest that a majority of new buildings in Vermont do not incorporate such design principles.

Geothermal Power

Geothermal energy refers to the potential of using the Earth's near constant temperature (45—58 degrees F) a few feet below the surface for heating and cooling applications. According to the Vermont Energy Atlas (<http://www.vtenergyatlas.com/>), the two types of geothermal systems with potential for use in Vermont are open loop systems and closed loop systems. A potential open loop system is indicated by the location of existing water well. With open loop systems, water is pumped or flows from a well and passes through a ground source heat pump (GSHP) system or heat exchanger. The water is then either returned to the well for reheating (Standing Column Well) or is disposed of (permits may be required if the water is primarily disposed of). With closed loop systems, a series of looped pipes are placed in the ground or even in a pond or water body. Water or other liquids in the looped pipes then pass through a ground source heat pump.

Electric Providers in Cabot

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

Green Mountain Power maintains hydroelectric generating facilities at the Marshfield Reservoir and Joe's Pond. According to GMP's data, only two percent of the power it sold to customers in 2010 came directly from fossil fuels. 40% came from nuclear power, 46% from hydropower, 3% from biomass, 1% from wood, methane and wind, and 8% from unspecified market purchases.

The Washington Electric Cooperative owns and operates the Wrightsville hydroelectric generating station, which is a store-and-release plant located at the Wrightsville Dam on the North Branch of the Winooski River. It also operates an electric generating facility at Vermont's largest landfill in Coventry, using landfill-derived methane gas. This methane facility is estimated to provide about two-thirds of WEC's members' electricity needs.

C. Planning Considerations for Energy Sustainability

Improvements in energy conservation can be a lower cost, immediate opportunity to make progress toward our energy sustainability goals.

Buildings and Structures

According to the Vermont Comprehensive Energy Plan, approximately 30% of the total amount of energy consumed in Vermont is used for residential purposes. The Plan shows that growth in energy demand in the residential sector will be driven by increases in population and housing, and a corresponding increase in demand for space and water heating.

Investments in energy efficiency improvements in new and existing buildings and appropriate site design in new development can have significant potential energy savings. Ultimately, such investments will reduce the percent of income residents spend on energy, per capita energy consumption and environmental degradation.

In August 2010 energy audits were completed on Cabot Town buildings by Building Energy under contract with the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission (fulfilling one of the action items identified in the 2003 Cabot Town Plan). Reports were completed for the Willey Building, the Masonic Hall, and the Waste Water Treatment Facility with the purpose of identifying ways to reduce the heating and electrical usage of the buildings.

Transportation and Settlement Patterns

According to the Vermont Comprehensive Energy Plan, the transportation sector accounts for over 45% of total energy demand and approximately two-thirds of all fossil fuels used in Vermont. Environmental degradation resulting from heavy petroleum use is well documented, as is the fact that most of the money spent on fuel and automobiles leaves the state, thus undermining the local economy.

The rural character and decentralized settlement patterns of Central Vermont pose a difficulty in efforts to minimize the consumption of traditional fuels in the transportation sector. Improved access to, and increased use of, alternative and public transportation options such as bus, vanpooling, ridesharing and bicycling will decrease energy consumption. (See Section VIII Transportation.)

Another strategy is to encourage settlement patterns that reduce travel. (See Section V Land Use). The concentration of employment opportunities, housing and social services, the

expansion of broadband access, and increased use of local goods and services, can reduce transportation demand.

Incentive Programs

A variety of organizations and programs exist to provide assistance to citizens and local governments in the area of energy conservation and development. The Vermont Renewable Energy Resource Center (<http://www.nerc-vt.org/>) provides incentives funded through the Clean Energy Development Fund for residential and commercial projects using alternative energy, such as wind and solar.

Efficiency Vermont, an energy efficiency utility, provides technical assistance and financial incentives to help Vermont households and businesses reduce their energy costs with energy-efficient equipment and lighting. Efficiency Vermont also provides energy-efficient approaches to construction and renovation. This utility is funded through an energy efficiency charge on ratepayers' electric bills.

Net metering, a provision created by a state law passed in 1998, requires electric utilities to permit customers to generate their own power using small-scale renewable energy systems. The excess power they generate can be fed back to their utilities, actually running their electric meters backwards. More information about net metering is available on the Vermont Department of Public Service's website, http://publicservice.vermont.gov/energy-efficiency/ee_netmetering.html.

Another mechanism that can provide incentives for homeowners to conduct energy upgrades is the establishment of a Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) program, originally known in Vermont as a Clean Energy Assessment District (CEAD). Title 24 of the Vermont Statutes was revised in 2009 to specifically provide for the creation of Clean Energy Assessment Districts, and outlined the responsibilities of municipalities that wish to create such districts and the property owners that opt into them. Participation in such districts can be valuable to homeowners who lack the upfront capital to make energy improvements that will save them money in the long term. [The Cabot Selectboard has signed a letter of interest with the Vermont Energy Investment Corporation \(VEIC\) giving the Town access to technical and legal consulting services from VEIC to explore the practicalities of establishing a Property Assessed Clean Energy \(PACE\) program in Cabot.](#)

Smart Grid Technology and Smart Meters

In 2009, Vermont received a matching federal grant to deploy smart grid technology. A smart grid allows two-way communication between the electric utility grid and all devices connected to it, all the way down to consumer appliances. For consumers, smart grid means vastly improved opportunities to understand how energy is used, usage costs, and how to save energy and money. Instead of one electric bill at the end of the month, consumers will see their energy usage and cost in much greater detail. There is much yet to be learned about the potential of smart grid technology, which will be deployed over the next several years to

about 85 percent of Vermont homes and businesses. Initial studies have shown that households can reduce electrical usage on average by 4 to 12 percent.

Goal	Implementation Strategy	Key Implementer(s)	Future Measures of Progress
conservation in existing buildings.	<p>on available low income weatherization services at Town Clerks office and Town web site.</p> <p>VI.4(b) Post information on available energy conservation programs, and a list of local contractors providing energy-efficiency retrofits at Town Clerks office and Town web site.</p>	Ad hoc energy team	Postings
VI.5 Promote land use patterns that minimize fuel consumption (for transportation and road maintenance) and manage local forests (for fuel and materials) and conserve agricultural land (for local food sources) for current and future use.	See Land Use section for strategies.	Planning Commission	(varies)
VI.7 Promote the use of local wood as a fuel source with appropriate consideration of air quality and forest protection.	VI.7(a) Investigate ways of tracking the use of local wood as a fuel source	Ad hoc energy team	Data on use of local wood resources as a fuel source available
VI.8 Promote access to a regional transportation network (carpool, van pool access, local bus link)	<p>VI.8(a) Designate and maintain a park & ride lot in an appropriate location.</p> <p>VI.8(b) Follow up with GMTA on possibility of extending service up Route 215.</p>	<p>Ad hoc energy team</p> <p>Planning Commission</p>	<p>P&R lot created</p> <p>Increased use of public transportation by local residents</p>
VI.9 Minimize non-	VI.9(a) Carry out	School Board	Efficiency of heating

Goal	Implementation Strategy	Key Implementer(s)	Future Measures of Progress
<p>renewable energy consumption and promote energy conservation in Cabot School and Town-operated buildings, facilities, and operations (Willey Building, Masonic Hall, Town Garage and road maintenance operations, water system, waste water system).</p>	<p>improvements to school buildings, including installation of energy-saving insulation, as recommended in 2008 report by Superintendents' Association.</p> <p>VI.9(b) Use August 2010 municipal energy audit results to implement cost effective recommendations.</p> <p>VI.9(c) Investigate the use of biodiesel blends (B5 or B20) in Town-owned heavy equipment taking into account "embedded" energy.</p> <p>VI.9(d) Send town road crew to UVM Transportation Research Center's free program "Eco Driving"</p> <p>VI.9(e) Base purchasing decisions for Town equipment, as well as new facility for Town Garage, on life cycle ananalysis, including fuel costs.</p>	<p>Selectboard</p> <p>Ad hoc Energy team</p> <p>Selectboard</p> <p>Selectboard</p>	<p>plant at school is optimized and requires less input of fuel oil and/or wood chips</p> <p>Building improvements at Willey Building, Masonic Hall, and WWTF are implemented</p> <p>Reduction of the use of fossil fuels by Town vehicles</p> <p>Completion of Eco Driving program by road crew members</p> <p>Life cycle cost estimation underway for new Town garage facility, and for proposed new equipment purchases.</p>

Goal	Implementation Strategy	Key Implementer(s)	Future Measures of Progress
<p>VI.10 Promote consumption of local food and other local products and services to reduce energy usage.</p>	<p>VI.10(a) Ensure that funding continues for existing Farm-to-School lunch program.</p> <p>VI.10(b) Use more locally-produced wood chips than oil in the heating plant at Cabot School.</p> <p>VI.10(c) Investigate use of UDAG funds to incentivize consumption of local products.</p>	<p>Cabot School/Selectboard</p> <p>Cabot School</p> <p>UDAG Committee</p>	<p>School continues to use local produce for lunch program</p> <p>Greater percentage of wood chips than fuel oil used</p> <p>Economic incentives in place</p>

VII. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

A. Introduction

A “healthy economy” was rated the number one factor in maintaining a high quality of life in Cabot according to the Cabot Community Planning Survey undertaken in June 2010.

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

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

Whether and how to promote economic growth was a pivotal question during Cabot’s Visioning Meeting in September 2010. While growth is sometimes considered a measure of a healthy community and economy, efficient connections among people and goods and services within the community are perhaps more important to maintain a healthy local economy. A downtown area that enables residents and visitors to access services and businesses with minimal transportation needs can facilitate these connections.

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

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

B. Existing Conditions

Existing Businesses/Employers

Cabot has one large employer, the Cabot Creamery, founded in 1919. It joined the Agri-Mark Cooperative in 1992. Approximately 1,300 dairy farm families in New England and New York supply Agri-Mark, which markets 40% of the milk in New England. The Cabot plant is one of three, employing approximately 350 workers, 7% of which are Cabot residents. Its specialties are cheese, cottage cheese, sour cream, yogurt, and butter. The best-known product sold under the Cabot brand is traditional cheddar cheese, which has won many prizes, including World’s Best Cheddar. Much of this cheddar is aged in the Cabot warehouse and wrapped in the packing plant.

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

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

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

There are also a number of commercial farm operations that are further discussed in the agriculture section.

Agriculture

When asked to help the Cabot Planning Commission prioritize planning issues, respondents to the 2010 Community Planning Survey ranked retention of farms as the number one issue. In keeping with Cabot's agricultural roots, many businesses have strong ties to the land. There are about 35 small to midsize agriculture operations in Cabot, from dairy farms to horticultural operations. Maple syrup is also an agricultural staple, with approximately 12 sugaring operations in Town.

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

In February of 2011, surveys were sent to approximately 30 farm businesses in Town.

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

Tourism

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

The Cabot Creamery, besides being a large employer in Town, is also an important four-season attraction, with over 40,000 tourists a year visiting the Cabot facility.

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

network intersects with Cabot's downtown Main Street. The 157 snowmobile clubs in Vermont have 27,000 members. Cabot Skylighters is the local snowmobile club. There is also a winter trail system, maintained by Cabot's volunteer Recreation Department. Some of this network overlaps with the VAST trail system, providing access for non-motorized use. Portions of these trails are available for hiking all year. These trails, most of which are located on private property through access agreements with the property owners, have the potential to bring economic activity to the town as users of the trail system buy goods and services in their travels through Cabot. Local activities, such as the 4th of July parade, the Apple Pie Festival, and the Cabot Maple Festival are important annual events that benefit the local economy, bringing people and economic activity to town.

Center for an Agricultural Economy

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

New Farmer Projects

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

Programs and Resources

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

Small Business Administration/ Vermont Small Business Development Center

The Vermont Small Business Development Center supports new business creation and existing small business growth and maintenance through no-cost confidential advisement,

training, financial analysis tools, and strategic assessment. It also offers training for entrepreneurs to plan for sustainable, value-added agriculture businesses.

Village Center Designation

The purpose of Village Center Designation by the State is to encourage local efforts to revitalize Vermont's traditional village centers. It is based on the recognition that economically strong downtowns are critical to the health and well-being of Vermont's communities. The program recognizes the need for reasonable access to them by workers, residents and visitors. The program also recognizes the need for assistance to municipalities for downtown transportation infrastructure, particularly parking facilities. Designation through the program would be focused on revitalizing and supporting commercial activity in the center of Cabot. Application for Village Center designation is made to the Vermont Downtown Program and only Towns with a confirmed planning process may be designated. Benefits of program participation include various tax credits for owners of commercial and residential rental property to assist with rehabilitation and code improvements for older and historic buildings located within the designated center. Government and religious buildings, as well as single-family residences are not eligible for the credits. However, applicants who are otherwise eligible for the credit, but do not have the tax liability to use a tax credit can sell the credit to a bank in exchange for cash.

Urban Development Action Grant

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

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

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

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

Municipal Planning Grants

Municipal Planning Grants (MPG) are a source of State funds available to Towns with a confirmed plan, and do not require a match. These grants can fund projects such as downtown development plans, feasibility studies, and the development of design guidelines.

C. Planning Considerations

New Businesses

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

Village Center Designation

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

Downtown Parking

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

The Local Agricultural Economy

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

school programs, which Cabot has done, the following two strategies identified in the F2P Plan can be effected at the municipal level:

- More school farms and gardens: Promote and support the existence of working farms, or larger-scale production gardens, at high schools and career and technical education centers.
- Planning and zoning: Review and update zoning ordinances to ensure, to the greatest extent possible, that prime agricultural soils are conserved for agricultural use.

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

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

Community and Economic Development Coordination

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

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

Growth and Its Impacts

By regulating residential growth in agricultural areas, population growth has a greater potential to benefit the local economy. Channeling growth to the village center areas and creating better connections between residential, recreational, civic and commercial uses enables population growth while retaining farmland and open space. Living in the “downtown” village center will be more appealing if the Town invests in public spaces, including landscaping in public rights of way, safe routes for walking and biking, and well-situated parking areas (including bike parking) for those visiting the downtown areas.

Goal	Implementation Strategy	Key implementer(s)	Future Measures of Progress
green/common as the visual centerpiece of community life and commercial development in Cabot.			
VII.4 Capitalize on Town’s scenic, recreational, and historic resources to draw new customers to local businesses.	<p>VII.4(a) Maintain and expand four-season trail system that connects to village center and public parking areas through the creation of a master plan and supported through grant funds.</p> <p>VII.4(b) Identify locations for bicycle routes throughout Town, undertake infrastructure improvements to improve safety, and create a bike parking area in village center.</p> <p>VII.4(c) Create a printed, self-guided walking/biking tour of historic resources.</p>	<p>Planning Commission/ Recreation Committee</p> <p>Planning Commission/ Recreation Committee/ Consulting engineer/ Selectboard</p> <p>Recreation Committee/ Historical</p>	<p>Village Vitalization plan for trails created</p> <p>Bicycle routes mapped Bike racks installed in village center</p> <p>Walking/biking tour of historic resources created.</p>
VII.5 Retain working farms and agriculture-based businesses as a key component of the Town’s economic base.	See Land Use section for multiple strategies designed to achieve this goal	Planning Commission	Inventory of farms remains stable Number of agri-based businesses grow

VIII. TRANSPORTATION

A. Introduction

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

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

A well-planned multi-modal transportation infrastructure that provides connections to alternative transportation options, such as ride-share programs and public transportation, encourages a reduction in the number of single-occupant vehicle trips, having a positive impact on energy conservation and creating more bicycle- and pedestrian- friendly roadways. Finally, a safe pedestrian infrastructure is particularly vital in the downtown village area of Cabot, where it makes sense to walk rather than drive from home or place of business to schools, recreational facilities, stores, post office and Town Hall.

B. Existing Conditions

Existing Road System

Cabot has approximately 76.8 linear miles of roadways, 18 miles paved and approximately 60 unpaved. The Town is responsible for the maintenance of approximately 69.5 miles of roadway. The amount of road in each of four classifications is listed in Table VIII – 1 below. (See also Map 3 in Appendix B.)

Route 215 is the main north-south corridor in town, extending from the Town of Walden in the north to the Town of Marshfield in the south. It is “Main Street” when it passes through the Cabot Village, and is also the main thoroughfare passing through Lower Cabot. The speed limit on Route 215 ranges from 30 M.P.H. in Cabot Village to 50 M.P.H. north and south of the main village area.

Much of U.S. Route 2 in Cabot is scenic, providing long views of forested areas, cultivated fields, and pastureland. The land adjacent to Route 2 in Cabot is sparsely developed, and all of the land is zoned either “Low Density Residential and Agricultural” or “Shoreland” (a small section along Route 2 currently zoned Medium Density Developed District is proposed to be eliminated – see Land Use section).

Plans for the widening and repaving of the stretch of Route 2 that lies in Cabot have been completed by VTrans and work has recently begun, to be completed in October 2013.

**Table VIII - 1
Existing Road System**

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

Cabot is continuing work on culvert replacement throughout the town. Since the last Town Plan in 2003, an inventory of culverts has been completed. Another culvert inventory is scheduled in 2012. Culverts are being inspected, upgraded, and added as necessary to ensure that erosion problems are minimized.

Classes of Town Highways

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

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

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

Residents can petition the Town to request that a road be reclassified. The Town’s governing body may also act on its own motion without a petition. Before taking action on reclassification, a hearing must be held on the proposal, and a decision should be made by the governing body within 60 days after the hearing.

Existing Pedestrian Facilities

In Cabot Village, a sidewalk extends on the northwest side of Main Street (Rt. 215 North) from the Masonic Hall to just before the intersection of Main Street with Elm Street. On the southeast side of Main Street a second sidewalk exists in front of the Willey Building. Two crosswalks are identified in the upper portion of Main Street with signs and pavement markings, and a third crosswalk is marked in front of the Cabot Creamery.

Public Transportation

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

Commuting

Table VIII – 2 below shows recent five-year estimates for vehicle use, carpooling and use of public transportation by working Cabot residents, as compared to workers throughout Washington County.

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

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

**Table VIII – 2
COMMUTING TO WORK**

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

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

Recreational trail system

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

Signage

Other than the crosswalk signs, there are few other traffic signs in the downtown area. The Federal Highway Administration’s (FHWA) Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) establishes uniformity and standards for traffic signs on public roads. Recently adopted language requires all agencies, large and small, to adopt a sign maintenance program to help meet new minimum retroreflectivity requirements for traffic signs. By January 2012, all agencies should have a sign maintenance program established that can regularly address the new minimum requirements.

Existing Policy, Programs, Resources and Funding

Local Regulations.

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

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

State Policies.

VTrans programs that are intended to support the use of bicycling and walking as a viable means of transportation include the “Bicycle and Pedestrian Program” and the “Safe Routes to School Program”. In 2002 VTrans adopted the Pedestrian and Bicycle Facility Planning and Design Manual which provides guidance on the design of infrastructure for pedestrians and cyclists, and in 2008 published the Vermont Pedestrian and Bicycle Policy Plan to promote bicycling and walking as an integral part of the overall transportation network in Vermont. In order to aid in the estimation of costs for infrastructure improvements related to bicycle and pedestrian facilities, VTrans has also published the Report on Shared-Use Path

and Sidewalk Unit Costs, last updated in November 2010. This report provides basic unit cost (per foot) information for bicycle and pedestrian facilities and basic bid costs for items commonly included on such projects.

The goals of the “Safe Routes to School Program,” which is a national program coordinated by VTrans, include improving the physical environment to increase the ability to walk and bicycle to and from school; increasing the number of children walking and biking to school and thereby improving childhood health and reducing childhood obesity; reducing fuel consumption and pollution; and enhancing community accessibility and involvement by fostering partnerships among schools, local municipalities, parents, and other community organizations, including non-profits.

One source of funding for infrastructure improvements is through the “Transportation Enhancements Program” administered by VTrans. Funds can be used for improvements such as new sidewalks, bike paths, and even historic preservation and environmental mitigation. The goal is to aid in the creation of a multi-modal and environmentally sustainable transportation system that encourages non-motorized use and enhances historic landscapes and a human scale of development.

Funding Sources.

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

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

State Programs.

Vermont’s Ancient Road legislation (19 V.S.A. Chapter ??), passed in 2006, was initiated by disputes over the legal status of so-called ancient roads because of problems for the real estate industry – primarily establishing clear title to land and disputes over legal access. The law establishes a timeline during which a municipality has the opportunity to act to either establish certain ancient roads as Town Roads, or let them be discontinued and allow ownership to revert to the landowner whose land the road traverses. State statutes concerning Town Highways and the Laying Out, Discontinuing and Reclassifying of Highways, defines under what conditions a Town road would revert to an “unidentified corridor” by July 1, 2010; and how that unidentified corridor, if no further action is taken by the municipality to reclaim the road by July 1, 2015, is discontinued. Once unidentified corridors come into existence, any usage of the corridor is limited to the uses of the decade proceeding January 1,

2006. Therefore, if a road only existed on paper, having been unused for many decades or even centuries, a new path could not be cut and new uses start that did not conform to the way the road was used from 1996 to 2006.

State Aid for Town Highways

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

C. Planning Considerations

Safety

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

A recent traffic study was conducted in Cabot village addressing traffic volume and speed. Northbound peak traffic occurred between 2:00 and 3:00 p.m.; 33% of vehicles travelled in excess of 30 MPH and highest recorded speeds were 50-55 MPH. Southbound peak traffic occurred between 5:00 and 6:00 p.m.; 40% of vehicles travelled in excess of 30 MPH with highest recorded speeds in excess of 75 MPH. The highest volume of speeding traffic occurred in both directions in the mid-afternoon hours.

Signage

Existing and new signage will need to meet current standards for retroreflectivity. A sign maintenance schedule will need to be in place by 2012 to comply with federal standards, and all specified signs will need to be replaced by 2015.

Access/connectivity

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

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

Road Standards

The lack of standards that specify road width and other design considerations in the construction of new roads and access driveways in Town has been problematic. At issue are concerns regarding access by emergency vehicles, and minimizing impervious surfaces and clearing of natural vegetation to avoid excessive storm water runoff. Road standards that assure safe access, minimize impacts to the environment, and preserve the historic characteristic of the town need to be developed and adopted by the Town.

Clarification is needed regarding the permitted use of Class 4 Roads (such as use by ATVs) and to specify the maintenance that the Town will provide (such as maintenance of bridges and culverts).

Scenic Roads

The State has a program for designation of scenic roads (19 V.S.A. Section 2502) that the Town may be able to take advantage of. Designation as a scenic road ensures that the scenic qualities of the road are preserved or enhanced.

Parking

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

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

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

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

Public Transportation

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

Town Garage

The Town garage and salt shed is located on a small lot in a densely populated residential area, and is within the federally-designated “Special Flood Hazard Area” (see Map 2 in Appendix B). A new location for the Town garage should be secured. Guidelines for choosing a new location for the Town garage include adequate access for road maintenance equipment, and sand and salt storage areas with adequate separation distance from sensitive environmental features.

Training

The Town should take full advantage of training and assistance provided by state and regional agencies such as the Vermont Local Roads Program on issues such as erosion control, road drainage improvements, tree and brush removal, and best practices for road maintenance, including roads adjacent to environmentally sensitive areas.

Capital Improvement Program

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

D. Goals and Implementation Strategies

Goal	Implementation Strategy	Key implementer(s)	Future Measures of Progress
<p>VIII.1 Establish safe routes between residential and commercial/ civic/recreational uses in the downtown village area, thereby making it more pedestrian and business-friendly.</p>	<p>VIII.1 (a) Create a Village Vitalization Plan that addresses pedestrian access, parking, and traffic calming infrastructure in the village downtown area to provide for increased connectivity between residential and commercial/ civic uses/recreational uses.</p> <p>VIII.1 (b) Develop a capital improvement plan (CIP) and budget with estimated costs, based on the above master plan.</p> <p>VIII.1 (c) Seek grant funds to accomplish infrastructure improvements.</p>	<p>Planning Commission/ Selectboard/ Ad hoc Committee appointed by Selectboard</p> <p>Planning Commission/ Selectboard</p> <p>Planning Commission/ Selectboard</p> <p>Planning Commission</p>	<p>Creation of Master Plan</p> <p>CIP developed</p> <p>Applications made</p> <p>Zoning regulations drafted</p>

Goal	Implementation Strategy	Key implementer(s)	Future Measures of Progress
	<p>VIII.1 (d) Develop standards for new construction to assure pedestrian connectivity, and integrate into zoning regulations.</p>		
<p>VIII.2 Improve non-motorized access from rural areas of Town to the downtown village areas.</p>	<p>VIII.2 (a) Maintain and expand four-season trail system through the creation of a master plan and supported through grant funds.</p> <p>VIII.2 (b) Identify locations for bicycle routes throughout Town and undertake infrastructure improvements to improve safety.</p> <p>VIII.2 (c) Create and implement plans for the improvement of the bridge on Main Street at the intersection of Rt. 215 and Walden Road in order to make it safe for bicycle and pedestrian use.</p>	<p>Planning Commission/ Recreation Committee Planning Commission/ Consulting engineer/ Selectboard Planning Commission/ Consulting engineer/ Selectboard</p>	<p>Master plan for trails created</p> <p>Improvements planned</p> <p>Improvements planned</p>
<p>VIII.3 Maintain Town road system, and provide for adequate maintenance facilities (i.e., Town Garage), and retain scenic qualities.</p>	<p>VIII.3 (a) Investigate and adopt comprehensive standards applicable to the construction of new roads and access driveways..</p> <p>VIII.3 (b) Develop a capital improvement program that provides for the routine maintenance of the town road system and transportation</p>	<p>Town Selectboard/ Planning Commission/ Fire Department</p> <p>Planning Commission/ Selectboard</p>	<p>Standards adopted</p> <p>CIP developed</p>

Goal	Implementation Strategy	Key implementer(s)	Future Measures of Progress
	infrastructure and equipment. VIII.3 (c) Explore designation of scenic roads or byways	Planning Commission/ VTrans	Inventory completed of scenic roads with potential for designation
VIII.4 Improve safety on existing roadways.	VIII.4 (a) Evaluate adequacy of existing road signage throughout Town and improve as necessary to comply with MUTCD. VIII.4 (b) Evaluate and enforce speed limits.	Selectboard/Road Commissioner/Ad hoc committee appointed by Select Board Selectboard	School zone posted; additional signage added as necessary Speeding is reduced
VIII.5 Retain the traffic flow efficiency of Route 2 as a valuable interregional travel route, while maintaining its scenic qualities.	VIII.5 (a) Review land use regulations, including zoning and new subdivision regulations, for opportunities to incorporate best practices for access management as recommended by VTrans.	Planning Commission	Regulations reviewed and revised if needed
VIII.6 Better utilize existing public transportation system and reduce the distance and number of single-occupant vehicle trips.	VIII.6 (a) Explore the feasibility of establishing a park & ride lot in an appropriate location. VIII.6 (b) Follow up with GMTA on possibility of extending service up Route 215.	Planning Commission/ Selectboard Planning Commission/ Selectboard	Park and Ride lot explored Number of commuting workers utilizing public transportation is > 0
VIII.7 Expand parking in the Village to improve downtown accessibility.	VIII.7 (a) Investigate off site public parking locations. VIII.7 (b) Investigate financing options such as fee in lieu of parking programs.	Planning Commission /Selectboard/ local businesses Planning Commission/ Selectboard/local businesses	Off-site options identified. Funding mechanisms defined

IX. COMMUNITY FACILITIES, UTILITIES, AND SERVICES

A. Introduction

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

The following section identifies existing resources and needs.

B. Existing Conditions

1. Town Buildings

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

- Town Recreation Building, located on the recreation fields on the west side of South Walden Road at its intersection with Main Street (Rte. 215)
- Town Garage, located to the rear of a house lot located on the southeast side of Main Street (Rte. 215) at its intersection with South Walden Road
- Masonic Hall, located on the northwest side of Main Street (Rte. 215) a few hundred feet south of its intersection with South Walden Road
- Cabot School Buildings, located on the southwest side of Main Street just north of the Town Common
- Willey Building , located on the southeast side of Main Street (Rte. 215) between Danville Hill and Glinka Roads
- Firehouse, located on the northwest side of Main Street (Rte. 215) just southwest of its intersection with Elm Street
- Wastewater Treatment Building, located on the north side of Saw Mill Road
- Solid Waste Collection Building, located on the north side of Saw Mill Road

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

2. Town Government

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

Selectboard.

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

In January 2011 the town voted to consolidate the Village District with the Town. The Village Trustees' responsibilities were transferred to the Selectboard.

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

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

Since the time of the last adopted Town Plan in 2003, the Planning Commission has developed an interim bylaw relating to setbacks in the village. The Planning Commission also prepared draft revisions to the local zoning regulations, which were put on hold until the 2011 draft Town Plan is completed, it is adopted by the Town Selectboard, and the Plan is confirmed by the Regional Planning Commission. In 2011, the Planning Commission reviewed and approved two Planned Unit Developments in Cabot, the first of their kind in Cabot.

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

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

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

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

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

Challenges/Needs Related to Town Government

The town garage is presently located at the north end of Cabot's Main Street. All road equipment and the stockpile of sand is stored at this facility; however, space is limited and the building is aging. The relocation of this facility was identified as a need at the time of the last Town Plan in 2005. Four or five sites have been considered, a purchase agreement was entered into by the Selectboard to purchase one of them, but the plan was not approved at Town Meeting. Since then, the Selectboard has used space at the wastewater plant to alleviate crowding at the Town Garage. The Selectboard is presently considering a ten-acre site on West Hill Pond Road.

The Highway Fund budget contains an equipment replacement schedule through 2015. The Town has few written plans for the long term maintenance, replacement, or improvement of its municipal infrastructure. A long-range plan for the improvement and maintenance of the Town's transportation infrastructure, including the re-location of the Town garage, can be included in the development of a Capital Improvement Program (CIP) and budget to implement the program. The required content of a capital budget and program is spelled out in 24 V.S.A. Chapter 117. The capital budget and program is a six-year document: year one is the capital budget for the upcoming fiscal year, and years two through six are the capital program, or schedule of investments, for the following five years. A committee appointed by the Selectboard may take the lead in developing a capital improvement program for consideration by the legislative body. The Planning Commission should review and submit annual project recommendations for inclusion in the CIP.

In order to efficiently manage the Town's facilities and departments, undertake the preparation of a CIP, and secure grants to aid in the implementation of a CIP, it is recommended that the Town adopt a Town Manager form of government, and conduct a vote at the next Town Meeting. State statute 24 V.S.A., sections 1235 through 1238 specify the duties of a town manager, which include performing most selectperson's duties, serve as the general purchasing agent, maintain town buildings and facilities, and act as road commissioner, among other duties. It is expected that the efficiencies realized in the management of Town facilities and the grants that could be secured by such an individual would pay for the cost of establishing and maintaining this position.

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

The Town should explore the feasibility and advantages of creating a Development Review Board (DRB) to replace the existing Zoning Board of Adjustment. Such a change would move development review functions of the Planning Commission to a DRB and allow the Planning Commission to focus on planning functions. This change would eliminate certain redundancies of project review that overlap and occur by two separate boards. Many towns, including several neighboring towns have made the change to a DRB.

3. Ambulance Services, Fire Protection, and Emergency Planning

Cabot Emergency Ambulance Service, Inc. is an independent non-profit ambulance service that serves Cabot and Marshfield, and on occasion Walden and Plainfield. The Ambulance Service is housed with the Cabot Fire Department in the firehouse on Main Street. In 2010 there were 175 calls for service. Most patients are transferred to the Central Vermont Medical Center. The Ambulance Service is supported with donations, fund raisers, appropriations from the towns of Cabot and Marshfield, and insurance reimbursements for services. There is currently one ambulance in service.

The Ambulance Service depends on volunteers. As of March 2011, the roster comprised eight Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT) at the basic level, 6 at the intermediate level, two EMT B, and two administrative staff.

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

calls. Generally, more than half of the calls are fire-related, with the rest related to traffic accidents.

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

The Cabot Fire Station was constructed in 1962 with two bays; a lean-to section was added in 1970. Two additional bays were added in 1992, making a total of four bays. The lean-to was converted into a training room and office. A new furnace system was added in 1998. A hydrant fill (located inside the building to fill trucks in cold weather) was added in 1999. An emergency backup generator was added as well as a cascade system for refilling air packs. Inefficient lighting has been replaced in the bays with T5 high-output fixtures. LED exterior building lights have been installed to help cut down on energy usage and light pollution. The Cabot Ambulance is housed in one of the four bays.

The Department is I.S.O. certified (at the present time “8,” with “1” being the best and “10” the worst.) The fire department’s goal is to get the rating down to a “3” which would result in structures within a three-mile radius of the qualifying for reduced fire insurance rates. One of the Strategies to lower this rating is to install more dry hydrants in Cabot.

There are 11 dry hydrants in Cabot: Urban Road (Smith), Bolton Road (Baharian), Coits Pond Road (West Hill Pond), South Walden Road (Pinette), Route 2 in East Cabot (Payne), Coits Pond Road (Houston), Ducharme Road (Ameden), Thistle Hill (Walker), Houghton Road (Covenant Hills), Bricketts Crossing, and Rte. 215 North (Greaves).

The Fire Department recently updated its bylaws to specify provisions for a junior membership program that would accept students 16 years and older into the department. Junior members would have limited responsibilities, and would be required to maintain a minimum grade point average. There is also provision in the bylaws for associate members who can volunteer for non-firefighting responsibilities.

The Town has developed a Local Hazard Mitigation Plan with the assistance of the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission to assure that the Town is capable of responding and protecting the public in the event of a natural disaster. These plans are subject to FEMA approval. The town has a current five-year plan that identifies the types of natural disasters that Cabot is most vulnerable to and action steps that will be taken over the next five years to enhance response to such disasters. The Town is most vulnerable to issues such as dam failure, flood/flash flood/fluvial erosion, hurricanes/severe storms/tropical storms, structure fire, and extreme cold/winter storm/ice storms.

Challenges /Needs:

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

Building needs are:

- Improve storage of equipment and gear
- Increase space for training and meeting
- Expand space for work and service of vehicles and equipment
- Become ADA compliant

The following emergency response issues have been identified:

- In regard to water, the Fire Department is currently looking for additional locations for dry hydrants on Bothfeld Hill Road, and West Hill Road, and will utilize state funding when available. Water supply availability to fight fires in remote areas of town where new residential construction has occurred is also a challenge.
- Additional volunteers are needed to insure adequate response, especially during the day. As a greater number of residents find employment outside of town, the challenge of adequate fire coverage by a volunteer squad becomes a greater concern that needs to be addressed.
- Visibility of house numbers is critical for emergency responders. The numbers should be displayed where they are easily seen from the public road.
- Road access has been identified as a major concern, as well. Adequate road width and turnaround areas are needed to permit tanker trucks and other apparatus to reach fires.
- Although significant improvements have been made to improve communication via radio and pager, repeater (signal booster) locations may be necessary in Cabot to obtain 100 percent coverage.
- In order to better assure the safety of fire department personnel as well as property owners, the Cabot Fire Department supports integrating the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards into Town building standards, and suggests that a Certificate of Occupancy system be established to ensure consistency of new construction and renovations with established standards.

The Cabot Ambulance has identified the following challenges:

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

In regard to Cabot's Local Hazard Mitigation Plan, a challenge will be to find resources to implement the measures identified in the plan to enhance the response to natural disasters.

4. Cabot School

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

During the 2010-2011 school year, groundwater seepage and flooding in the elementary and high school buildings necessitated foundation, waterproofing, and excavation work as well as interior renovations. In 2011, the Cabot School Directors began a general assessment of the condition of the school buildings, which will serve as a guide for future repairs and renovations.

In an effort to increase communication, three community forums were held in 2010 in Cabot. Among the issues discussed were strengths and weaknesses of the Cabot School, the concept of merging with other school districts, and ways to reduce spending. The school directors used the input received at these forums in making decisions about the future of the Cabot School.

The Cabot School Directors have decided not to move ahead with governance merger with other school districts, but have looked at ways to enhance opportunities for Cabot students by collaborating with the neighboring school districts of Twinfield and Danville. The Washington Northeast Supervisory Union has commissioned a Collaboration Study to investigate ways to share operational, administrative and educational functions.

Rather than make cuts to the high school staff in order to reduce the budget, the Cabot School Directors requested the principal and staff to undertake an assessment and redesign of the high school curriculum with the intention of using the improvements to attract additional high school students in future years.

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

Enrollment and Staffing

There were 16 students in the graduating class of 2010, and total student enrollment (Pre-K through 12) in the 2010 -2011 school year was 221: 20 in Pre-K, 101 in K-6, 35 in the middle school, and 65 in grades 9-12. Of the total students enrolled in 2010-11 year, 12

came from outside the district. Enrollment over the past five years has varied with a high of 230 in 2008-2009 and a low of 200 in 2006-2007.

Based on information available from the State Department of Education for fiscal year 2011, Cabot had the following faculty and staff (paraprofessional) full time teaching equivalents (FTE):

Direct Instruction:	23.9
Teacher Aides:	7
Student Support	2
Instructional Staff Support	2

Expenditures

Total expenditures for Cabot School operational costs for fiscal years 2010, 2011, and 2012, as reported in annual report for 2010- 2011 was as follows:

FY10 Actual: \$3,469,135

FY11 Budget: \$3,310,607

FY12 Budget: \$3,398,289

Of these totals, between 8% and 9% were for operations and maintenance, and 4% were for student transportation.

Cabot School as a Community Resource

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

The school is frequently used by various community groups for recreational and organizational functions. The gym is used after school and on weekends both by adults and students for sports activities and other events such as auctions and craft shows. Cabot residents are able to walk in the gym each morning during winter. The school kitchen is used throughout the year by many organizations for fund raising dinners and food sales.

Community groups utilize school facilities for activities and events. Organizations such as Girl Scouts, Vermont Rural Partnership, the Athletic Committee, and the Parent-Teacher-Student Organization (PTSO) make frequent use of the meeting spaces after school hours. In addition, the art teacher has offered instructional courses for community members.

Educational Opportunities Available to Cabot Residents

The Cabot School arranges learning opportunities with other educational institutions in Vocational and Continuing Education. Besides the Barre Vocational Technical School, there are several post-secondary schools in the region. Vermont Student Assistance Corporation (VSAC), Adult Basic Education, and Cabot's Wellness Director work closely with community individuals and families to inform them about academic and skills-based program application processes, costs, and scholarship opportunities and the availability of financial aid. On average, 60-70% of Cabot graduates go on to post-secondary education

following graduation.

Challenges/Needs

Although the Cabot, Twinfield, and WNESU Boards decided not to move ahead with governance merger, they have recognized that collaboration is a way to improve student learning and make more efficient use of resources. The Collaboration Study commissioned by the WNESU Board will investigate possible ways to share operational, administrative and educational functions.

5. Cabot Public Library

The library facility occupies two rooms, approximately 1300 square feet, on the second floor of the Willey Building and is ADA accessible. The library is open 25 hours per week, and is staffed by two co-directors and six substitutes. It has a five-member Board of Trustees.

The library provides Internet access as well as connection to the Vermont Automated Library System (VALS), affording access to inter-library loan programs. The library participates in Listen Up! Vermont, a website where library patrons can download free audio books. The library provides three computers for public use serviced with DSL, a high speed Internet access.

Services and programs include Preschool Story Time, an after school Game Club, Vermont Humanities Council adult book discussions, Summer Reading Programs, and special monthly programs. The number of volumes is approximately 8,000. In 2010, over 9700 items circulated, with 56% apportioned to adults, and 44% to juveniles.

Challenges/Needs

Renovations to library shelving were completed in 2010. However, there is a need for more space, evidenced by overflowing shelves that require culling of the collection.

6. Cabot Masonic Hall

The 2003 Town Plan noted that although the school and church had long been the hub of activities for education, arts, and community meetings, a community center was needed. This need was established as a high priority through community input. In 2006 the Masonic Hall was donated to the Town by the Masons, and it now is available for public and private use most evenings and weekends. Faith in Action Northern Communities Partnership rents the space for its day to day operations. Renovations, including weatherization, are underway.

7. Recreation

A variety of recreational programs and activities are available in Cabot.

The Cabot School provides a vital component to recreation through its middle and high school sports programs. Many non-student residents use school gym facilities. Many parents volunteer to coach the school's basketball, soccer, and little league teams. Local residents also contribute time to support summer soccer camp, adult basketball, bicycling, ice skating and the beginnings of a community trail system.

Public lands in Cabot are available for hiking, swimming and boating access for fishing, and other low-impact recreation. These include our town forest, town rights-of-way, and class IV roads, which may be used for skiing, biking, jogging, horseback riding, and walking. (See Transportation section for issues relating to maintenance of Class IV roads.)

Cabot owns the recreation field at the north end of village, with its two ball fields, basketball court, storage buildings, and picnic area.

The Recreation Committee actively promotes, maintains, and raises funds for recreational improvements and equipment purchases. These efforts have contributed significantly to improvements at the recreation field including construction of the shelter facilities, drainage improvements at the adjacent baseball/soccer fields and a new guardrail at the parking area.

A privately owned facility, Larry and Son Field, is used for soccer, baseball & softball. There have been recent improvements which include the construction of two dugouts, concessions stand and storage room as well as installation of improved material for the baselines and break-away bases.

Public boating access for fishing is available at West Hill Pond, Joe's Pond, Coits Pond and the Molly's Falls Reservoir. All access points are on State land. Recreational activities at Joe's Pond include boating, fishing, and swimming.

The Skylighters Snowmobile Club maintains trails in Cabot. Approximately fifty miles of trails, primarily on privately owned land, interconnect with the Vermont Association of Snowmobile Travelers (V.A.S.T.) system and is enjoyed by snowmobile operators and cross country skiers.

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

Challenges/Needs

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

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

Over the years, the Recreation Committee has been a recipient of federal funds for improvements at the recreation field facilities. The Recreation Committee has traditionally requested funds at Town Meeting to supplement its own fund raising activities such as concession sales at sporting events, bingo nights, and an annual sports equipment swap/sale. Maintenance of the recreation field facilities is currently accomplished through the efforts of the Town maintenance personnel with some assistance from Recreation Committee volunteers.

Over 50% of Cabot School students participate in interscholastic athletic activities. Team sports and adult and non-student uses of the gym often compete for valuable gym time. Given the age of the school gym, there are maintenance issues in need of review. While team sports are important to the Cabot community, there has been declining interest, and the Recreation Committee is evaluating alternative sports activities.

8. Solid Waste

Cabot is now a member of the Northeast Kingdom Waste Management District (NEKWMD), having previously been a member of the Central Vermont Solid Waste Management District (CVSWMD) since 1989. Each of the member towns in the NEKWMD is represented by at least one Supervisor. The Board of Supervisors is the primary authority over the NEKWMD.

Solid waste collection and disposal is not provided to residents as a municipal service. Residents have several options for trash disposal: self-haul to a transfer station; private hauler pick-up; or bag drop off to a private trash hauler. Transport and disposal is provided through private firms to a limited number of large landfills. There is currently adequate landfill capacity in the private sector. A private trash hauling service is available at the town recycling center where recycling can be dropped off free of charge. A roll-off container for free scrap metal disposal is provided. Household hazardous waste collection is offered periodically. The recycling center is located on Saw Mill Road adjacent to the Town Wastewater Treatment Facility.

9. Water Supply

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

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

The Danville Hill Well provides the primary source of public water for those within the water service area of Cabot. It is located about a half mile east of the village center before the intersection with Menard/Old Center Road and is drilled to a depth of 295 feet. The yield of this well is estimated to be between 300 and 500 gallons per minute (GPM).

The Walden Road Well, also known as the Bond Hill Well, provides a secondary source of water for Cabot, and is located on Route 215 north of its intersection with Main Street, and less than half a mile from the intersection with Garney Road. The well was drilled in 1949 at a depth of 225 feet. The static flow yield is estimated to be 30 GPM.

Utility Partners currently manages both the water supply and wastewater systems. There are currently 104 water users, with a three year allocation pending for an additional seven units to be constructed on Danville Hill Road. The water system is rated at 50,000 gallons per day and current usage is currently at almost half of capacity. Once water usage is at 80 percent of capacity an engineering study must be performed.

Challenges/Needs

A number of residential wells in Lower Cabot were contaminated by volatile petroleum compounds as a result of a petroleum leak from the buried fuel tanks at the former Derek’s Country Store (the tanks were removed in 1998). Bottled water was previously provided to the owners of these contaminated wells by the State of Vermont. Based on the latest available report provided to the Department of Environmental Conservation by Ross Environmental Associates, sampling was conducted in November 2009 on 13 monitoring wells, the drinking water supply well serving one of the residences, and the carbon treatment system serving the on-site supply well. Three areas of concern were noted at that time, in which contaminant concentrations remained above the Vermont Groundwater Enforcement Standards. Originally, four residences had point-of-use carbon treatment systems installed. The contamination has dissipated, and currently only one residence remains eligible to receive bottled water.

Water drawn from many wells and springs in Lower Cabot tends toward a sulfur flavor, although this has not been linked to any outside source of contamination. This condition has existed at least prior to 1900, according to several sources.

10. Sewage and Municipal Wastewater

The Cabot Wastewater Treatment Facility, located on Sawmill Road in Cabot, was completed in fall of 2001. The area of the former Cabot Village and Lower Cabot is in the service area of the municipal wastewater system. (See Map 3 in Appendix B) The facility is

managed by Utility Partners, and is under the direct authority of the Selectboard. All daily operations and plant management decisions are made by the Selectboard or its designee, the waste water Superintendent. Since the Wastewater Commission dissolved in 2010, budgeting, rate-setting and capacity allocation is the responsibility of the Selectboard.

Cabot's sewage treatment facility has a design capacity of 50,000 gallons per day (GPD), with a daily flow of 20,000 to 25,000 GPD. There are currently 114 connections and 163.5 Equivalent Residential Units (ERU) on the system. An additional 7 ERUs have been committed for a proposed development on Danville Hill Road.

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

Challenges/Needs

A capital budget needs to be developed to deal with the depreciation and inevitable failure of major plant components. The Selectboard has developed a plan to restore and grow investment funds that were depleted in prior years.

A careful prioritization of the allocation of reserve capacity will necessarily define the scope of potential development within the wastewater service area. The Wastewater Ordinance sets forth mechanisms for the distribution of capacity for different user classifications. The Selectboard is charged with setting annual limits for each user classification. However, long term management of the reserve capacity is not addressed in detail. The Selectboard should determine, with input from the Planning Commission, School Board, the local business community and the UDAG committee, whether uses such as elderly housing, restaurants, or other commercial uses should be favored over increased residential development, and if some capacity should be reserved for future expansion of the school.

11. Electric Service

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

Green Mountain Power maintains hydroelectric generating facilities at the Marshfield Reservoir and Joe's Pond. According to GMP's data, only two percent of the power it sold to customers in 2010 came directly from fossil fuels. 40% came from nuclear power, 46% from hydropower, 3% from biomass, 1% from wood, methane and wind, and 8% from unspecified market purchases.

The Washington Electric Cooperative owns and operates the Wrightsville hydroelectric generating station, which is a store-and-release plant located at the Wrightsville Dam on the North Branch of the Winooski River. It also operates an electric generating facility at Vermont's largest landfill in Coventry. This facility powered by landfill methane is estimated

to provide about two-thirds of WEC's members' electricity needs. (See also "Energy" section of Plan)

12. Communications

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

Challenges/Needs

The town's telecommunications zoning regulations need to be reviewed to ensure they are consistent with current technological changes and advancements in the industry and recent changes to state statutes. They should also provide direction regarding the siting of facilities.

The general public and businesses depend on adequate telecommunications services. Cell phone service and high-speed internet access is not available in all parts of Town, and, as noted previously, wireless communications for emergency services are not adequate in some locations in town.

13. Law Enforcement

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

Challenges/Needs

Vandalism is always a concern throughout Town. With limited law enforcement presence, it is beneficial to maintain vigilance throughout the community. A neighborhood/ community watch should be explored.

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

14. Health and Human Services

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

The United Church of Cabot plays a valuable supportive role in the community. The Twin Town Homemakers, which meets at the church, donates to school and community-based agencies, and provides social events for its members. The Church is also home to a weekly Alcoholics Anonymous meeting.

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

Cabot Coalition

The Cabot Coalition is a community-based grassroots organization, including parents, school staff, youth, business owners, senior citizens and members of the faith community, who identify issues, create strategies, and implement solutions to enhance Cabot's overall quality of life, community health and economic development. The coalition began in 1998 in response to a series of crimes committed by juvenile offenders. The Cabot Coalition's membership has grown to include more than 200 community volunteers.

The Cabot Coalition has been awarded grants from the federal and state government for its work and receives significant local support from area businesses and taxpayers through an annual town appropriation.

The Cabot Coalition implements and oversees five key programs:

- **Cabot Connects:** A community-based mentor program that matches an adult volunteer and a young person (ages 9-17) with the expectation that a caring and supportive relationship will develop. More than 30 adults are matched with youth in our community. Fifteen percent (15%) of eligible youth in Cabot have a mentor.
- **The Cabot Chronicle:** When town and school communication became an issue for the community, the Coalition gathered 30 key players together and created a community-based town newspaper. In 2008, The Cabot Chronicle debuted and continues as a vibrant, reliable, monthly publication that brings relevant news to every Cabot resident's mailbox.
- **Community Leadership Development:** In addition to our work with adult community members, the coalition sponsors middle and high school student action groups. These groups each meet once a week to discuss current issues, make plans to deal with these issues, and organize healthy recreational activities.
- **Community / Economic Development:** Earlier in 2011, the coalition brought together community leaders to improve collaboration. The result of that meeting was the creation of a Community and Economic Development Committee. There is tremendous momentum to move this discussion into action and the group was

unanimous in selecting the Cabot Coalition, with demonstrated leadership and successful follow-through, be the organization to drive this effort.

- **Health Promotion:** The coalition works with our Cabot School partners to ensure that classroom time is dedicated to teaching skills to guide youth towards making healthy decisions. The coalition also implements parent outreach strategies and uses The Cabot Chronicle to share emerging information with our readers about health and wellness issues.

One of our most successful strategies is identifying future leaders (adults who are not yet fully engaged in community life) and providing opportunities for them to build and/or use their skills where they live. Once involved these folks bring new ideas, energy and connections that expands our reach and capacity. Many of our current coalition leaders previously considered Cabot just a place to sleep since they commuted elsewhere to work each day, but now these volunteers have found ways to be meaningfully engaged in their community.

An independent evaluation report found that “The Cabot Coalition has connected community participants, board members, school staff, volunteers, and businesses in a comprehensive effort to benefit young people. If isolation contributes to human problems, then the coalition is doing its best to promote connection, health and resilience among its constituents. The Cabot Coalition harnesses human and financial capital as well as information and material goods to put power behind an effort aimed at the health of its community.”

Child Care

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

In 2011, Cabot had four registered home-based child care providers. The Cabot Preschool is a licensed child care facility, providing a pre-kindergarten program for 4-year-olds. In addition, there is a summer camp for school-aged children in Cabot that is a licensed child care facility.

A home child-care facility that serves no more than six children full-time and four children part-time, which is protected under State statute as an allowed use of a single-family dwelling, and falls under the further statutory protections for home occupations. Although all day care facilities are required to be registered or licensed with the state (depending on size), they are considered by right to constitute a permitted single family residential use of property. As such, municipal regulations cannot unduly burden or restrict such facilities. Daycare facilities may be subject to safety access requirements if and when the Town adopts such standards for new structures.

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

Currently Cabot School's afterschool program, TLC, a licensed daycare facility, provides a safe, educational and enriching blend of activities for students in grades 1-6. TLC is open Monday-Thursday until 5:30 p.m. whenever school is in session. TLC offers a sliding fee scale and needs-based scholarships.

Challenges/Needs

An updated list of all registered and licensed day care facilities in Town would help residents in need connect with these services. This list should also be made available to the Ambulance and Fire Departments (see: http://dcf.vermont.gov/child_care) In addition, fire safety building standards for all residential uses will help insure the safety of children in home-based day care facilities.

15. Civic and Cultural Activities

A. Introduction

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

B. Existing Conditions

Civic Life

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

1. Town Meeting

Like roughly 31 percent of Vermont towns and cities where the town meeting tradition continues, Cabot's civic life reaches its climax on the first Tuesday of March each year.

During town meeting, roughly 20% of Cabot's eligible voters gather to discuss the Town's business and pass important decisions – some (such as the election of town officials) by Australian Ballot and many others (such as the town's \$1.2m budget) through discussion and voice, hand, or paper ballot. In a sense, this is our single greatest opportunity to learn where our shared and individual priorities and interests in the town lie and to plan our investments in the future.

Cabot can pride itself in having an excellent town meeting moderator and the benefit of civil – if at times lively and tense – discourse on town business. In 2010 Cabot's town meeting took place over two days: a meeting on the School budget Monday evening, and other town matters the following day. Both meetings took place in the Cabot School gymnasium. Town meeting is an important opportunity to hear how our preferences stack up against those of others, and to hear the voices in favor or opposed to various discussion items. While there has been some movement over the years to move toward Australian Ballot (which is used by 69 percent of Vermont towns to conduct most business), so far most voters prefer to come together to learn about town matters and make decisions regarding specific articles together.

During town meeting, town voters are able to learn more about the people and the institutions that support well-being in Cabot. In 2010 Cabot voters elected to support a striking range of groups that benefit Cabot's roughly 1,200 residents – more than 25 civic organizations received funding from Cabot in 2011, including local organizations (such as the Cabot Coalition and the Aquatic Nuisance Control Project at Joe's Pond) to regional and state-wide organizations (such as the Washington County Youth Services Bureau and Green Up Vermont).

2. Voluntary Associations

Cabot is a healthy, thriving community that aligns well with the State of Vermont's major indicators of well-being (see Vermont Indicators Online project at www.vcgi.org/indicators). Part of this success is due to the quality of services provided by the many voluntary and civic associations that have a strong presence in town. These include local organizations like the Cabot Coalition, regional associations like the Winooski Natural Resources Conservation District, and state-wide associations like Green Up Vermont. Long-standing organizations with a physical presence in Cabot – from Cabot United Church, the Cabot Library, and new civic resources like the Cabot School Performing Arts Center – contribute significantly to the civic health of Cabot – they host public functions and welcome other groups to hold meetings in their space while providing their own programs and services to the public.

Overall, the organizations most active in support of Cabot's civic life are of four kinds:

- Human services, including educational, social, and well-being support for children, families, and the elderly
- The environment, including conservation and stewardship efforts
- Recreation, including after school and social programming
- Cultural, including historical, craft, and arts oriented programming

Many of these organizations provide essential stop-gap services where government and private support is insufficient. While the dollar value of these services can be calculated as a series of Town investments totaling roughly \$25,000 for FY2011, the return on that investment in terms of tangible benefits (food provided to hard-up families), as well as intangible benefits (awareness, sense of security, social capital, connectedness) are invaluable and Cabot residents who support these programs have good reason for pride.

3. Internet Resources

The ability of citizens to access, interpret, make use of, and produce useful information is a hallmark of our time. Cabot is not immune to these pressures. As more and more residents gain access to the Internet, expectations are likely to change. This is an opportunity for growth in some interesting ways.

Already, the Cabot Library provides free wireless Internet access. In addition, a privately managed town website (<http://cabotvt.us>) – with the support of the Selectboard and Town Clerk – provides useful information about key activities in the civic life of the town, from election results to upcoming events and public meeting minutes. At the same time, a free but private email list (GeneralPublic@cabotvt.us) serves to share important announcements and requests among Cabot residents. Finally, a new and growing town paper, the Cabot Chronicle (<http://cabotchronicle.org>), provides a useful point of reference for town news and local perspective.

At the same time, many Cabot residents and associations are taking to social networking resources such as Facebook and Twitter, where social chatter along with news and information upcoming events are shared regularly. The Town of Cabot maintains a Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Town-of-Cabot>.

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

The Arts and Culture

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

Cultural and artistic life in Cabot is punctuated by a few important events throughout the year. The annual Fourth of July parade attracts thousands of spectators who pack Main Street, coming to see the train of floats, dancers, antique and farm equipment, and other displays of local cultural and civic life each year. The parade traditionally has ended at the recreation field where the Cabot School PTSO puts together an afternoon of games, food, entertainment and a flea market.

The fall Apple Pie Festival, hosted annually by the Historical Society since 1999, has grown into a profitable fund raiser. It is held in the Cabot school gymnasium where dozens of apple pies baked by community members are tasted and judged for their baking accomplishment. Hundreds of other pies are sold in an atmosphere of fall celebration.

Other notable activities throughout the year include Fall Foliage Week during which tours, hikes, and arts and crafts are available; Old Home Week in August, during which homes of historical interest are opened to the public for tour; the Maple Festival (the third Saturday in March); the annual Garden Tour hosted by Friends of the Cabot Library in June; the Fireman's Breakfast; Joe's Pond Association's Fourth of July Fireworks; and the Joes Pond Ice Out raffle each spring.

CSPAC

Since the 2003 Town Plan, the goal of creating a performing space has been realized with the construction of the Cabot School Performing Arts Center, and the acquisition of the Masonic Hall by the Town also provides additional space for community gatherings. Completed in 2009, CSPAC is used for school music rehearsals and performances as well as community events such as the Cabot Community Theater, talent shows, and film screenings.

Historical Society

The Cabot Historical Society was formally founded in 1965 and currently maintains two historic properties in Town, the Main Street Museum (acquired in 1978) and the West Hill School (acquired in 1970). Both buildings have been restored, and the Main Street Museum (a.k.a. the Brimblecombe Shop) houses a collection of historical artifacts. The collections grew out of earlier collections of the Old Home Week Committee, begun in 1901. The Museum is open on selected dates, including the 4th of July, from mid-May 1 through October. The Main Street Museum also houses an intact and well-preserved second story theater. The Historical Society has also published collections of oral histories, a local family history, and a collection of early Cabot photographs. The Historical Society has recently launched a new website, cabothistory.com.

Cabot United Church

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

The Willey Building

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

Other arts and culture resources in Cabot include:

- Cabot Creamery, which hosts regular introductions to Cabot's dairy roots;

- Cabot Community Theater, which held its first series of children’s plays in 2010
- Old Crow Craft Farm, offers artisan crafts, dolls and carved wood sculptures;
- Birdman Woodcarving, featuring sculptural works;
- Klingler’s Woodcarving, featuring fine woodcarving and custom woodworking;
- The Gallery at Loon Cove (Joe’s Pond), which features nature photography;
- Vermont Floorcloths, featuring finely decorated traditional floorcloths

Challenges, Needs

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

Increase visibility

As it stands, too many Cabot’s residents and visitors are unaware of existing civic and cultural opportunities. We can increase visibility of these assets through:

- Improved village and road signage to key points of interest around town
- Distribution of regularly produced print material in high-traffic locations like the Cabot Creamery and the General Store
- Develop standards for, and maintain, a robust presence for civic and cultural activities on the town website
- Expand the access and utility of email announcements through use of online tools like FrontPorchForum.com

Broaden participation

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

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

Invest in Facilities

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

- The old church/school gymnasium, once the proposed site for a dairy museum
- The former Goldie’s Gathering and Cabot Inn, now privately owned and vacant

Support Youth

Through increased coordination, fundraising, and resource-sharing, Cabot could significantly improve the out-of-school resources available to students interested in exploring the arts, technology, and culture. Areas for growth might include:

- Film-making, including animation
- Website design

- Audio production, including a local radio station
- Community theater and writing workshops

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

C. Goals and Implementation Strategies

Goal	Implementation Strategy	Key Implementer(s)	Future Measures of Progress
<p>IX.1 Continue to provide Cabot with excellent ambulance services and fire protection with trained volunteers and well-maintained equipment. Protect residents and businesses to the extent feasible from natural disasters.</p>	<p>IX.1(a) Use available opportunities (Cabot Chronicle, Town email list) to publicize/advertise the need for volunteers.</p> <p>IX.1(b) Explore options for meeting requirements for training/ costs/mutual aid.</p> <p>IX.1(c) Develop public information campaign with the goal of having all residents ensure their house numbers are visible from the road to aid in quick response during an emergency.</p> <p>IX.1(d) Continue to maintain and implement a Local Hazard Mitigation Plan .</p>	<p>Cabot Ambulance/Fire Dept.</p> <p>Cabot Ambulance</p> <p>Cabot Ambulance/Fire Department</p> <p>Selectboard, Fire Department, Planning Commission</p>	<p>Volunteers increase</p> <p>Options reviewed</p> <p>House numbering improved</p> <p>Mitigation Plan updated every 5 years and after any natural disaster</p>
<p>IX.2 Maintain the Cabot public library as an important community resource.</p>	<p>IX.2(a) Library directors will develop and implement a detailed plan to forward this goal, supported by a yearly Town appropriation and supplemented by private donations.</p>	<p>Cabot Library Trustees</p>	<p>Plan developed</p>
<p>IX.3 The Cabot School will continue to be a source of vitality to the Cabot community and a resource for the community as a whole.</p>	<p>IX.3(a) The School and Town will explore opportunities to engage the community as a whole in educational enrichment programs.</p> <p>IX.3(b) The School will continue to explore and implement methods to publicize school events and activities to all town residents and other methods to improve communication with the</p>	<p>School Board/Selectboard/ Planning Commission</p> <p>School Board/Selectboard/ Planning Commission</p>	<p>School events publicized</p> <p>Educational enrichment programs developed</p>

Goal	Implementation Strategy	Key Implementer(s)	Future Measures of Progress
	<p>community as a whole.</p> <p>IX.3(c) The School will be encouraged to explore methods to engage students in meaningful community service and involvement in town government.</p>	<p>School Board/Selectboard</p>	<p>Town Events involving students organized</p>
<p>IX.4 Ensure effective town governance and ensure that all Town facilities, and infrastructure, including water supply and wastewater facilities, are properly maintained and appropriately located.</p>	<p>IX.4(a) The Planning Commission and Selectboard will begin discussions on the development of a Capital Improvement Plan and budget for maintaining the Town’s infrastructure.</p> <p>IX.4(b) Secure an appropriate site for the relocation of the Town garage.</p> <p>IX.4(c) Evaluate benefits of co-locating Fire/ Emergency Services with the Town Garage and Recycling Center.</p> <p>IX.4(d) Evaluate the benefits of establishing the position of Town Administrator.</p> <p>IX.4(e) Explore the feasibility and advantages of creating a Development Review Board (DRB) to replace the existing Zoning Board of Adjustment</p>	<p>Planning Commission/ Selectboard</p> <p>Selectboard</p> <p>Selectboard/Planning Commission</p> <p>Selectboard/Planning Commission</p> <p>Select Board/Board of Adjustment/Planning Commission</p>	<p>CIP discussions occur</p> <p>Sites for relocation assessed</p> <p>Sites for relocation assessed</p> <p>Decision on Town Administrator made</p> <p>Decision made on whether to propose the creation of a DRB</p>
<p>IX.5 Cabot’s high ground water quality is maintained and citizens are aware of preventative measures to protect water quality.</p>	<p>IX.5(a) Implement the Source Protection Plan for the Cabot Water System and update every three years as required.</p> <p>IX.5(b) Evaluate these source protection plans for implications to the zoning</p>	<p>Selectboard/contract operator</p> <p>Planning Commission</p>	<p>Report up to date</p> <p>Zoning regulations reviewed and</p>

Goal	Implementation Strategy	Key Implementer(s)	Future Measures of Progress
	regulations and propose any amendments to protect the public water supply, including the establishment of a source protection overlay district.		revised as necessary
IX.6 Ensure that potable water is available to Lower Cabot residents with contaminated wells.	IX.6(a) The Selectboard explores the feasibility of extending the village water supply to Lower Cabot.	Selectboard	Feasibility study completed
IX.7 Regulate future development within the wastewater service area.	IX.7(a) The Selectboard, in cooperation with the Planning Commission, shall discuss and develop clear allocation formulas to insure a fair and beneficial distribution of reserve capacity consistent with the objectives of the Town Plan and other ordinances or regulations of the Town.	Selectboard/Planning Commission	Allocation schedule adopted on a yearly basis
IX.8 Educate new residents in Town on all available Town services, facilities, and cultural and historic resources.	IX.8(a) Establish an informal “welcome wagon” program for newcomers to the community, to acquaint them with services, events, programs, community organizations, health care availability, etc. in town.	Community and Economic Development Committee	Program established
IX.9 Ensure the availability of safe and affordable child care in Town.	IX.9(a) Review zoning regulations to ensure safe and accessible child care facilities.	Planning Commission	Zoning regulations revised as needed
IX.10 Identify and ensure access to resources for various recreational activities.	IX.10(a) Continue to develop and maintain a trail system in town for recreational use. IX.10(b) Identify through signs, maps, and other means, Cabot’s trail facilities, land trust lands, town forests, historical resources, and other desirable areas warranting public access.	Conservation and Recreation Committees Community and Economic Development Committee/ Recreation Committee	Permissions secured, trails cut Signs created, GPS identifiers collected , maps available at Town Hall/ kiosks/ web pages

Goal	Implementation Strategy	Key Implementer(s)	Future Measures of Progress
	<p>IX.10(c) Study the compatibility of motorized and non-motorized recreational use of trails, identify trails which might be safely used by both and, where appropriate, make recommendations for the separation of uses.</p>	<p>Planning Commission/ Recreation Committee</p>	<p>Development of recommendations</p>
<p>IX.11 Minimize the impact of telecommunications facilities on the scenic, historic, environmental, natural, and human resources of Cabot, and on property values, while allowing adequate telecommunications services to be developed.</p>	<p>IX.11(a) The town should periodically update its telecommunications zoning regulations to keep abreast of technological changes and advancements in the industry.</p> <p>IX.11(b) Encourage co-location of antennae on existing structures to the extent practicable.</p>	<p>Planning Commission/ Selectboard</p> <p>Planning Commission</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Revise zoning regulations as needed</p>
<p>IX.12 Increase visibility of civics and culture in Cabot.</p>	<p>IX.12(a) Improve village and road signage to key points of interest around town.</p> <p>IX.12(b) Regularly distribute produced print material in high-traffic locations like the Cabot Creamery, village store, and hardware store.</p> <p>IX.12(c) Develop standards for, and maintain, a robust presence for civic and cultural activities on the town website and expand the access and utility of email announcements through use of online tools like FrontPorchForum.com</p>	<p>Planning Commission/ Selectboard /</p> <p>Community and Economic Development Committee</p> <p>Selectboard/ Community and Economic Development Committee</p>	<p>Enhance road signs installed</p> <p>Print materials produced and distributed</p> <p>Town Website enhancement strategy developed</p>
<p>IX.13 Broaden public</p>	<p>IX.13(a) Sponsor an “open</p>	<p>Planning</p>	<p>Open house</p>

Goal	Implementation Strategy	Key Implementer(s)	Future Measures of Progress
participation in civic and cultural life.	<p>house” event to familiarize Cabot residents with Town offices, services, and community groups that comprise civic life.</p> <p>X.13(b) Regularly promote ongoing volunteer opportunities in civic organizations (for example: Town website and Cabot Chronicle).</p> <p>IX.13(c) Coordinated promotion of civic activities by maintaining a calendar of events.</p>	Commission/ Selectboard / Community and Economic Development Committee	<p>created</p> <p>Record of promotion</p> <p>Calendar of events created</p>
IX.14 Encourage a venue to bring the visual arts and crafts into downtown Cabot.	IX.14(a) Conduct a feasibility study to maintain a year-round venue for arts and crafts in downtown Cabot.	Planning Commission/ Community and Economic Development Committee	Feasibility study conducted and report drafted
IX.15 Increase the out-of-school arts resources available to Cabot youth.	IX.15(a) Explore feasibility of establishing a youth/teen center.	Planning Commission/ Cabot Coalition	Feasibility study conducted and report drafted

Cabot Community Planning Survey

Purpose and methodology

The Cabot Community Planning Survey was conducted in the month of June, 2010. This was the Cabot Planning Commission's first step in reaching out to the Cabot community to seek input on various issues that would be covered in the Town Plan. Residents of all ages were invited to participate anonymously.

Prior to the opening of the survey on June 1, postcards were mailed to all Town residents notifying them of the purpose of the survey, how to access the survey online, and where to find paper copies. Copies of the survey were distributed as an insert to the June issue of *The Cabot Chronicle*, and were also available at the Town Clerk's office and the local library. Eighty-five residents responded, 63 online, and 22 using the paper survey.

The survey contained a total of 26 questions. The first 11 questions sought the opinion of Town residents on various issues that would be addressed in the Town Plan. Questions 12, 13 and 14 inquired about past participation of the respondents in the Town planning process, gauged interest in future participation, and solicited general comments on the Town Plan update. Questions 15 and 16 gathered information regarding the area of Town where respondents lived, and their age, as a way of determining the general representativeness of the survey responses. Question 17 was used to direct certain questions to year-round residents; seasonal residents skipped forward to question 25. Questions 18-24 were for year-round residents, and pertained to occupations, employment status, home-ownership, number of years residing in town, farming practices, and number of school children in the household. The last two questions asked residents to rate Town facilities and services, and to identify what they believed were the most significant problems affecting youth in the community.

Based on a comparison to the age breakdown within the population estimates for Cabot for 2010, the survey response rate was determined to be about 8.3%.

Results

Valued Resources and Quality of Life in Cabot

The **first question** on the survey asked residents to rate the extent to which they value particular physical features and institutions in Cabot. Out of the choices provided, "working farms" ranked first as the most-valued feature in Cabot, followed by "natural features" in second place, and "historic buildings and sites" in third. Respondents were also given the option of identifying additional features that were not specifically listed. Ten people took this opportunity to describe or elaborate on the features they value most.

1. To what extent do you value the following features of Cabot?

Answer Options	Very Valuable	Valuable	Not Valuable	Don't Know	Response Count
Historic buildings and sites	36.5% (31)	56.5% (48)	3.5% (3)	3.5% (3)	85
Working farms	77.6% (66)	22.4% (19)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	85
Natural features (lakes,rivers,forests,etc.)	76.5% (65)	21.2% (18)	0.0% (0)	2.4% (2)	85
Schools	57.6% (49)	30.6% (26)	10.6% (9)	1.2% (1)	85
Community and cultural organizations	48.2% (41)	38.8% (33)	7.1% (6)	5.9% (5)	85
Recreational facilities	28.2% (24)	56.5% (48)	11.8% (10)	3.5% (3)	85
Other (please specify and indicate value) 10					10
<i>answered question</i>					85
<i>skipped question</i>					0

Number	Other (please specify and indicate value)
1	stores & businesses - very valuable
2	open land
3	community facilities library, fire station town recycling garage
4	value k-8, not high school
5	working organic farms, public library, local farmers market, food and hardware store in village: very valuable
6	times of community celebration around all of them... potlucks, parades, suppers, etc.
7	Jobs!
8	a relaxed place to visit with local people, café
9	Events and organizations that provide for our youth after school, weekends and summer.
10	active "downtown" in the village is also very valuable

While the first question on the survey dealt with physical features or institutions, the second question dealt with qualities of the community. It is noted that while “working farms” was the front runner in question 1, in **question 2** a “healthy economy” rated number one as valuable in maintaining a high quality of life. “Rural character” and “scenic qualities” tied for second, and “neighborly connections” came in third. Respondents were given the option of identifying additional features important to a high quality of life. Four people took this opportunity to describe or elaborate on the qualities they value most.

2. How valuable are the following in maintaining a high quality of life in Cabot?

Answer Options	Very Valuable	Valuable	Not Valuable	Don't Know	Response Count
Rural character	57.6% (49)	36.5% (31)	4.7% (4)	1.2%(1)	85
Scenic qualities	55.3% (47)	38.8% (33)	5.9% (5)	0.0% (0)	85
Small-town character	48.2% (41)	41.2% (35)	9.4% (8)	1.2% (1)	85
Safety	54.1% (46)	37.6% (32)	7.1% (6)	1.2% (1)	85
Neighborly connections	50.6% (43)	41.2% (35)	4.7% (4)	3.5% (3)	85
Access to health care	37.6% (32)	50.6% (43)	10.6% (9)	1.2% (1)	85
Healthy economy	50.6% (43)	48.2% (41)	1.2% (1)	0.0% (0)	85
Other (please specify and indicate value)					4
<i>answered question</i>					85
<i>skipped question</i>					0

Number	Other (please specify and indicate value)
1	access to healthy food
2	children having "safe" adults to talk with, healthy fun as a value, yoga-meditation-dances-dancing-etc
3	Note: Scenic qualities are important, however, so are solar panels and windmills. Some people complain about how these things take away from scenic beauty, but they are just as important, if people can stand the sight of telephone poles, there should be no complaints about anything else.
4	youth programs

Housing Types, Location and Affordability

Since housing is an issue that must be addressed in the Town Plan, **question 3** on the survey sought input from residents regarding the specific types of additional housing they thought were needed in Town. More than half (67.1%) of respondents indicated “don’t know,” to this question, indicating that more information in the area of housing would be useful to residents. Of the eight identified categories of housing, the top three housing types needed as per the respondents’ choices were single-family housing for sale (16.5%); rental housing for the elderly (14.1%), and single-family rental housing (12.9%).

3. Do you believe there is a need in Cabot for more...? (select all that apply or select "Don't know")		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Single-family housing (for sale)	16.5%	14
Single-family housing (for rent)	12.9%	11
Multi-family housing (for sale)	7.1%	6
Multi-family housing (for rent)	8.2%	7
Housing for the elderly (for sale)	10.6%	9
Housing for the elderly (for rent)	14.1%	12
Housing for the disabled (for sale)	10.6%	9
Housing for the disabled (for rent)	10.6%	9
Don't know	67.1%	57
	<i>answered question</i>	85
	<i>skipped question</i>	0

Question 4 dealt with housing affordability. When asked what actions the Town should take to address affordability of housing, a majority of respondents (67.1%) responded “Don’t know.” This question also afforded the option of an open-ended response, to which 28 residents provided a response. Eleven of the responses identified property taxes or a flawed property valuation system as an impediment to affordability. A few respondents suggested that affordable housing should be well- planned, incorporating green space and easy accessibility to the Town center. Planned unit developments (PUDs) were suggested as a means to provide affordable housing. It was also suggested that planned affordable housing would be more beneficial to the community if it was owner-occupied, promoting permanence over transience. A number of comments suggested the renovation of existing older buildings as a means to

provide affordable housing. Other comments questioned the Town’s role in providing affordable housing, or suggested working with other Towns in the region to identify need and housing options.

4. What action(s) do you think the Town of Cabot should take to address local affordable housing needs?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Don't know	67.1%	57
The following action(s) should be taken	32.9%	28
	<i>answered question</i>	85
	<i>skipped question</i>	0

The following action(s) should be taken

- 1 Accurately re-assess property instead of using a computer generated program. Also increase disabled veteran tax abatement to \$40K - you will attract more vets to the area. Possibly, offer an abatement for residents who are on SSDI or are 65+ years and on Medicare. Finally get rid of the "dead wood" and redundant teachers at the Cabot School and put in a more reasonable budget so the school taxes will be reduced.
- 2 reduce rents so people can afford to live here.

bring jobs here
- 3 Lower tax rate
- 4 Multi family housing like condos for sale and/or rent.

This should be a well planned community with lots of open space not far from town with a bike path to town. It could also utilize alternative energy practices and be a model for other communities. It is a smaller carbon footprint than many single family houses.
- 5 Need to know more. Planned affordable housing that allows for shared green space, gardens, recreation & leisure is one thing; encouraging slummy apartments in the village is entirely different. What are the incentives for Cabot to plan more housing? Seems the benefits accrued to the town from shared housing would come from sold housing signaling a longer commitment to & investment in community; more shared rental housing sounds like more burden than it's worth on all systems & more transient, aka non-community oriented residents.
- 6 Lower land and housing property values. These are way out of reach, and cause the taxes to go up too much. The values are not realistic. Money isn't everything.
- 7 tax discounts for the elderly and disabled, and also for families living at or close to the poverty level
- 8 Depending on what may happen to our school and consequently the buildings (some of which may not at a later date be in use), these were intended to be lower income housing I heard....a good idea if they're rehabed a bit.
- 9 develop a cluster housing zone that allows for ownership of a larger parcel with clustered facilities on normal than average lots, also average lot size should be larger to keep more open areas for farming recreation ect.
- 10 If a survey finds housing is needed, it could be addressed at some point; for now, in this economy, it wouldn't

- seem to be sensible to invest deeply in housing.
- 11 Reduce property taxes, because buying a house is one thing, but being able to keep on paying very high and ever increasing property taxes is another thing.
- 12 the idea that every small town has to provide affordable housing should be not be assumed to be true till tested.
- 13 Encourage a few PUD's
- 14 Work with the Land Trust to secure property designated for low-income occupancy. Make sure the property is inspected and up to code. I think low-income "clusters" should be avoided (think of Holister Hill apartments, for example.)
- 15 Work with surrounding towns (like Marshfield) to explore affordable housing options and needs
- 16 encourage through zoning etc, the development of additional affordable housing options for families, single persons and the elderly
- 17 More available housing - well supervised
- 18 Open the UDAG grant for residential "flip" opportunities and small business improvements in Cabot.
- 19 Address the problem of high taxes.
- 20 No Action
- 21 I realize that this is going to sound extreme, but since my junior year at Cabot High (less than five years ago), I have believed that Cabot and Twinfield should join forces for schooling and that Cabot should then convert the campus into affordable housing. Unfortunately, due to declining enrollment, I feel that the school is going to inevitably suffer if it continues the way it has been going. By pooling resources with the entire district, we are able to give students more options for courses. I know this would have meant a lot to me as I was only able to take an extremely limited number of AP courses during my time at Cabot. By converting the campus to housing (either rentals or condos for purchase), there would be more housing. The CSPAC, gym, and other areas could be maintained for the community as well as for school age students.
- 22 Lower property taxes so I could afford to build single family housing.
- 23 we need to lower our taxes. The taxes in Cabot are too high to have affordable living
- 24 Bring the residential valuations in line with the actual market. When appraisals come in 40% below the town valuations, there are problems to accessing affordable housing. In other words, get the listers off their A\$\$e\$ and have them visit the sites rather than relying upon archaic computer programs and owners' "word" for newness / completion to set valuations.
- 25 lower taxes
- 26 Encourage better economic environment rather than providing housing for lower economic realm. Providing "affordable housing" will only serve to further over burden our schools and services. The residential tax values should be re-evaluated immediately to account for the downturn in the housing market. That would make saleable homes slightly more attractive to those who might better afford them. Additionally, Question #3 should have allowed for other options as well. I have an opinion, not "don't know", but I don't believe manipulating housing is the way to go.
- 27 Housing upgrade loan program, loans to run with the property, repayments to be added to property tax bill
- 28 Renovate some of the existing buildings in town

The Central Vermont Regional Plan has established a regional housing distribution plan to help meet future housing demand. In order for the Town’s plan to be confirmed by the regional planning commission, it must identify the preferred location for any future housing. In **Questions 5**, the Planning Commission sought input from residents to determine the best location for future housing in Town by rating the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with several statements regarding the location of new housing. The highest number of respondents (50) registered strong agreement with the statement that new housing development should be located “so as to avoid impacts to farmland.” However, when looking at all who registered any level of agreement with the various statements, the highest number of respondents (73) agreed with the statement that new housing should “avoid impacts to natural resources.” The second highest number of respondents agreed that new development should avoid impacts to farmland, and the statement that rated the third highest level of agreement was “in areas served by existing roads and utilities.” The statement that rated the highest level of *disagreement* was that new housing development should be located “wherever it is feasible to build.”

5. Cabot needs to identify the preferable location for any new housing that is built in Town. To what extent do you agree or disagree that new housing development should be located...						
Answer Options	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know	Response Count
Wherever it is feasible to build	7.8% (6)	22.1% (17)	28.6% (22)	31.2% (24)	10.4% (8)	77
So as to avoid impacts to farmland	60.2% (50)	25.3% (21)	7.2% (6)	1.2% (1)	6.0% (5)	83
So as to avoid impacts to natural resources	57.3% (47)	31.7% (26)	2.4% (2)	1.2% (1)	7.3% (6)	82
So as to avoid impacts to historic sites and buildings	41.0% (34)	33.7% (28)	14.5% (12)	2.4% (2)	8.4% (7)	83
In a manner that preserves open space	57.1% (48)	22.6% (19)	6.0% (5)	2.4% (2)	11.9% (10)	84
In areas served by existing roads and utilities	47.0% (39)	36.1% (30)	4.8% (4)	1.2% (1)	10.8% (9)	83
<i>answered question</i>						85
<i>skipped question</i>						0

Land Use and Development

Question 6 was a more general question regarding the protection of resources when any type of development occurs (not just housing). Respondents were again asked to rate their level of agreement or disagreement with several answer choices. In addition to identifying nine types of features, the question included the option to specify an additional resource that should be protected when development occurs. The results show that the resource respondents were most concerned with protecting was land being actively farmed. Wildlife habitat/wildlife travel corridors and tributaries and streams tied for second as a resource most agreed should be protected, and historic buildings and sites came in third. Eight respondents took the opportunity to make additional comments. Three of the comments specifically supported the use of wind power on ridgelines. Two of the comments noted that while development may have an impact on historic or natural resources, this may be a positive or non-damaging impact if done responsibly. Other comments noted that impacts on traffic flow and privacy of existing homes should be considered.

6. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the following resources should be protected when development occurs?						
Answer Options	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know	Response Count
Large areas of contiguous forest	45.8% (38)	33.7% (28)	10.8% (9)	1.2% (1)	8.4% (7)	83
Wildlife habitat and wildlife travel corridors	66.3% (55)	21.7% (18)	7.2% (6)	1.2% (1)	3.6% (3)	83
Land being actively farmed	70.2% (59)	22.6% (19)	3.6% (3)	1.2% (1)	2.4% (2)	84
Open land not actively farmed	22.9% (19)	39.8% (33)	26.5% (22)	1.2% (1)	9.6% (8)	83
Scenic views, including scenic roads	24.4% (20)	42.7% (35)	17.1% (14)	2.4% (2)	13.4% (11)	82
Ridgelines	27.2% (22)	32.1% (26)	21.0% (17)	4.9% (4)	14.8% (12)	81
Wetlands	52.4% (44)	27.4% (23)	11.9% (10)	1.2% (1)	7.1% (6)	84
Tributaries and streams	61.4% (51)	26.5% (22)	6.0% (5)	1.2% (1)	4.8% (4)	83
Historic buildings and sites	37.3% (31)	45.8% (38)	8.4% (7)	1.2% (1)	7.2% (6)	83
Other (please specify)						8

<i>answered question</i>	85
<i>skipped question</i>	0

Other (please specify)

- 1 I support wind development on a small scale
- 2 historic sites can be utilized/incorporated into development
- 3 "Don't know" means "it depends" on what is meant by "impact". any housing will have impact. the question is, on who and what. I might wonder if the survey is designed and the planning commission comprised by those who want to protect their own corner at the expense of others - the 'not in my backyard' syndrome. shared housing could be reasonably and responsibly developed in areas that do impact natural and hx resources w/o trashing or ruining those resources. development of any kind may require a scar on a ridgeline that is enjoyed by those who own 1/4 and 1/2 million dollar homes but we should not protect those better off from having to see any impact on their world except where they want to see it. the consequences of development should be shared by all - not just those that are currently living in affordable housing, neighborhoods, or cedar swamps.
- 4 wind power on ridge lines is ok with me
- 5 traffic flow is good (or improved by this dev)
- 6 I would welcome windpower on ridgelines
- 7 Are we developing for families with school age children?
- 8 existing homes - i.e. privacy, use, existing conditions

Question 7 sought residents’ opinion regarding permanent land conservation (through public ownership or conservation easements). While a majority (57.6%) of respondents indicated that additional conservation should be supported, 22.4% of respondents answered “don’t know” indicating more information regarding this practice may be useful to residents. 20% of respondents did not support additional permanent land conservation.

7. Over 2,000 acres of land in Cabot (about 9 percent of Cabot's total land area) are permanently conserved through public ownership or conservation easements. Should additional land conservation be supported?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	57.6%	49
No	20.0%	17
Don't Know	22.4%	19
	<i>answered question</i>	85
	<i>skipped question</i>	0

Recreational Resources

Question 8 asked residents which recreational features in Cabot they valued most. This was an open-ended question to which 48 people responded. At least 20 of the responses specifically identified trails for hiking or cross-country skiing as most valued, three of which mentioned use of trails by snowmobiles. Fourteen of the comments highly valued water-dependent activities including fishing, boating and swimming. Organized community events were also noted as being valuable, and 10 of the comments identified recreational opportunities for youth (recreation fields, organized sports programs, and playgrounds) as valuable. Other valued recreational activities mentioned often were biking (10 instances) and walking (12 instances).

8. What recreational opportunities in Cabot do you value most?

<i>answered question</i>	48
<i>skipped question</i>	37

Response Text	
1	We like to hike, fish, hunt, and ride ATV's.
2	Places for families and friends to gather for events; trails for walking
3	Cross country skiing
4	I know little about this. Have never been invited to anything like a softball game but I would like that. I work weekends and am not available evenings so my free time is daytime and during the week mostly.
5	dirt roads and vast trails for walking; the fact that landowners share their land for trails, Larry's field and the Rec field, ponds and pond access for small boats
6	walking and skiing trails
7	hiking paths
8	None.
9	back roads for biking and walking, hiking and ski trails
10	The wooded trail systems and logging roads. The river running thru our town and the par - rec field
11	trails open space, recreational facilities, would like to see further development of recreational facilities at rec field and connection to other town owned land, plus future things such as a tennis court/swimming pool
12	School sports.
13	I don't often use recreational facilities/opportunities except to attend functions sometimes.
14	Hiking trails (Coits Pond), ski trails
15	Walking, swimming, biking

- 16 x-c skiing, walking
- 17 Hiking and kayaking
- 18 Things I like to do include x-c skiing, walking, hiking, biking, and community events - including those sponsored by the library and the school. C-SPAC is a WONDERFUL addition to the community and I hope to see it used more! I think sports events are great; while I don't play any organized sports I do recognize that they are an important piece of the picture.
- 19 trails for low impact (non-motorized) recreation
- 20 cross country skiing, biking and walking trails
- 21 hiking, rink on commons, playgrounds, library
- 22 Cabot Roamers
- 23 library, bike group
- 24 Recreation for young people - Rec. field - adult volunteers
- 25 trails for hiking and skiing
- 26 Snowmobiling is vital to our local economy - biking, hiking, horseback riding are all important too.
- 27 The recreation field used for the 4th of July Barbecue
- 28 Sno Trails, access to Wood Lands
- 29 walking, kayaks, maybe riding horses, maybe bicycles.
I think adult sports are good... softball, basketball, volleyball... keep 20-50/60 year olds in good shape and in healthy social times. Dancing, yoga, etc for anyone interested.
- 30 we are close to many opportunities
- 31 camping, swimming boating
- 32 kids sports
- 33 Walking and biking
- 34 Joe's Pond and the channel
- 35 Joe's Pond and the channel
- 36 Do not enjoy, as they are "controlled" by an elite few.
- 37 cross country skiing
- 38 Hiking, biking, areas for organized athletics (courts, fields)
- 39 Library activities,
- 40 Nichol's Ledge, informal hiking trails, athletic fields for kids, quiet roads for walking on, Joe's Pond
- 41 Joe's Pond and it's channel
- 42 Snowmobiling, hunting, and baseball
- 43 river access
- 44 Trails for skiing and hiking; Ponds for swimming
- 45 Field Day 4th of July
- 46 Who has time for recreation?
- 47 Skating, fields for games (baseball, soccer, etc.)
- 48 outdoor - skiing, snowshoeing, boating, hiking

Question 9 was another open-ended question, asking residents what they believed was needed in regard to recreational opportunities in Town. Thirty-eight people responded. In the responses, 11 mentioned the need for more trails for walking and cross-country skiing. Eight of the comments suggested physical improvements to recreational facilities, including new playground equipment, tennis court, swimming pool, rope tow/sledding area, a skate/bike park, running track and a safe shooting range. Eight of the comments suggested a need for more organized, community-oriented recreational events that are well-publicized, and five comments mentioned a need for bike paths. Two comments specifically suggested a swimming area be created at West Hill Pond.

9. What, if anything, do you believe is needed in regard to additional recreational opportunities in Cabot?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Don't Know	55.3%	47
The following is needed	44.7%	38
	<i>answered question</i>	85
	<i>skipped question</i>	0

Number	The following is needed
1	I would love to have a new playground at the recreation field. It is a great unused space for the community.
2	limited atv access; trails for walking
3	Would love to see some bike paths Publicity and coordination for activities and times, see above.
4	Peoples availability vary...
5	it would be nice to have a local rope tow. the loss of Thistle Hill sledding to the elder housing was big to village people. a new sledding area is needed. a skateboard area @ Larry's or the Rec field would be nice to develop
6	dances
7	There seems to be plenty of recreation enthusiasts and efforts under way. If anything, we need more emphasis on the arts and on sustainable living.
8	Year round recreational trails (non-motorized)
9	x-c ski trails, bike trails, nature trails, rope tow ski lift near village, shed for skating, year-round swimming pool
10	More use of the Fields across from Nunns, esp by the school children during school hours
11	trails open space, recreational facilities, would like to see further development of recreational facilities at rec field and connection to other town owned land, plus future things such as a tennis court/swimming pool
12	Activities for adults and families.
13	New gym.
14	None

- 15 maintained winter skating area
- 16 A really good, modern playground that is adaptable for a wide age range and doesn't give kids splinters. I would love something like a park with covered bench swings, shade trees, and a bike path. Marked nature trails that are accessible to families would be fantastic. Maybe even an exercise trail, something like the trail in Hubbard Park? Okay, now I'm on a roll....
- 17 More low-impact recreational trails
- 18 Anything that encourages fitness and is community building
- 19 swimming pool, xc ski trails (groomed)
- 20 Bike and walking trails around town. Any recreation that supports businesses or fits good niche in community.
- 21 More trails - and maps showing where they are.
- 22 4-wheelers on designated trails.
- 23 1/4 mile track - so the students can run the mile in a safer location than Gould's Flats.
- 24 None
- 25 I think there are a lot of opportunities already if someone wants to be involved. Some ideas I listed above, too.
- 26 Get rid of the beavers in Molly's Pond.
- 27 kids sports
- 28 more participation of residents in recreational activities....it seems that it is a small group of families that organize and attend these events.
- 29 A community calendar that allows for all community members to participate...
- 30 skate park... or somekind of better recreational area that is up to date and not creepy, i have heard complaints of kids riding their bikes/skateboards at the school... first off, isn't that public property? second I pay a load of taxes for that school, and it bothers me that kids get yelled at for riding their bikes on the "new concrete" in front of the over priced music room. I'm pretty sure if some little kids want to tool around on there bikes they shouldn't be reprimanded for it. at least they are not getting into trouble.
- 31 sidewalks to walk on, at least on Rte. 215, More walking paths in the woods
- 32 safe shooting ranges
- 33 bike paths
- 34 I'd love public swimming access at West Hill Pond--we live only 1 mile away, but have to drive half an hour to Joe's Pond to swim. (Nichol's Pond is closer, but is pretty grubby and there's often people smoking and/or swearing etc. there, so I don't like to go with kids.)
- 35 Allow recreation in conservation areas
- 36 Why not use the Masonic Hall for programs (other than those provided by the Cabot Library) (Bingo, Movies, Cont. Education, First Aid Training, Garden and Art Classes)
- 37 Town Swimming Area at West Hill Pond
- 38 More hiking trails

Economic Development

Question 10 was another open-ended question that asked residents what businesses they believed were needed in town. 54 residents responded. Twenty-eight respondents (over 50%) mentioned an eatery of some kind as being desirable in Town. Ten of the comments suggested new local businesses that marketed locally-sourced goods or products, including farmers markets and coops. Six of the comments specifically mentioned a bank as a desirable local business. Other suggestions included a laundromat, chiropractor, drug store, book store, bed and breakfast, barber shop, bike repair shop and general retail businesses.

10. What, if any, additional businesses do you think are needed in Town?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Don't Know	36.5%	31
New businesses needed in Cabot include	63.5%	54
	<i>answered question</i>	85
	<i>skipped question</i>	0

New businesses needed in Cabot include

- 1 A year-round cooperative market to let farmers and micro-farms sell to each other. A cooperative craft store would also be nice for local artisans to display their wares. If the town were to renovate an old building and lease the spaces (stalls), the revenue would pay into the town.
- 2 anything to bring in revenue
- 3 a bank branch
- 4 Restaurant
- 5 none - we're good
- 6 A good eatery with a friendly bar so people do not have to go far or drive after drinking in St. J or Montpelier.
- 7 small, low-impact, owner-operated businesses w/ pretty low impact. the problem w/ these is that small business often has difficulty w/ health insurance for employees (so they say)small scale agricultural business would be nice. it all depends on the entrepreneurs and the market
- 8 restaurant, eco friendly power generation, food production,
- 9 banking, expanded retail, public transportation connection from village to Rte. 2 bus
- 10 Small, individually/family owned businesses. The cafe at the Hardware Store provides a place for folks to gather, and it is amply used by community members. An evening spot to gather, such as a pub, would be great also.
- 11 cafe/deli/bakery; coffee shop/cybercafe; chiropractor
- 12 bakery, cable tv service for other than the village,
- 13 Having the restaurant in town was nice; also, it would be convenient to have banking services. What happened to the Union Bank

branch that was promised as part of UDAG deal?

14 a restaurant, farmer's market

15

Small businesses that bring life back into town, rather than the sleeping village it is now, because most people work out of town. Stimulate the development of small farms and artisan food production and contribute to making our society sustainable again.

16 Breakfast and lunch diner or rest.

17

A laundromat, bike repair shop, an active farmer's market. Better access to locally grown and butchered foods would be nice!

18 Restaurant

19 Restaurant, fitness center, food coop

20 restaurant, inn, drug store / variety store

21 pharmacy, farmers market, thrift shop

22 Restaurants, Lodging, anything to strengthen local economy, book store

23 Towns stores should offer organic and local food, and organic animal feed.

24 Some sort of office business - tax company, Alternative Energy Company

25 Any and all. Restaurant serving dinner, better farmers market, a CSA or 2.

26 Restaurant -- Goldies is missed dearly!

Gym or regular exercise classes in evening and when people can attend. This is very limited in Cabot.

27 A Saturday Farmers' Market with crafts

28 Bed and Breakfast

29 This is not an addition, but I would like to say that the snack area in Harry's is an incredible addition!

30 bank, public transportation,

31 Anything that will bring some jobs even if it is manufacturing. We all want the area to be pretty, but it's impossible to make a living without traveling so far that it's prohibitive on gas and terrible for the environment.

32 pub

33 Would like some time of casual meeting/dining/pub area with maybe some pool tables....some where for adults to get out that is close to home.

34 barber shop, evening restaurant for dining

35 barber shop, evening restaurant for dining

36

A community cooperative for local farm products, produce, and gifts. The store is obsolete and does not help local people.

37 some kind of coffee shop might be nice. however the last few restaurants seemed to have failed so I don't know how well a coffee shop would work out.

38 Restaurant

39 eatery, youth center

40 what ever the owner of the land chooses

41 let the ones that are here to be able to operate

42 Clothing or furniture manufacturing that takes advantage of local resources in coordination with farmers and loggers and provides employment opportunities. Expand on the arts. Camps and businesses that bring musicians and artists to Cabot will bring outside

money and can be coordinated with NECulinary efforts. Build on the success and reputation of the school music and art program as well as Vermont culinary niche. Engineer an area to host performances and events that are compatible with nature and Vermont values. Attract people with disposable dollars. Serve people that have a desire to spend.

- 43 restaurant
- 44 Restaurant, Laundromat, Specialty retailer -- locally-made goods, crafts, foods -- general Vermontiana
- 45 good restaurant
- 46 A coffeehouse would be very cool, though not _needed_ as such.
- 47 A place to eat.
- 48 evening restaurant
- 49 Any manufacturing that will promote job growth and school population
- 50 Bank, Pharmacy, Craft/Art (for local artisans - Coop), Legal Aid (affordable for lower-income residents-sliding fee scale- civil not criminal)
- 51 A better hardware store
- 52 Bank
- 53 clean retail businesses
- 54 creamy stand

Planning Priorities

Question 11 asked respondents to prioritize various planning issues. Retention of farms was the number one issue, followed by road maintenance, and tied for third were energy alternatives and retention of open space/natural areas. Respondents were also given the opportunity to identify other issues that should receive priority. Fifteen residents provided written comments, most of which qualified or elaborated on the issues they had rated, including schools, economic development, energy alternatives and farming. The responses helped to identify the issues that have particular urgency.

11. Please help the Cabot Planning Commission prioritize the following issues:					
Answer Options	Very important	Important	Not important	Don't Know	Response Count
Retention of farms	61.9% (52)	31% (26)	2.4% (2)	4.8% (4)	84
Retention of open space/natural areas	50.0% (42)	36.9% (31)	7.1% (6)	6.0% (5)	84
School facility planning	46.3% (37)	35.0% (28)	12.5% (10)	6.3% (5)	80
Preservation of historic buildings and sites	25.0% (21)	54.8% (46)	10.7% (9)	9.5% (8)	84
Development of tree canopy on Main Street	26.5% (22)	28.9% (24)	34.9% (29)	9.6% (8)	83
Climate change mitigation	24.4% (20)	40.2% (33)	24.4% (20)	11.0% (9)	82

Transportation alternatives	29.3% (24)	43.9% (36)	17.1% (14)	9.8% (8)	82	
Affordable housing opportunities	19.3% (16)	51.8% (43)	10.8% (9)	18.1% (15)	83	
Road maintenance	50.6% (42)	42.2% (35)	4.8% (4)	2.4% (2)	83	
Economic development	33.7% (28)	48.2% (40)	8.4% (7)	9.6% (8)	83	
Tourism	22.9% (19)	49.4% (41)	15.7% (13)	12.0% (10)	83	
Energy alternatives	50.0% (42)	36.9% (31)	7.1% (6)	6.0% (5)	84	
Commercial development	10.8% (9)	41.0% (34)	33.7% (28)	14.5% (12)	83	
Cell phone service	31.3% (26)	45.8% (38)	19.3% (16)	3.6% (3)	83	
Other (please specify and indicate level of importance)					15	
					<i>answered question</i>	85
					<i>skipped question</i>	0

Other (please specify and indicate level of importance)

- 1 I would love to see us look into wind farm possibilities and/or solar panels for at least town buildings
- 2 A restaurant and bar in town like Clares in Hardwick. Community supported and partially funded.
- 3 some of these things seem to be beyond the purview of the planning commission
- 4 economic development of a sustainable type that is also ecologically sound
- 5 Burying of wires to accomodate tree canopy
- 6 improvement of town facilities
- 7 Farming needs to move away from dairy toward vegetable crops; we have to down-size the school as it take too much of our resident's resources in proportion to the number of people in town and children served; we need to come up with alternative transportation as road maintenance is a very expensive and taking too much out our wallets.
- 8 You guys don't have enough to do? (Kidding!) I think there's a lot to work with here!
- 9 Development of local products economy - firewood, food, crafts
- 10 An idea: Creative community housing, like senior housing very close to school, mixing of generations is usually a win-win. Seniors should be able to walk to the school. Daycare near to the school (and health center). Like a complete village.
- 11 Property taxes are too high
- 12 Cable TV or Fiber network for broadband internet service.
- 13 open road to 4 wheelers
- 14 The school is a JOKE. Don't put any more money into it - and fire the duplicative staff. Get rid of the paraeducators and hire ones that KNOW how to do their job rather than feeding off of the Udders of the town.
- 15 Re: School Facility Planning -- put CSPAC to use as COMMUNITY resource -- establish year-round venue management as school-town partnership

Community Involvement and General Comments

Question 12 asked residents to indicate the extent to which they had been involved in the Town Planning process in the past. 78.8% respondents had no previous experience with the Town Planning process, indicating that the survey represented their first involvement with this process. 18 of the respondents described their previous involvement, which included serving on the Planning Commission or other Town committees.

Question 13 asked residents how they planned to be involved in the planning process in the future. While 65 respondents did not know how they might be involved in the future, 17 residents indicated ways they would like to be involved, six of which identified the current survey and future surveys as ways they would like to be involved. While the survey responses to this question were anonymous, respondents had the opportunity at the end of the survey to add their name, contact information, and area of the plan in which they'd like to become involved.

12. How have you been involved in the Town planning process in the past?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Not previously involved in the planning process	78.8%	67
I've been involved in the following way(s):	21.2%	18
	<i>answered question</i>	85
	<i>skipped question</i>	0

I've been involved in the following way(s):

- 1 Planning Commission years ago
- 2 Was on zoning board in another town.
- 3 my experience w/ any sort of town planning is that town fathers only want to hear from those w/ like minds and shun others. Those who speak out are often ostracized and gossiped about
- 4 formerly on planning commission
- 5 tangentially through serving on the UDAG committee, which encourages economic development, service and recreational groups and activities, and scholarship
- 6 zoning
- 7 on the commission
- 8 Participated in Taking Charge program
- 9 Member of Planning Commission
- 10 Years ago

- 11 I am currently living out-of-state and have been for the past three years. However, when I was living in Cabot, I was very active in the community as well as in the school.
- 12 no specific answer
- 13 UDAG, Village government, facilitating services
UDAG Committee

Solid waste representative
- 14 Selectboard member
Have become very familiar with the most recent town plan and Zoning
- 15 Ordinances.
- 16 review of plans for adoption by the selectboard
Planning Commission Member - also developed overall plans for different
- 17 sectors.
- 18 Fire Department

13. How would you like to be part of the planning process in the future?

	Response Percent	Response Count
Don't know	79.3%	65
I would like to be involved in the following ways:	20.7%	17
	<i>answered question</i>	82
	<i>skipped question</i>	3

I would like to be involved in the following ways:

- 1 by voting for various foci, including renewable energy alternative, preserving farms and farmland, and contiguous forest land; I might help with renewable energy issues
- 2 I would be willing to meet w/ town selectmen to discuss and develop longterm capital needs so facilities can be planned for, not just equipment
- 3 This online survey is a good start - online participation is a very good way to make me part of the process as it is convenient, less time consuming, and flexible.
- 4 I'm not sure what I can do, but I'd like to help in some way. Give me some idea of what needs doing!
- 5 Attend public forums and meetings
- 6 receive e-mail updates, participate in work days (planting trees, setting up rink, etc.)
- 7 unknown
- 8 Surveys like this are a wonderful tool to involve everyone who wishes to participate...
- 9 one shot deals, not committee forever meetings. advisory. brainstorming sessions...
- 10 continue surveys to get everyones input
- 11 whatever is available

- 12 I am. Thank you.
- 13 taking part in surveys, coming to meetings
- 14 Collaborate on program design re: housing loans, CSPAC, etc.
Collaborate on development of a REAL UDAG plan that actually proposes how to SPEND money to leverage economic development in Cabot village.
- 15 Assisting, if possible.
- 16 I would like to make sure the plan is specific to cabot and not some other towns rendition
- 17 Community forum participation, review of plan

Question 14 was an open-ended question soliciting general comments on the Town Plan Update process. Thirty-one residents responded, and provided specific comments on various aspects of Town, including housing, economic development, schools, land conservation, and roads and use of Town facilities. A few comments expressed dissatisfaction with local politics, local regulation and taxes. Some comments expressed suggestions for the content of the plan, such as the inclusion of cost/benefit analyses for housing and commercial development, and more discussion of long term use and maintenance of town buildings and facilities. A few comments stressed self-sustainability in the plan for Cabot.

14. Would you like to share any other comments regarding the Town Plan update with the Planning Commission?

	Response Count
	31
<i>answered question</i>	31
<i>skipped question</i>	54

	Response Text
1	I might be interested, but don't want to get into the small town politics that are inherent in Cabot. Case in point is that Chris Tormey is the head of the school board and his wife is a teacher. At the town meeting a lady stood up and mentioned this. She was laughed out by the crowd...but she was right (I checked, because I felt bad for her) - and the Cabot School Board is breaking the law. When the town's people start to follow the laws instead of ignoring them, I might get involved, but until then, I don't want the liability for stupidity.
2	I am not sure about that
3	stick to a few manageable items. I don't think it's the business of the town planning to try to manage all open land, school facilities, road maintenance,
4	Cabot is beautiful, and the folks who live here know that. We need to be careful about selling out to big business, and becoming a dumping ground for dangerous waste and other pollutants. We can survive, together, by sharing what we've got with each other more. Expanding the farmer's market, and bringing

it closer to the outside world (such as on Route 2) would be useful. Any "commerce" with the outside world could move closer to Route 2, since Cabot Village is tucked out of most people's way. Cabot's Route 2 corridor is underutilized as a valuable asset, and way to bring commerce to the residents.

- 5 If possible, the update should do cost-benefits analyses of increasing available housing, of encouraging new businesses in designated areas of the town (village, route 2 corridor) etc., and also cost-benefit analysis of school centralization, including maintenance, new construction, bussing.
- 6 Town development and infrastructure for future development is sorely lacking in the old town plan the current town garage is in violation and the town has been using the recently acquired masonic hall to store sand, the current fire station is inadequate and town office facilities will not be able to handle long term needs. the school facilities need to address long term maintenance and they also need to address long term viability.
- 7 Thank you for doing the updating of the plan. I haven't a clue how it's done, but I know it's important to our future.
- 8 Local, decentralized, self sustainable are the keywords we need to start using as our mantra when planning for our future.
- 9 It would be nice if the plan/zoning were actively enforced--otherwise this is just wasted energy.
- 10 Thank you for the work you're doing!
- 11 Get a grip on profligate spending for schooling. Class size is too small, and there are too many teachers' aides.
- 12 Less planning; more action please!
- 13 Additional land conservation should be supported for future food growing
- 14 keep it simple and small town
- 15 The Festivals (Maple, Apple) are great ways to encourage economic growth and strengthen community, but there needs to be more collaboration between festival coordinators and farmers and business owners so that businesses and farms benefit from these festivals rather than simply being asked to donate.
- 16 Schools are much too expensive for elderly taxpayers.
- 17 Limiting multi-housing units limits/controls the level of "undesirables" who will "set up shop" in town. More single-family homes for rental ops brings in better family units not delinquents.
- 18 Keep The Gov't out of our lives. We don't need all your regulation and taxation.
- 19 Thank you for this survey, and I hope the results are thoroughly reviewed and used to improve this incredible town and community that is Cabot.
- 20 I do not want Rt. widened into my hayfield. The road is fine the way it is and was just resurfaced last summer. The traffic is too fast already and they have to slow down when they get to Joe's Pond anyway, so don't waste money on a hideously expensive road project that would take most of my hay field and make the road more dangerous. Also, I've already take the trees down along the curve just west of Young Farm road which vastly improved the visibility.
- 21 I am a very new resident so I do not know how much demand exists for new housing or new businesses but I am willing to help if needed. I will say that rural character, open spaces and lack of commercial interests were a plus for me in choosing to live here. That said, the health of any community requires a healthy economic base to pay for services and finding the right type of business to encourage would, to

- my mind, be of primary importance in planning.
- 22** I'm not familiar with the "update". I would like to be, though. How can I accomplish this?
- 23** leave our personal lives alone
- 24** The survey sounds like the decision has already been made to affect the housing scene in Cabot. I would suggest that you have additional questionnaires reviewed by someone outside of the creation process. Unless that is what you intended, and if so...congratulations. Please do what ever you might in your power to dis allow Leonard and others like him from taking advantage of section 8 housing opportunities. I have been required to check a box in number 3. None of the boxes are appropriate and I considered stopping at that point. Thank you for your efforts.
- 25** Village development is of greatest importance -- we need to take advantage of our wastewater system and incentivize village development through more aggressive application of UDAG funds, events programming at CSPAC, expansion of public parking.
- 26** Get rid of the red apartment building next to Cabot Inn.
- 27** Not familiar with updates, yet...
- 28** Is road grader broken? Whittier Hill has not been graded in a year
- 29** Good luck!
- 30** The Fire Department has thoughts about planning of driveways and other ordinances.
- 31** keep it simple

Demographics

Questions 15 and 16 asked questions of respondents that would help determine if the respondents were representative of the general population of Cabot. Question 15 asked people to identify in which quadrant of Town they lived. The results indicated that respondents came from all parts of Town, with the least amount of respondents (11) coming from quadrant D, the southeastern portion of the Town.

Question 16 asked respondents to indicate the age group to which they belonged. The results show that only residents 18 and older responded to the survey. 78% of respondents were in the 18 to 64 age group, and 22% were 65 or older. Current estimates of the Cabot population and age breakdown indicate that those in the age group of 20 to 64 make up 64.7% of the population and those in the age group of 65 and older make up about 11.7% of the Cabot population. The age grouping of survey respondents is roughly proportional to the age breakdown in the adult population of Cabot.

15. In what part of Cabot do you live, or, if a part-year resident, own a home?(Please refer to the map above)

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Quadrant A	25.0%	21
Quadrant B	36.9%	31
Quadrant C	25.0%	21
Quadrant D	13.1%	11
<i>answered question</i>		84
<i>skipped question</i>		1

16. Are you...?

	Response Percent	Response Count
Under 18	0.0%	0
18 to 64	78.0%	64
65 or older	22.0%	18

<i>answered question</i>	82
<i>skipped question</i>	3

Question 17 asked the residency status of respondents. Although the survey was open to seasonal residents, only 6 of the survey respondents were seasonal residents. Since questions 18 through 24 related to housing and occupational characteristics of year-round residents, seasonal residents were directed to skip ahead to question 25.

17. Is your primary residence in Cabot?		
	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	92.9%	78
No (skip to question 25)	7.1%	6
<i>answered question</i>		84
<i>skipped question</i>		1

Question 18 asked respondents how many years they had resided in Cabot. Almost half (48.7%) of year-round respondents had lived in Cabot for 20 years or more. Another 29.5% of respondents had lived in town for at least 10 years. This indicates that almost 80% of survey respondents have been in Town long enough to be familiar with the previous Town Plan (2003). It also indicated that 15.4% of the respondents to the survey were relative newcomers (those living in town for less than 5 years) presumably interested in becoming involved with the Town planning process.

18. How many years have you lived in Cabot?		
	Response Percent	Response Count
Less than 5	15.4%	12
5 to 9	6.4%	5
10 to 19	29.5%	23
20 or more	48.7%	38
<i>answered question</i>		78
<i>skipped question</i>		7

In order to ascertain some of the reasons that people would plan to continue to live in Cabot, **Question 19** asked whether respondents expected to be living in Cabot for the next 5, 10 or 20+ years. A majority of respondents (65.4%) responded that they expected to be

living in Cabot for the next 20 years and beyond. 20.5% of respondents expected to live in Cabot for another 10 years, and 14.1% expected to live in Cabot for only the next five years. Respondents were also asked to explain the reasons for their answers, and 49 responded.

In order to understand the reasons that people expected to be living in Cabot for only 5 more years, responses by the 11 who checked that category were filtered to examine the reasons. All of the respondents in that category were in the 18 to 64 age group. Two had lived in Cabot for less than five years, two had lived there for five to nine years, three had lived in Cabot for 10 to 19 years, and four had lived in Cabot for 20+ years. Six of the 11 respondents in that category also provided an explanation, and those were response numbers 5, 11, 28, 29, 30, and 34. The reasons for a limited outlook included access to affordable housing, access to employment, dissatisfaction with cuts that eliminated school sports and music programs, and high taxes and water/sewer costs.

The responses of the 16 residents who answered that they expected to live in Cabot for only another 10 years were also filtered to determine reasons. Of the 16 residents, 9 were in the 18 to 64 age group and 7 were 65 or older. Seven had lived in Cabot for 20+ years, six had lived in Cabot for 10 to 19 years, two had lived in Town for five to nine years, and one had been a resident for less than five years. Eleven of the 16 respondents provided an explanation for their choice, and these were response numbers 2, 7, 10, 17, 22, 24, 35, 37, 44, 45, 49. Out of those 11 detailed responses, six cited health or age as determining factors. Other factors cited were affordability, commute to work, taxes, economic sustainability, and whether Cabot retains its small-town feel.

It is noted that a number of the 51 residents who expect to be living in Cabot for 20+ years indicated that continued affordability and ability to maintain property would determine how long they would remain in Town.

19. Do you expect to still be living in Cabot in...		
	Response Percent	Response Count
5 years	14.1%	11
10 years	20.5%	16
20 years and beyond	65.4%	51
Please explain...		49
	<i>answered question</i>	78
	<i>skipped question</i>	7

Please explain the factors that will determine whether you continue to live in Cabot	
1	Veteran's tax abatement, lower property taxes, and conservative spending in the school.
2	I may be looking for a retirement community setting with leveled care

- 3 If I'm too old to stay in my home, which heats with wood, I might have to move to another place. . .
- 4 life span
- 5 access to arts, affordable housing (perhaps co-op community) w/ gardening, trails, and VIEW,
- 6 If I can afford the property taxes and if I am able to manage transportation
- 7 health
- 8 I plan to be buried here, come hell or high water. Only full-fledged government facism and emanant domain could make me go.
- 9 Cost of living, cost of maintenance, health, marketabilty of home
- 10 affordability commitment to improving overall quality of life
- 11 Whether or not employment continue to be available in this area of the state.
- 12 Age and health!
- 13 Whether I will have someone to shovel snow for me when I get old.
- 14 The level of property taxes will ultimately decide whether I will be able to afford to live here when I am retired.
- 15 death and taxes
- 16 property taxes cannot go up
- 17 It's very expensive to commute to work, and I'm in a position where I either need to work closer to home or move closer to the town where I work. However, the quality of the education at Cabot has been exceptional and I am reluctant to put my child in a different system! Plus, Cabot has been a warm and kind community to me, and that's important. I live in a very rural location, and would consider moving into town at some point in the future if I can afford to do so.
- 18 If I can afford the high property taxes.
- 19 good neighbrs, working rural landscape (farms, forestry), services in town (library, hardware store, food store)
- 20 Affordable property taxes, good neighbors, continued good food growing climate/soils; ability to get around when oil runs out.
- 21 Death
- 22 If I am healthy enough to maintain my home.
- 23 Appropriate work opportunity within a 30-mile range.
- 24 Population stays small, safe, small town feel.
- 25 Secure feeling, convenience, natural beauty
- 26 If I am living and the Government doesn't take over.
- 27 If spouse dies. children live hours away and I want to be near to them and the grandkids... ?
- 28 If I can make a living I will have to move. If I can't pay the property taxes I will have to move. If Rt. 2 expansion takes my land I will sell it and move.
- 29 Whether we find affordable housing when we are ready to buy.
- 30 Due to increases in water / waste waster/ taxes and severe reductions in the school and activities offered for my children, I don't not expect to stay in Cabot for a long period of time. I feel that my children do not have enough sports opportunities and am disappointed with the changes that have happened in Cabot School due to the budget cuts. I believe that the loss of music, a school sports program for elementary and grade consolidation will ultimately reduce the quality of education that they children receive.

- 31 extended family, water quality of Joe's Pond, physical ability to maintain our property.
- 32 extended family, water quality of Joe's Pond, physical ability to maintain property
- 33 Affordable taxes.
- 34 can plan ahead more than 5 years, but if the school taxes and water/sewer costs keep going up I am not going to be able to afford owning a house and paying for these things and sadly would probably have the end up selling my house. this is something that worries me greatly, but as it is I can barely afford to live here, but I also don't know where else to go in VT because it is so pricey in general.
- 35 Death and/or taxes
- 36 if I can afford to do to taxes
- 37 Economic sustainability, will move if school is combined with Twinfield.
- 38 what we choose to do for retirement
- 39 Property taxes, Village water price, Village sewer price
- 40 When I die
- 41 We will live here as long as we can live independently in a rural location.
- 42 I'm not sure I'll still be alive in 20 years, but if I am I expect to live here.
- 43 Extended family, ability to maintain our property, water quality of Joe's Pond
- 44 i may not be alive
- 45 Age
- 46 As long as I am able
- 47 Quality of school, quality of community life, quality of life on Main Street
- 48 Live here as long as I can make a living here!
- 49 taxes

Question 20 asked respondents about home ownership. 94.9% of respondents owned their homes, with the remainder (3.8%) either renting or living with a family member. Although available public information on home-ownership rates in Cabot are based on the 2000 Census and therefore dated, that data show 15.4% of Cabot's population in 2000 were in renter-occupied housing units. Assuming that homeownership rates in Cabot have not significantly risen since 2000, this indicates that Cabot residents who rent their homes were under-represented in the survey.

20. Do you...? (please choose one)		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Own your home	94.9%	74
Rent your home	3.8%	3
Other (please specify)	1.3%	1
<i>answered question</i>		78
<i>skipped question</i>		7

Other (please specify)

- 1 Live in house owned by my daughter

Question 21 inquired about school children in the household. The reason for this question was to determine whether the survey represented the opinions of residents who lived in households both with and without school-aged children. 32.1% of the survey respondents had children in their household, while 67.9% did not.

21. Are there school-aged children (entering pre-k through 12th grade) in your household?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	32.1%	25
No	67.9%	53
<i>answered question</i>		78
<i>skipped question</i>		7

Question 22 asked respondents to describe their employment status, to better understand the various employment situations represented by survey respondents. The category with the largest percentage of respondents (32.5%) was “Travel outside Cabot to work.” The next highest category of respondent were “retired” (19.5%), followed by people who worked from home, either self-employed or working for a Cabot business numbered (18.2%). The results indicate a diversity of employment situations among respondents to the survey, although the percentages in each category do not necessarily reflect the percentages in the Town-wide population.

22. Are you...? (choose the one that best describes your situation)

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Working from home (self-employed or working for a Cabot business)	18.2%	14
Working from home, for a business outside Cabot	11.7%	9
Working outside the home for a business in Cabot	7.8%	6
Travel outside Cabot to work	32.5%	25
Stay-at-home parent/caregiver/homemaker	6.5%	5
Retired	19.5%	15
Attending school	0.0%	0
Unemployed	3.9%	3
<i>answered question</i>		77

Question 23 sought information on the types and nature of agricultural/forestry operations survey respondents were engaged in. A majority (61.5%) of survey respondents were engaged in some level of agriculture or forestry, with over half (53.8%) growing produce for home consumption. Farming provided supplemental income for 6.4% of respondents, while 5.1% listed farming as their primary source of income. The results indicated that residents engaged in a wide variety of agricultural concerns, from raising produce for their family to operating dairy farms, were represented in the survey.

23. Are you engaged in the following in Cabot? (Please select all that apply)

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Farming as a primary income source	5.1%	4
Farming as a supplemental income source	6.4%	5
Raising dairy cows	3.8%	3
Raising other livestock	15.4%	12
Growing field crops	9.0%	7
Growing hay	19.2%	15
Producing Maple syrup	10.3%	8
Growing produce for home consumption	53.8%	42
Forestry	17.9%	14
None of the choices listed	38.5%	30
	<i>answered question</i>	78
	<i>skipped question</i>	7

Question 24 was included to determine how many survey respondents drew a sizeable portion of their income from agriculture. The percentage of survey respondents that reported earning more than 50% of their income from farming or forestry was 7.8.

24. Do you earn more than 50% of your annual income from any of the agricultural/forestry occupations listed in question 23 above?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	7.8%	6
No	92.2%	71

<i>answered question</i>	77
<i>skipped question</i>	8

Town Programs and Services

Question 25 rated respondents’ satisfaction with 19 town facilities and services, to inform the goals and plans of action contained in the Town Plan. The results help to illustrate where improvement is most needed. It also afforded respondents the opportunity to specify and rate other services not listed.

The service that received the poorest rating was indoor recreation facilities, with 31% of respondents giving it a poor rating. Second lowest rated was police protection, with 29.8% of respondents indicating a poor rating. Third in line was internet access, with 17.9% giving it a poor rating. Services that received the largest number of people responding in the “don’t know” category were Town water supply (48.8%) and Town wastewater treatment (40.5%). Since a relatively small percentage of residents are served by public water and sewer, it is likely that this is the reason for this response. Other areas that had a high number of responses in the “don’t know” category were adult/senior services (42.2%) and indoor recreation facilities (28.6%).

Ten respondents included additional comments, either elaborating on their responses or identifying and rating other services, all of which will help the Planning Commission to identify problem areas in its work on the Town Plan.

25. How satisfied are you with the following Town facilities and services?						
Answer Options	Very good	Good	Adequate	Poor	Don't Know	Response Count
Town water supply	9.5% (8)	17.9% (15)	17.9% (15)	6.0% (5)	48.8% (41)	84
Town wastewater treatment	8.3% (7)	23.8% (20)	19.0% (16)	8.3% (7)	40.5% (34)	84
Town administration	13.3% (11)	39.8% (33)	31.3% (26)	7.2% (6)	8.4% (7)	83
State road maintenance	11.9% (10)	40.5% (34)	34.5% (29)	6.0% (5)	7.1% (6)	84
Local road maintenance	35.7% (30)	34.5% (29)	17.9% (15)	10.7% (9)	1.2% (1)	84

Fire protection	28.6% (24)	38.1% (32)	14.3% (12)	3.6% (3)	15.5% (13)	84
Police protection	3.6% (3)	14.3% (12)	34.5% (29)	29.8% (25)	17.9% (15)	84
Emergency medical services	23.8% (20)	32.1% (27)	15.5% (13)	7.1% (6)	21.4% (18)	84
Trash/recycling services	25.3% (21)	39.8% (33)	26.5% (22)	6.0% (5)	2.4% (2)	83
Outdoor recreation facilities	8.3% (7)	38.1% (32)	28.6% (24)	4.8% (4)	20.2% (17)	84
Indoor recreation facilities	2.4% (2)	15.5% (13)	22.6% (19)	31.0% (26)	28.6% (24)	84
Building maintenance	1.2% (1)	39.0% (32)	37.8% (31)	8.5% (7)	13.4% (11)	82
Cabot School	19% (16)	33.3% (28)	26.2% (22)	14.3% (12)	7.1% (6)	84
Adult/senior services	15.7% (13)	25.3% (21)	15.7% (13)	1.2% (1)	42.2% (35)	83
Internet access	17.9% (15)	31.0% (26)	28.6% (24)	17.9% (15)	4.8% (4)	84
Arts and cultural events	9.5% (8)	32.1% (27)	35.7% (30)	9.5% (8)	13.1% (11)	84
Cabot Public Library	33.3% (28)	40.5% (34)	20.2% (17)	1.2% (1)	4.8% (4)	84
Cabot Chronicle	22.6% (19)	40.5% (34)	23.8% (20)	9.5% (8)	3.6% (3)	84
Cabot Coalition	22% (18)	23.2% (19)	24.4% (20)	8.5% (7)	22.0% (18)	82
Other service (please specify and rate)						10
<i>answered question</i>						84
<i>skipped question</i>						1

Other service (please specify and rate)

- 1 Cabot coalition and chronicle are poorly balanced in their view and turn most normal youth off. Doesn't address the hard real issues of use and/or abuse and a punitive 0 tolerance approach never works. It is like teaching sexual abstinence and not teaching about making choices.
- 2 let's be clear - they are not Town water supplies or wastewater - they are users and supported only by users - excessively expensive & forced upon them by town majority; user fees continue to rise and are above affordable rates for individual users. The Town should subsidize as the Town benefits and feels satisfied w/ these resources. Town people tend to want to develop the village to hold all conveniences for them to come from their lovely hillside estates and get the convenience of down-country but not have to bear the consequences in their own back yards.
- 3 Waste water bill is out of proportion (too high) when compared to other towns.
- 4 I think C-SPAC has made a big improvement in access to indoor recreational facilities - otherwise, I'm not sure I know if any.
- 5 farmers market/easy access to local foods: adequate/poor
- 6 Mutual aid emergency medical services: good
- 7 Store - good
Hardware - good
Garage - Poor (too pricey)
- 8 The police are a joke and the town is regressing into a place where only the affluent can live. Real people live here and need to be treated fairly. All recreation has been planned or curtailed by the school in the PAC - It SUCKS and is a WASTE of MONEY.
- 9 We could have more recycling services. Use that 'historic' building as a give & take center. not including clothes. Things like building supplies, household items, etc.
- 10 Zoning enforcement: we are pleased Town administration has taken steps to try to better enforce...

Question 26 was included at the suggestion of the Cabot Coalition, and gauges the perceptions of Town residents regarding problems affecting the Town's youth. Respondents were asked to identify the three most significant problems affecting youth ages 12 to 18. In addition to choosing among a list of 12 problem behaviors/situations, respondents were able to identify other issues.

The three behaviors identified as having the greatest impact on overall community health were alcohol abuse (55.1%), illegal drug use (44.9%), and lack of activity/exercise (39.1%). Twenty-four residents took the opportunity to specify other problems, or describe the factors that lead to the problems. Boredom, lack of meaningful and interesting activities outside of school, and lack of adult role models were among the issues cited as leading to problems affecting youth in the community.

26. Of the following, which do you think are the three most significant problems affecting youth ages 12 to 18 in our community? (Please select the three problems that have the greatest impact on overall community health)

Answer Options

Response Percent

Response Count

Alcohol abuse	55.1%	38
Being overweight	27.5%	19
Dropping out of school	10.1%	7
hygiene	0.0%	0
Illegal drug use	44.9%	31
Lack of activity/exercise	39.1%	27
Poor eating habits	37.7%	26
Pregnancy	4.3%	3
Sexually transmitted disease	7.2%	5
Tobacco use	30.4%	21
Not using safety belts in cars	4.3%	3
Racism	4.3%	3
Other (please specify)		24
<i>answered question</i>		69
<i>skipped question</i>		16

Other (please specify)

- 1 Boredom
- 2 being overweight and poor eating habits and lack of activity are really all the same problem; a very big problem that isn't listed here is driving safety
- 3 See above #26 comments.
- 4 lack of access to educational, vocational opportunities; lack of guidance and models re: how to develop their future lives. More recreational and arts/ culture opportunities. Need more diverse peer interactions and opportunities to get out of Cabot. Hope for the future. Work opportunities. These kinds of oportunities leave little room for the select few cabot coalition fears for youth. Cabot Coalition is touting too many scare tactics. Boo. positive adult relationship, work, and non-academic learning opportunities for teens are the biggest needs. The other issues are more surface symptoms that often don't develop for youth w/ meaningful endeavors.
- 5 War Culture (media, military and government influences).
- 6 Hypocrisy
- 7 I think there is too small a population to generalize so specifically--each of these is a problem to somebody, but I don't think we have a pandemic of any of them
- 8 lack of choices in activities/school interests
- 9 Not enough opportunities to get involved in community events and issues that impact them. Although I would like to thank Kathleen at the library for encouraging kids to be very involved in the summer reading program events; she's made it very welcoming to kids and very easy for parents.
- 10 Technology overload, i.e. facebook, twitter / bullying
- 11 Isolation from community due to lack of jobs, too much media (TV, Video games) school's narrow focus.
- 12 Don't know this age group well enough
- 13 Unsupervised youth is a huge problem.

- 14 Don't know responsibility and work ethics.
- 15 Face it-- we all drank when we were younger. It's part of life. Let's stop wasting money on preventing teenagers from drinking and rather focus it towards other issues-- perhaps ones that (especially when combined with drinking) can cause severe future problems. As a young adult who recently grew up in Cabot, I believe that the amount of racism (or racist comments that are made out of pure naivety) as well as the lack of seatbelts that have even this past weekend led to deaths in the local area are unacceptable. I hope that there is some way to use some of the money (that in my opinion is wasted on getting teenagers in trouble for consuming a few beers in the safety of their own family homes) to work through these issues.
- 16 Sorry, I don't know any youth in Cabot.
- 17 Lack of Good Parenting
Lack of Accountability to selves and others
Lack of APPROPRIATE School Discipline
- 18 they may do all of the above for lack of anything else to do
- 19 These are all symptoms of not having positive activities and appropriate adult role models/mentors to offer and lead them into better behaviors. Why aren't you listed here?
- 20 Lack of recreational and cultural activities
- 21 Prevalence of TV/videogames/internet as extracurricular activities of choice (and the fact that they see adults all around them making the same choice)
- 22 Reckless driving (cars, mopeds, ATVs, Trucks, etc.)
- 23 don't know
- 24 homophobia

Visions of the Ideal Cabot of the Year 2030, organized by theme (as identified in public planning forum on September 13, 2010)

Program: After initial presentations about the planning process, planning survey, and demographics, about 40 Cabot residents were presented with the critical vision question: *It is the year 2030. You as a group of citizens have successfully created the ideal and desired Cabot. Describe what the community is like. This is not a description of the strategies used to get where we are in 2030, but a description of what we have become.*

Attendees broke into four groups, each with a facilitator/recorder. Each person wrote down his or her response to the vision question, and then shared their visions around the table. As each person expressed their vision, it was written down on a large sheet of paper displayed on an easel. The individual vision statements from each of the four groups took up several large sheets.

Everyone then reconvened and a representative from each group shared the multiple vision statements that emerged from that group. As each group reported, recorders wrote down the statements on large sheets set up at the front of the meeting room. An attempt was made to combine statements that were essentially the same. However, the combined vision statements still took up 14 sheets of large paper.

These written statements were then examined, and the attendees, working as a large group, began to identify themes, or categories, that were evident in the statements. The themes identified were: **Affordability (A), Education (E), Governance (GV), Growth/non-growth (G), Health and Well-being (HW), Housing (H), Self-sustainable community (SS), and Social/Cultural fabric of Town (SC).**

The attendees, aided by the facilitators, then identified each of the statements as corresponding to certain themes, and the abbreviation of the theme was written next to the statement. Most of the statements were identified as belonging to multiple themes.

Below is a transcription of these sheets. Since many of the statements were identified as belonging to several themes, they appear under each theme with which they were identified.

Affordability (A)

- Source more locally and regionally
- More cell and internet access
- Comfortable and accommodating to diverse population
- All housing needs met
- Everyone has enough to eat

- Bartering system for skills/goods
- Free broadband
- Increase and diversify farms
- Local renewable energy projects
- As little government as possible involved in property rights
- Local and alternative medical care
- Self-sustaining Cabot where everyone is healthy and happy
- Lower taxes (so we can retain small agriculture)
- Land affordable to young people
- General store

Education (E)

- Retain school for young people
- High-quality education at reasonable cost
- Everyone graduates with skill they feel proud of
- Time for learning outside school building and schedule
- Keep school in town and rethink education
- Cabot makes school decisions, not State/S.U.
- Consolidated school district – learning facility
- Intact and funded library
- Oral History of Cabot gathered from elders
- People volunteering to teach skilled trades/skills mentoring program (ag., arts, etc.)
- Dairy museum to complement Cabot Creamery
- Young people much more involved, working side by side with leaders
- Schools geared toward development of children (not the reverse) and supports different types of learners
- Strong, enviable school system
- Competitive High School Course offerings
- A school exists and enrollment increases
- Have necessary resources for youth
- More alternative education/life skills for non-college bound
- Unique culinary
- Larger school, more families
- Quality education (pre-K – 12)available to all

Governance (GV)

- Strict adherence to zoning
- Pedestrian resource and access
- Cabot tolerate diverse, healthy attitudes toward land use
- Consolidated school district – learning facility

- Zoning regulations will be pulled forward
- More police patrols through town
- Fair and balanced zoning
- Transparent government operations we can all be proud of
- Protect historic real estate and enhance to be income-generating
- Waste Water Treatment Plant paid off
- Shooting is banned in agricultural areas
- Australian Ballot
- Council of Wise Women to decide all matters of justice
- More police patrols through town
- Improve parking rather than wider roads
- Increase number of conservation easements
- Full-time law enforcement, paid fire staff
- Modern Town Garage for town resources built for everyone, with recycling center
- Cabot makes school decisions, not State/S.U.
- Friendly to small businesses
- Keeping traditional uses of land open (logging, hunting, fishing, trapping)
- People able to have more rights with their property -- fewer "hoops"
- As little government as possible involved in property rights
- Everyone is able to retain property – no one is pushed out

Growth/non-growth (G)

- More cell and internet access
- Rethink location of Cabot Creamery
- No large housing developments
- Community bus service-improve public transportation
- Fair and balanced zoning
- Free broadband
- More organic farming
- Integrate farms and community
- Tourist destination beyond Creamery (eatery, B&B, etc.)
- Increase and diversify farms
- Local renewable energy projects
- Continue to include farms in addition to small business
- A safe and vibrant center of town with successful farms and cottage industry surrounding it
- More local manufacturing
- A school exists and enrollment increases
- Increased population with city dwellers to enjoy Cabot
- Remain a real Vermont town instead of a tourist town
- Unique culinary
- Protect Joe's Pond

- Brewery and restaurant
- General store
- Vibrant village
- Larger school, more families
- Population of 4,000
- Cabot tolerate diverse, healthy attitudes toward land use

Health and Well-being (HW)

- Source more locally and regionally
- Cross-country ski trails on private land maintained by public funds
- Bike path that is well lit, safe
- Pedestrian resource and access
- Cabot tolerate diverse, healthy attitudes toward land use
- World peace
- Decrease animal and dairy consumption, move to veggie diet to reduce carbon
- Everyone has enough to eat
- Healthful lifestyles (food avail. promotes health)
- Improved playground in rec. area
- More sporting events – biking, etc. More family events
- Bartering system for skills/goods
- Keeping traditional uses of land open (logging, hunting, fishing, trapping)
- Local renewable energy projects
- Continue to include farms in addition to small business
- Local and alternative medical care
- Self-sustaining Cabot where everyone is healthy and happy
- Community where individual interests recognized and common goals that satisfy most
- More alternative education/life skills for non-college bound
- Local food resources

Housing (H)

- No large housing developments
- All housing needs met
- Diverse housing options (seasonal, rentals, yurts)
- Local renewable energy projects
- A safe and vibrant center of town with successful farms and cottage industry surrounding it
- Repurposing downtown buildings
- People able to have more rights with their property -- fewer “hoops”

Self-sustainable community (SS)

- Source more locally and regionally
- Unique culinary
- Everyone graduates with skill they feel proud of
- Supports manufacturing industry in an environmentally and economically –friendly way
- More UDAG funds
- No large housing developments
- Community bus service-improve public transportation
- Decrease animal and dairy consumption, move to veggie diet to reduce carbon
- Community greenhouse for year-round food
- Controlled development
- More jobs in town
- Successful farmers' market in town
- Integrated transportation
- Everyone has enough to eat
- Full-time law enforcement, paid fire staff
- Healthful lifestyles (food avail. promotes health)
- Annual Apple Pie and Maple Festivals thrive
- Modern Town Garage for town resources built for everyone, with recycling center
- Shared resources of residents: combines, tractors, tools, etc.
- Bartering system for skills/goods
- More energy self-reliant
- Friendly to small businesses
- More work on energy efficiency in town buildings and individual homes
- More goods produced locally
- Local food resources
- Keeping traditional uses of land open (logging, hunting, fishing, trapping)
- Farms offering CSAs
- Carbon-free town where all aspects of life co-mingle as a harmonious community
- Free broadband
- More organic farming
- Integrate farms and community
- Intact and funded library
- Increase and diversify farms (beans, rice, flax, etc.)
- Local renewable energy projects
- Continue to include farms in addition to small business
- A safe and vibrant center of town with successful farms and cottage industry surrounding it
- Self-sustaining Cabot where everyone is healthy and happy
- Dairy museum to complement Cabot Creamery
- Bank in Village (a VT State bank)
- Vibrant, big local businesses and pedestrian-friendly Main Street
- Bakery

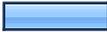
- Taking advantage of soil and energy resources
- Lower taxes (so we can retain small agriculture)
- Local power – wind, animal power, bio-diesel
- More local manufacturing
- Improve Main Street
- Access to lakes and ponds
- Business with diverse skills, employment
- Self-sufficient with food and energy
- Land affordable to young people
- Increased population with city dwellers to enjoy Cabot
- Cabot is a net exporter of goods
- People volunteering to teach skilled trades/skills mentoring program(ag., arts, etc.)
- More alternative education/life skills for non-college bound
- General store
- Vibrant village

Social/Cultural fabric of Town (SC)

- A good sledding place in Town
- Bandstand on Common
- Activities to stay connected – not just “virtual”
- Community that places as much value on elders as youth
- More cell and internet access
- Rethink location of Cabot Creamery
- More UDAG funds
- No large housing developments
- Council of Wise Women to decide all matters of justice
- Community bus service-improve public transportation
- Time for learning outside school building and schedule
- Cross-country ski trails on private land maintained by public funds
- More arts and cultural opportunities in Town
- Bike path that is well lit, safe
- Comfortable and accommodating to diverse population
- Community greenhouse for year-round food
- Revitalize dead spaces: entry point to village, green space, underutilized space around commons
- Active senior center
- Larger town-base community
- Successful farmers’ market in town
- Everyone has enough to eat
- Community performing arts center
- Annual Apple Pie and Maple Festivals thrive
- Improved playground in rec. area

- More sporting events – biking, etc. More family events
- Modern Town Garage for town resources built for everyone, with recycling center
- Shared resources of residents: combines, tractors, tools, etc.
- Bartering system for skills/goods
- Diverse housing options (seasonal, rentals, yurts)
- People able to have more rights with their property -- fewer “hoops”
- Carbon-free town where all aspects of life co-mingle as a harmonious community
- Steadfast devotion to Tribe of Cabot
- Local recreation
- Integrate farms and community
- Tourist destination beyond creamery (eatery, B&B, etc.)
- Oral History of Cabot gathered from elders
- Continue to include farms in addition to small business
- People volunteering to teach skilled trades/skills mentoring program(ag., arts, etc.)
- A safe and vibrant center of town with successful farms and cottage industry surrounding it
- Self-sustaining Cabot where everyone is healthy and happy
- Dairy museum to complement Cabot Creamery
- Young people much more involved, working side by side with leaders
- Vibrant, big local businesses and pedestrian-friendly Main Street
- Pedestrian resource and access
- Bakery
- Continues to be welcoming, close-knit
- Repurposing downtown buildings
- Improve Main Street
- Business with diverse skills, employment
- Beautify community – more cohesive
- Everyone is able to retain property – no one is pushed out
- Land affordable to young people
- Increased population with city dwellers to enjoy Cabot
- Remain a real Vermont town instead of a tourist town
- Community where individual interests recognized and common goals that satisfy most
- Have necessary resources for youth
- More alternative education/life skills for non-college bound
- Historical Society
- Brewery and restaurant
- Vibrant village
- Cabot tolerate diverse, healthy attitudes toward land use

1. How many acres of land do you use for farming and/or making your product(s)?

		Response Percent	Response Count
1 acre or less		15.4%	2
2-3 acres		7.7%	1
4-10 acres		0.0%	0
11-20 acres		0.0%	0
21-50 acres		7.7%	1
51-100 acres		7.7%	1
More than 100 acres		61.5%	8
answered question			13
skipped question			0

2. Do you own that land or is it leased?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Own		53.8%	7
Lease		0.0%	0
Combination Own and Lease		46.2%	6
Other arrangement (please specify)			0
answered question			13
skipped question			0

3. How many TOTAL acres do you OWN?

		Response Percent	Response Count
1 acre or less		0.0%	0
2-3 acres		0.0%	0
4-10 acres		7.7%	1
11-20 acres		7.7%	1
21-50 acres		15.4%	2
51-100 acres		15.4%	2
More than 100 acres		53.8%	7
answered question			13
skipped question			0

4. What is/are your primary product(s)? (Check all that apply)

		Response Percent	Response Count
Vegetables		23.1%	3
Fruit		30.8%	4
Nursery stock		0.0%	0
Dairy products		46.2%	6
Maple Syrup		53.8%	7
Agri-tourism		7.7%	1
Lodging		0.0%	0
Other		7.7%	1
Poultry		30.8%	4
Beef		23.1%	3
Other Meat		23.1%	3
Forest products		30.8%	4
Specialty food		0.0%	0
Animal feed		30.8%	4

Please provide details about your farm/forest products (e.g., type of meat, vegetables, fruit, etc.)

7

answered question

13

skipped question

0

5. Do you use greenhouses in your farm operation?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		15.4%	2
No		84.6%	11

If no, would your farm operation benefit from the use of greenhouses?(please explain)

4

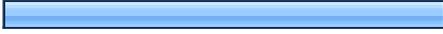
answered question

13

skipped question

0

6. Where do you sell your product(s)? (check all that apply)

		Response Percent	Response Count
From the farm		91.7%	11
Wholesale		66.7%	8
CSA (Community supported agriculture)		0.0%	0
Restaurant		16.7%	2
Farmers' Market		8.3%	1
Local Store		16.7%	2

Other (please specify)

3

answered question

12

skipped question

1

7. Is your farm certified organic?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		38.5%	5
No		38.5%	5
Only certain products (please specify)		23.1%	3
answered question			13
skipped question			0

8. What are the other uses of your land? (check all that apply)

		Response Percent	Response Count
Leased to other farmers		9.1%	1
Forest		90.9%	10
Conserved Land		18.2%	2
Residential (not counting your own home)		18.2%	2
Commercial use		0.0%	0
Industrial Use		0.0%	0
Other (please specify)		27.3%	3
answered question			11
skipped question			2

9. Do you live on the same site as farming/production?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		84.6%	11
No		15.4%	2
answered question			13
skipped question			0

10. What year did you buy your land?(If you have made multiple land purchases, please give the earliest year)

		Response Count
		12
answered question		12
skipped question		1

11. What was the land used for before you bought it? (check all that apply)

		Response Percent	Response Count
Cropland		30.8%	4
Pasture		30.8%	4
Vegetables/Fruit		0.0%	0
Dairy		38.5%	5
Poultry		0.0%	0
Beef/other meat		0.0%	0
Specialty food		0.0%	0
Maple syrup		53.8%	7
Plant nursery		0.0%	0
Forest		69.2%	9
Conserved land		0.0%	0
Residential		7.7%	1
Commercial		0.0%	0
Industrial		0.0%	0
Other (please specify)		23.1%	3
answered question			13
skipped question			0

12. What borders your land? (check all that apply)

		Response Percent	Response Count
Farm		69.2%	9
Forest		84.6%	11
Conserved Land		30.8%	4
Residential Use		38.5%	5
Commercial Use		0.0%	0
Industrial Use		0.0%	0
	Other (please specify)		0
answered question			13
skipped question			0

13. Please rate the pressure you feel from external forces to sell or develop some or all of your land for non-agricultural uses(e.g., residential or commercial use)

	No Pressure	Slight pressure	Definite Pressure	Excessive Pressure	Not sure	Rating Average	Response Count
Level of Pressure	91.7% (11)	8.3% (1)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	1.08	12
answered question							12
skipped question							1

14. Please rate the pressure you feel from neighbors to change the way your farm operates:

	No Pressure	Slight Pressure	Definite Pressure	Excessive Pressure	Not Sure	Rating Average	Response Count
Level of pressure	76.9% (10)	23.1% (3)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	1.23	13
answered question							13
skipped question							0

15. Do you believe it would be beneficial to your agricultural operation to increase the acreage of land available for your use?(If no, please skip to question 19)

		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		53.8%	7
No		46.2%	6
answered question			13
skipped question			0

16. If yes, would you prefer to purchase or lease the land?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Purchase		37.5%	3
Lease		12.5%	1
Not sure		50.0%	4
answered question			8
skipped question			5

17. Would it be adjacent to your current land?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		62.5%	5
No		0.0%	0
Not Sure		37.5%	3
answered question			8
skipped question			5

18. Do you believe it will be difficult to acquire additional land for your farming operation, either through purchase or lease?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		75.0%	6
No		25.0%	2
	If yes, please explain		7
	answered question		8
	skipped question		5

19. How likely is it that you will sell the land, or at least a majority of the land, on which you farm? (If not at all likely, please skip to question 22)

	Not likely	Somewhat likely	Very Likely	Definitely	Not Sure	Rating Average	Response Count
Likelihood	72.7% (8)	9.1% (1)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	18.2% (2)	1.11	11
	answered question						11
	skipped question						2

20. If at all likely, what would be the primary reason?

	Response Count
	3
answered question	3
skipped question	10

21. If at all likely, in what time frame?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Less than a year		0.0%	0
1-5 years		0.0%	0
More than 5 years		25.0%	1
Not Sure		75.0%	3
answered question			4
skipped question			9

22. Do you have land in "current use"?

		Response Percent	Response Count
yes		75.0%	9
no		25.0%	3
If yes, please specify the acreage and category of land in current use			6
answered question			12
skipped question			1

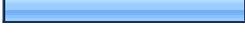
23. Do you have conservation easements on your land?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		23.1%	3
No		76.9%	10

If yes, please specify the acreage and use of the conserved land (i.e., open space, forest, or working farmland) 2

answered question	13
skipped question	0

24. What are the annual revenues of your farming/production business?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Under \$1,000		0.0%	0
\$1,000 - \$9,999		18.2%	2
\$10,000-\$24,999		18.2%	2
\$25,000-\$49,999		9.1%	1
\$50,000-\$99,999		18.2%	2
\$100,000 or more		36.4%	4

answered question	11
skipped question	2

25. What are the annual expenses of your farming/production business?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Under \$1,000		18.2%	2
\$1,000-\$9,999		9.1%	1
\$10,000 - \$24,999		9.1%	1
\$25,000-\$49,999		18.2%	2
\$50,000 - \$99,999		9.1%	1
\$100,000 or more		36.4%	4
answered question			11
skipped question			2

26. How many paid employees do you have at the busiest time of year? (part and full time, not including yourself)

		Response Percent	Response Count
None		30.8%	4
1		23.1%	3
2-4		30.8%	4
5-10		7.7%	1
11-15		7.7%	1
16-20		0.0%	0
More than 20		0.0%	0
answered question			13
skipped question			0

27. Is farming/production your only source of income?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		25.0%	3
No		75.0%	9
answered question			12
skipped question			1

28. If not, approximately what percentage of your income is derived from farming/production?

		Response Percent	Response Count
75% or more		11.1%	1
50% - 74%		22.2%	2
25% - 49%		11.1%	1
10% - 24%		0.0%	0
Less than 10%		55.6%	5
answered question			9
skipped question			4

29. Do you believe current local land use regulations or other local conditions present any barriers to the growth and/or continued economic viability of your farming operation?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		9.1%	1
No		90.9%	10

If yes, please explain 2

answered question 11

skipped question 2

30. Do you believe that increased exposure/awareness of your agricultural operation to tourists and local residents, through advertising, the creation of a local information booth and/or self-guided tour maps, would benefit your farm business?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		41.7%	5
No		50.0%	6
Not Sure		8.3%	1

answered question 12

skipped question 1

31. As it continues its work on the Town Plan, is there anything that the Planning Commission should address in regard to land use or community/economic development that you believe will have a positive impact on the economic sustainability of your agricultural operation?

	Response Count
	4

4

answered question 4

skipped question 9

Q4. What is/are your primary product(s)? (Check all that apply)

1	Organic, mixed vegetables, small-scale berry, organic/free-range eggs and meat birds, future plans to have a small sugaring operation	Feb 9, 2011 2:16 PM
2	Dairy farm that sells milk to a cooperative and some beef.	Feb 10, 2011 11:47 AM
3	We sell goats for replacement and for meat; animal feed: hay	Apr 11, 2011 1:48 PM
4	Hay, occasional logs	Apr 11, 2011 2:02 PM
5	milk, dairy, beef, logs, wood, etc. Note: acreage is in both Cabot and Woodbury	Apr 11, 2011 2:28 PM
6	Beef, eggs, apples, pumpkins, some garden vegetables	Apr 11, 2011 2:34 PM
7	wood products, mixed veggies, blueberries, logs and firewood	Apr 11, 2011 2:40 PM

Q5. Do you use greenhouses in your farm operation?

1	No we have a dairy farm.	Feb 10, 2011 11:47 AM
2	No	Apr 11, 2011 1:52 PM
3	No	Apr 11, 2011 2:02 PM
4	Greenhouses would allow us to start vegetable plants	Apr 11, 2011 2:34 PM

Q6. Where do you sell your product(s)? (check all that apply)

1	Roving Farmers' market at local businesses in Cabot and Montpelier	Feb 9, 2011 2:16 PM
2	VT Butter and Cheese creamery	Apr 11, 2011 1:48 PM
3	bulk maple syrup/online website	Apr 11, 2011 1:52 PM

Q7. Is your farm certified organic?

1	We grow on certified land but we have not paid the fees to be certified ourselves. It doesn't really effect our market	Feb 9, 2011 2:16 PM
2	Maple Syrup	Apr 11, 2011 2:02 PM
3	blueberries	Apr 11, 2011 2:40 PM

Q8. What are the other uses of your land? (check all that apply)

1	Managed forest, sugarbush, and pasture	Feb 9, 2011 2:16 PM
2	wildlife habitat	Apr 11, 2011 1:52 PM
3	habitat for wildlife	Apr 11, 2011 2:40 PM

Q10. What year did you buy your land?(If you have made multiple land purchases, please give the earliest year)

1	2006	Feb 8, 2011 7:11 AM
2	2009	Feb 9, 2011 2:16 PM
3	We only own our home and some woods, 2003, the rest is leased land.	Feb 10, 2011 11:47 AM
4	1991	Apr 11, 2011 1:40 PM
5	1991, 1997	Apr 11, 2011 1:48 PM
6	1996	Apr 11, 2011 1:52 PM
7	1971	Apr 11, 2011 2:02 PM
8	2000	Apr 11, 2011 2:12 PM
9	1985	Apr 11, 2011 2:22 PM
10	1947	Apr 11, 2011 2:28 PM
11	1988	Apr 11, 2011 2:34 PM
12	1988	Apr 11, 2011 2:40 PM

Q11. What was the land used for before you bought it? (check all that apply)

1	fallow fields	Apr 11, 2011 2:02 PM
2	It wasn't used for much; it was abandoned farm land.	Apr 11, 2011 2:28 PM
3	fallow field and forest	Apr 11, 2011 2:40 PM

Q18. Do you believe it will be difficult to acquire additional land for your farming operation, either through purchase or lease?

1	too expensive	Feb 8, 2011 7:11 AM
2	We are able to increase production by lease at any time	Feb 9, 2011 2:16 PM
3	The land is too expensive to compete with others wanting to buy it. Any land that we bought we would keep the fields and sell the homes that come with them.	Feb 10, 2011 11:47 AM
4	Other adjacent land is in farming already, some in residential	Apr 11, 2011 1:48 PM
5	Cost	Apr 11, 2011 1:52 PM
6	Because of cost and availability	Apr 11, 2011 2:34 PM
7	Don't no	Apr 11, 2011 2:40 PM

Q20. If at all likely, what would be the primary reason?

1	Can't make a living on it.	Apr 11, 2011 1:57 PM
2	money	Apr 11, 2011 2:34 PM
3	Old age, kids not interested	Apr 11, 2011 2:40 PM

Q22. Do you have land in "current use"?

1	We applied last year for current use	Feb 9, 2011 2:16 PM
2	All that we lease is in current use, the land owners could not afford the taxes without it.	Feb 10, 2011 11:47 AM
3	57 and a half acres	Apr 11, 2011 1:40 PM
4	All of it	Apr 11, 2011 1:57 PM
5	About 150 acres in pasture and forest	Apr 11, 2011 2:22 PM
6	all but 2 acres, farm and forest	Apr 11, 2011 2:34 PM

Q23. Do you have conservation easements on your land?

1	309 acres half open half wooded	Feb 8, 2011 7:11 AM
2	123 acres forest	Apr 11, 2011 1:48 PM

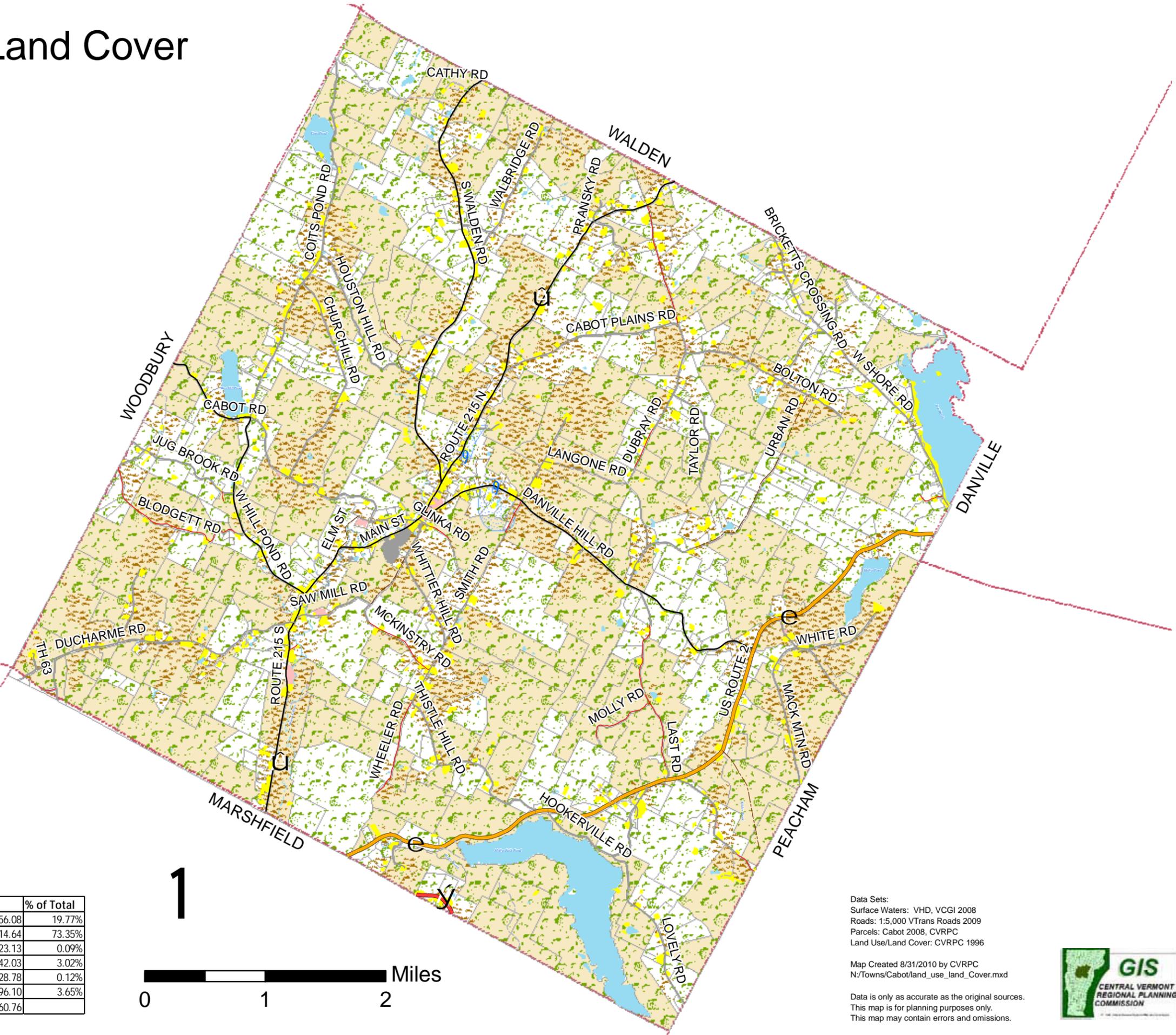
Q29. Do you believe current local land use regulations or other local conditions present any barriers to the growth and/or continued economic viability of your farming operation?

1	not enough open land left for the amount of farmers in this town	Feb 8, 2011 7:11 AM
2	Local conditions: We are limited at our property for organic production due to practices used by neighboring farms. Example: We can't grow "organic" corn on our property because cross-pollination with genetically modified "round-up ready" corn(the corn itself is a registered insecticide) renders our corn non-organic. We will have to grow these crops elsewhere which is disappointing.	Feb 9, 2011 2:16 PM

Q31. As it continues its work on the Town Plan, is there anything that the Planning Commission should address in regard to land use or community/economic development that you believe will have a positive impact on the economic sustainability of your agricultural operation?

1	stop building in open fields	Feb 8, 2011 7:11 AM
2	Our hired man wanted to start his own farm and we had everything set up, but the creamery told us they would not go to the small farm we had found in town because of the roads. This is very unfair it is hard enough to start farming, but to have the roads be the reason you can't continue is sad. Small farms are going to become a thing of the past even in my short time on this earth the farms in Cabot have gone away. There are only three conventional farms and only two that ship to Cabot Creamery. We started with 15 milkers in 2001 and we are now milking 70 and will be milking well over 90 this spring. I don't think there is much that can be done to save the farms. Many farms are so far behind on bills now that the high fuel prices this summer are going to send them under. We are fortunate to have been organic for ten years and we now have our feet under us, but it would be impossible to start farming now unless you had income from some other endeavor. Sorry for the rambling but my grandparents are in their eighties and still going to barn every day only to put themselves farther in debt, and they have already spent any retirement that they had. It makes me sad, and now our outlook on farming is to do it long enough to pay everything off and make a little profit and then sell and find something else to do. I don't want to be in their shoes at their age. Organic has saved us for now but it won't last forever and shouldn't have to be the answer. Every farmer deserves a fair price.	Feb 10, 2011 11:47 AM
3	Try to prevent further forest fragmentation	Apr 11, 2011 1:52 PM
4	Prime ag soils (land) should be protected from residential/commercial development, but this will not happen. The pressure from residential development is too great and much prime ag land is already too fragmented. Sorry!	Apr 11, 2011 2:28 PM

Map 1: Land Use Land Cover



Legend

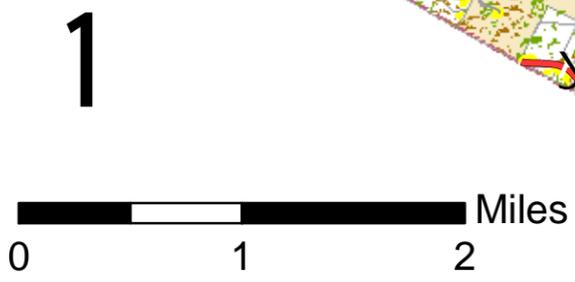
Roads

- Class 2
- Class 3
- Class 4
- Private Rds
- Vermont State Highways
- US Highways
- Legal Trail
- Parcels
- Cabot Current Use Parcels 2010

Land Use/ Land Cover Class

- Agriculture & Open Land
- Forested/Shrub Land
- Public/Service
- Residential
- Commercial/Industrial
- Surface Water
- Well
- Well Head Protection Area

Classes	Acres	% of Total
Agricultural /Open Land	4856.08	19.77%
Forested/ Shrub Land	18014.64	73.35%
Public/ Service	23.13	0.09%
Residential	742.03	3.02%
Commerical/ Industrial	28.78	0.12%
Surface Water	896.10	3.65%
Total	24560.76	



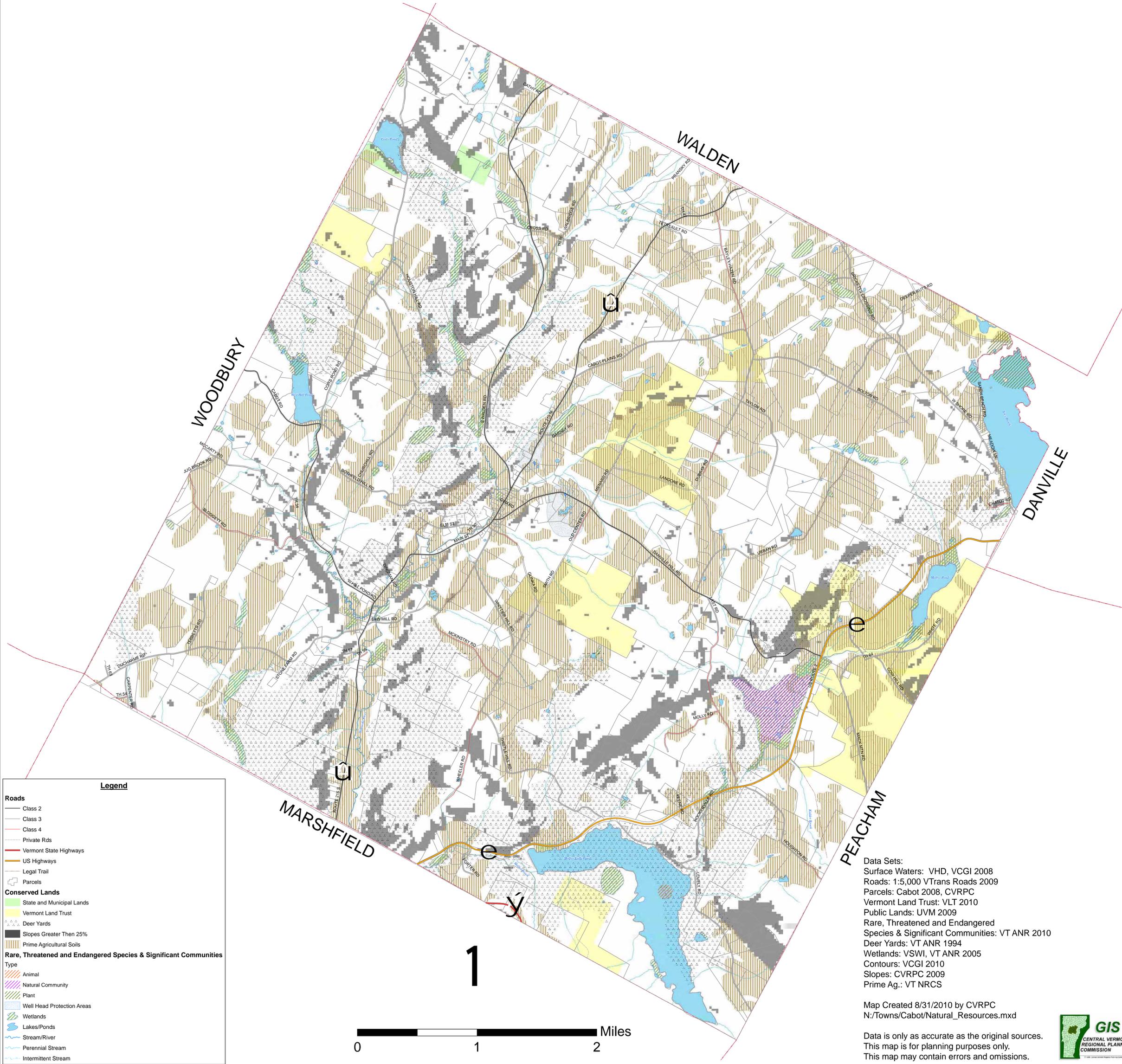
Data Sets:
 Surface Waters: VHD, VCGI 2008
 Roads: 1:5,000 VTrans Roads 2009
 Parcels: Cabot 2008, CVRPC
 Land Use/Land Cover: CVRPC 1996

Map Created 8/31/2010 by CVRPC
 N:/Towns/Cabot/land_use_land_Cover.mxd

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 This map may contain errors and omissions.



Map 2a: Natural Resources



Legend

- Roads**
- Class 2
 - Class 3
 - Class 4
 - Private Rds
 - Vermont State Highways
 - US Highways
 - Legal Trail
- Parcels**
- Conserved Lands**
- State and Municipal Lands
 - Vermont Land Trust
 - Deer Yards
 - Slopes Greater Than 25%
 - Prime Agricultural Soils
- Rare, Threatened and Endangered Species & Significant Communities**
- Type
- Animal
 - Natural Community
 - Plant
 - Well Head Protection Areas
 - Wetlands
 - Lakes/Ponds
 - Stream/River
 - Perennial Stream
 - Intermittent Stream

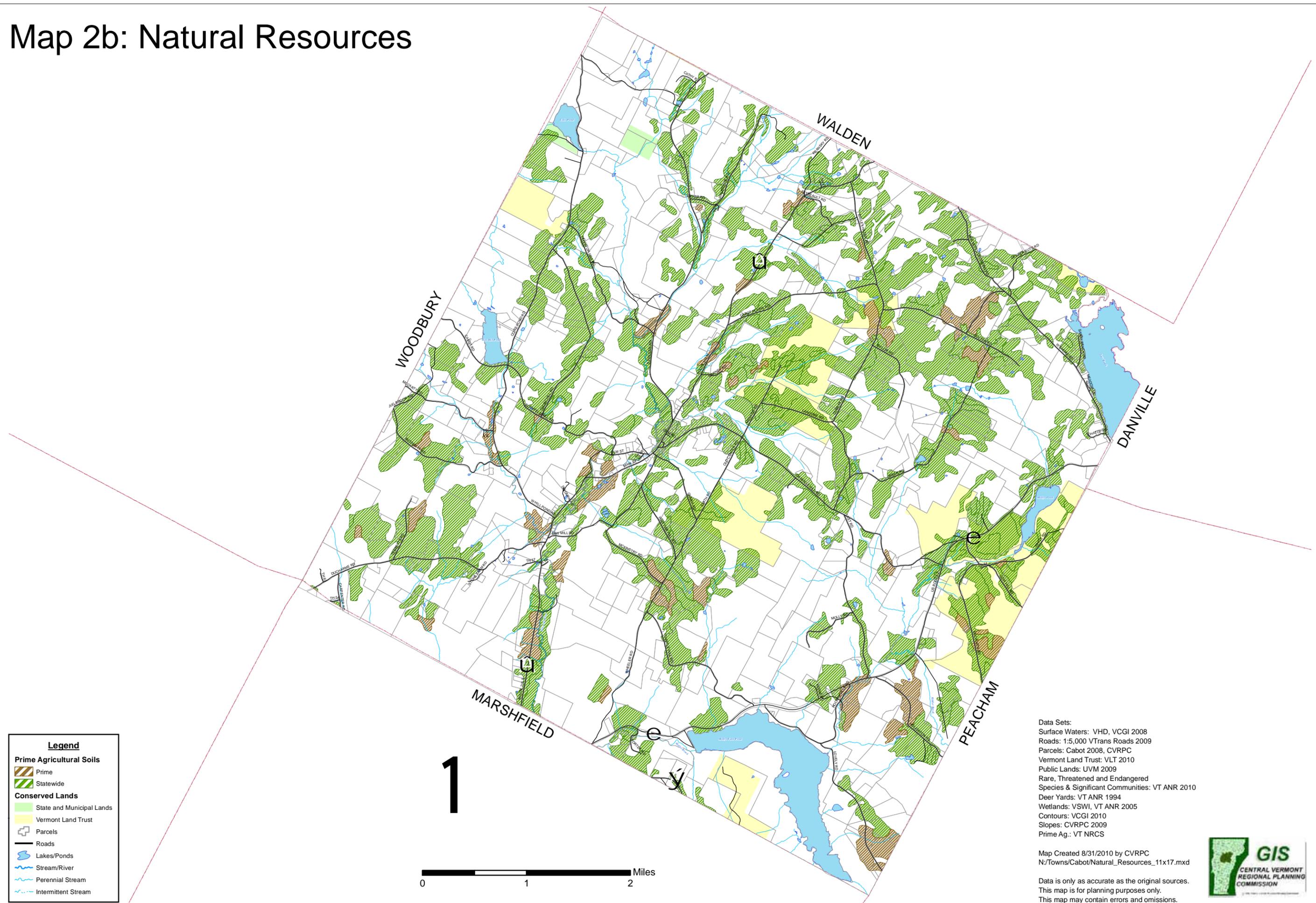
Data Sets:
 Surface Waters: VHD, VCGI 2008
 Roads: 1:5,000 VTrans Roads 2009
 Parcels: Cabot 2008, CVRPC
 Vermont Land Trust: VLT 2010
 Public Lands: UVM 2009
 Rare, Threatened and Endangered
 Species & Significant Communities: VT ANR 2010
 Deer Yards: VT ANR 1994
 Wetlands: VSWI, VT ANR 2005
 Contours: VCGI 2010
 Slopes: CVRPC 2009
 Prime Ag.: VT NRCS

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Map 2b: Natural Resources



Legend

Prime Agricultural Soils

- Prime
- Statewide

Conserved Lands

- State and Municipal Lands
- Vermont Land Trust

Parcels

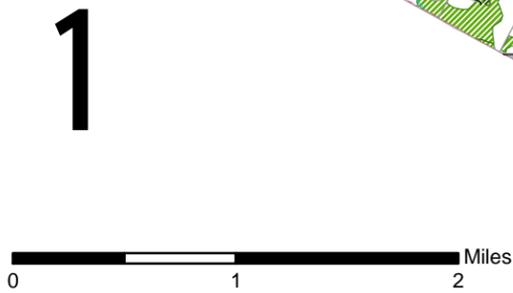
Roads

Lakes/Ponds

Stream/River

Perennial Stream

Intermittent Stream



Data Sets:

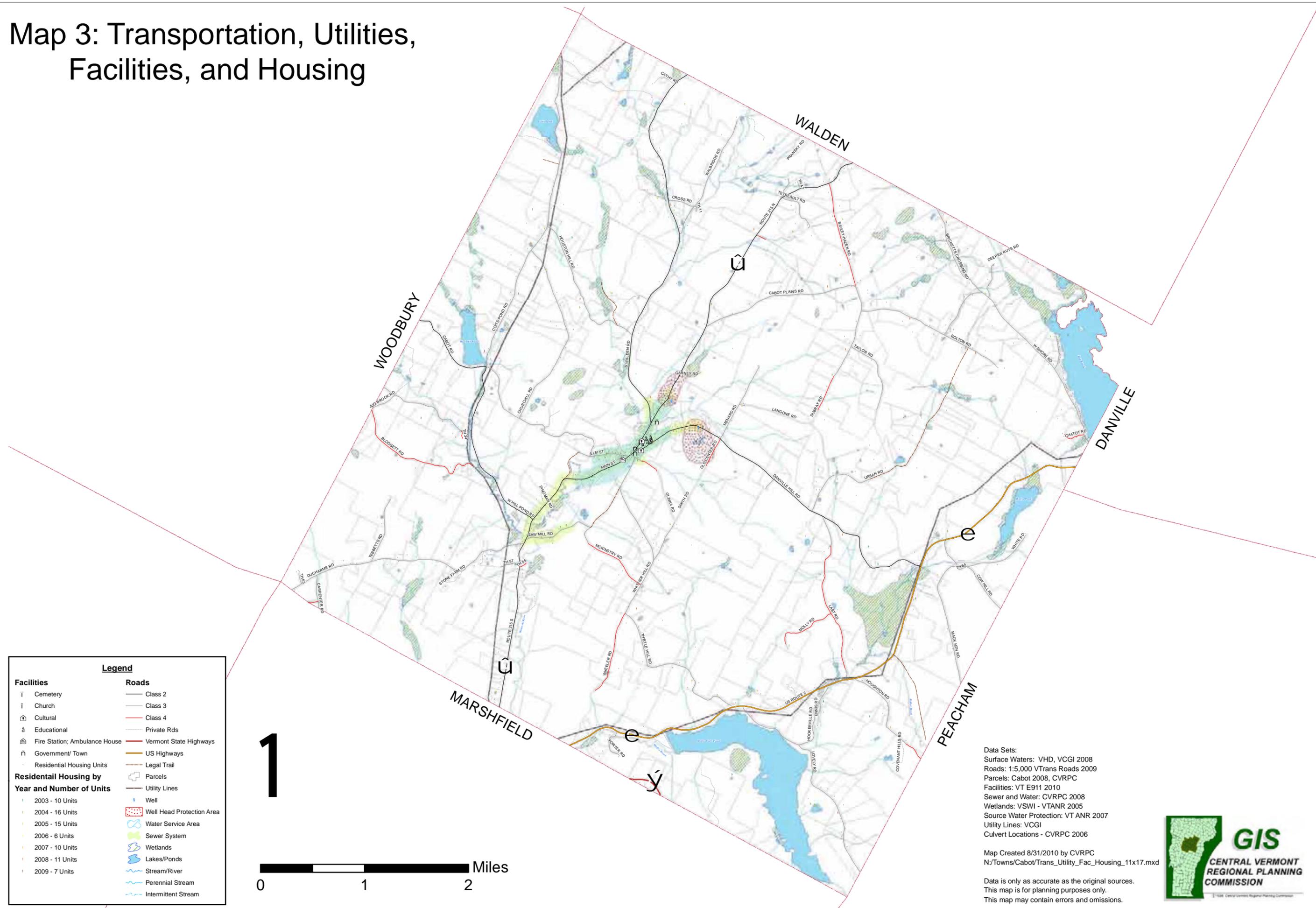
- Surface Waters: VHD, VCGI 2008
- Roads: 1:5,000 VTrans Roads 2009
- Parcels: Cabot 2008, CVRPC
- Vermont Land Trust: VLT 2010
- Public Lands: UVM 2009
- Rare, Threatened and Endangered Species & Significant Communities: VT ANR 2010
- Deer Yards: VT ANR 1994
- Wetlands: VSWI, VT ANR 2005
- Contours: VCGI 2010
- Slopes: CVRPC 2009
- Prime Ag.: VT NRCS

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 N:/Towns/Cabot/Natural_Resources_11x17.mxd

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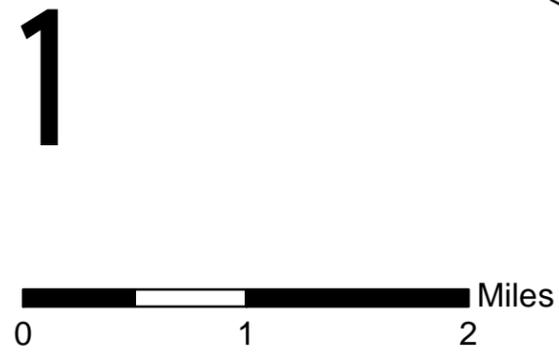


Map 3: Transportation, Utilities, Facilities, and Housing



Legend

Facilities	Roads
☐ Cemetery	— Class 2
☐ Church	— Class 3
☐ Cultural	— Class 4
☐ Educational	— Private Rds
☐ Fire Station; Ambulance House	— Vermont State Highways
☐ Government/ Town	— US Highways
☐ Residential Housing Units	— Legal Trail
Residential Housing by Year and Number of Units	☐ Parcels
2003 - 10 Units	— Utility Lines
2004 - 16 Units	☐ Well
2005 - 15 Units	☐ Well Head Protection Area
2006 - 6 Units	☐ Water Service Area
2007 - 10 Units	☐ Sewer System
2008 - 11 Units	☐ Wetlands
2009 - 7 Units	☐ Lakes/Ponds
	☐ Stream/River
	☐ Perennial Stream
	☐ Intermittent Stream



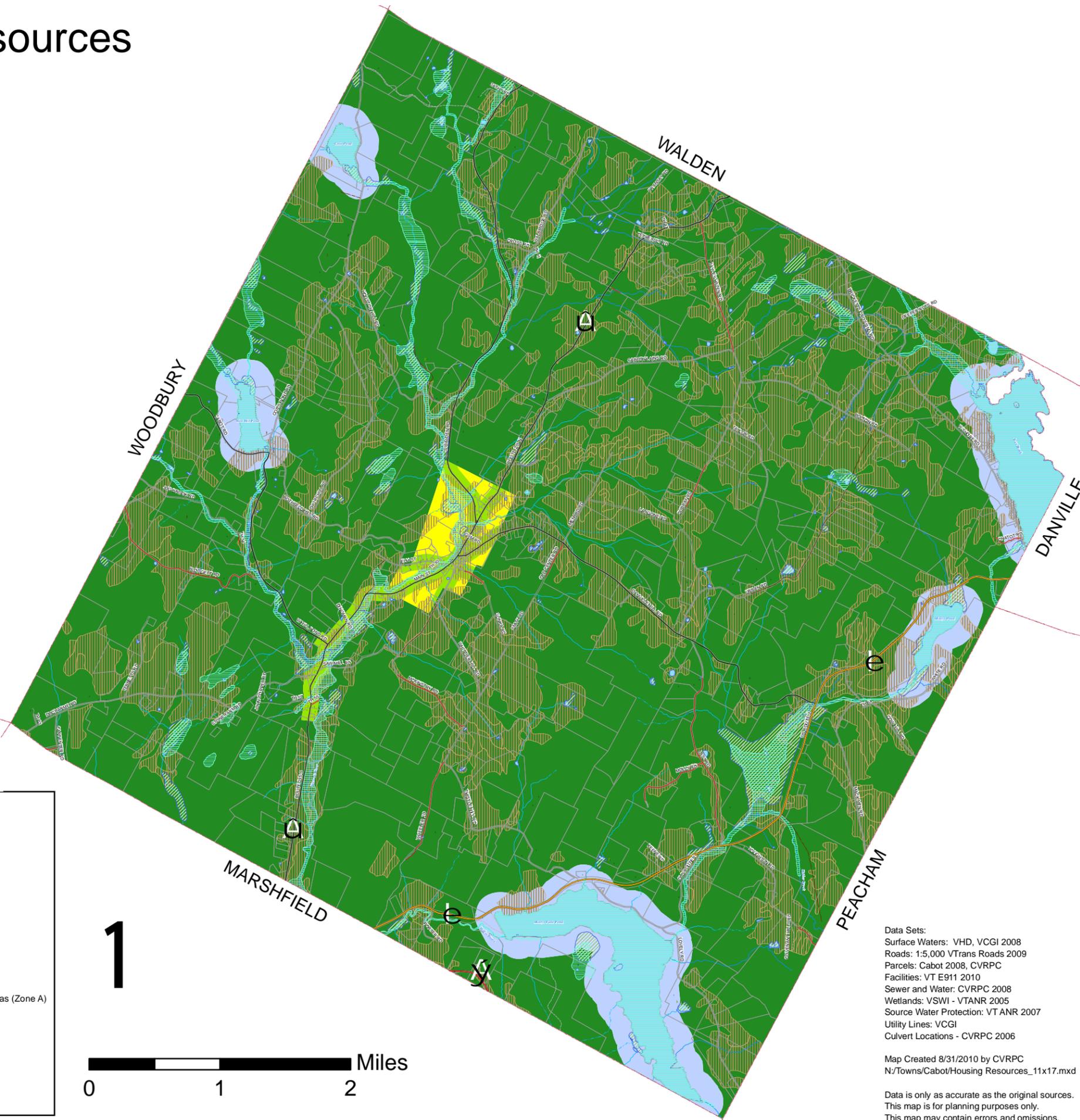
Data Sets:
 Surface Waters: VHD, VCGI 2008
 Roads: 1:5,000 VTrans Roads 2009
 Parcels: Cabot 2008, CVRPC
 Facilities: VT E911 2010
 Sewer and Water: CVRPC 2008
 Wetlands: VSWI - VTANR 2005
 Source Water Protection: VT ANR 2007
 Utility Lines: VCGI
 Culvert Locations - CVRPC 2006

Map Created 8/31/2010 by CVRPC
 N:/Towns/Cabot/Trans_Utility_Fac_Housing_11x17.mxd

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Map 4: Housing Resources

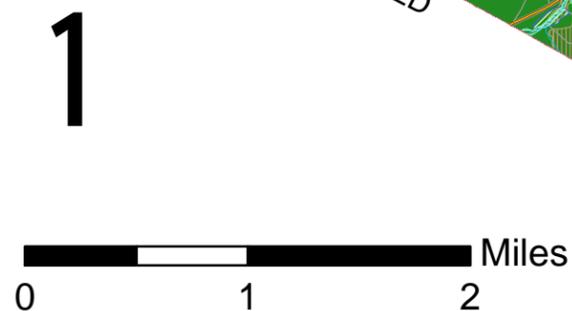


Cabot's projected future housing demand to the year 2020 is 64 units. Cabot has a goal of incorporating 65% (42 units) of the future housing demand into the Village Center District and 35% (22 units) in the Low Density Residential and Agricultural District.

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

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

Legend	
Parcels	Special Flood Hazard Areas (Zone A)
Roads	Wetlands
Class 2	Lakes/Ponds
Class 3	Stream/River
Class 4	Perennial Stream
Private Rds	Intermittent Stream
Vermont State Highways	
US Highways	
Legal Trail	



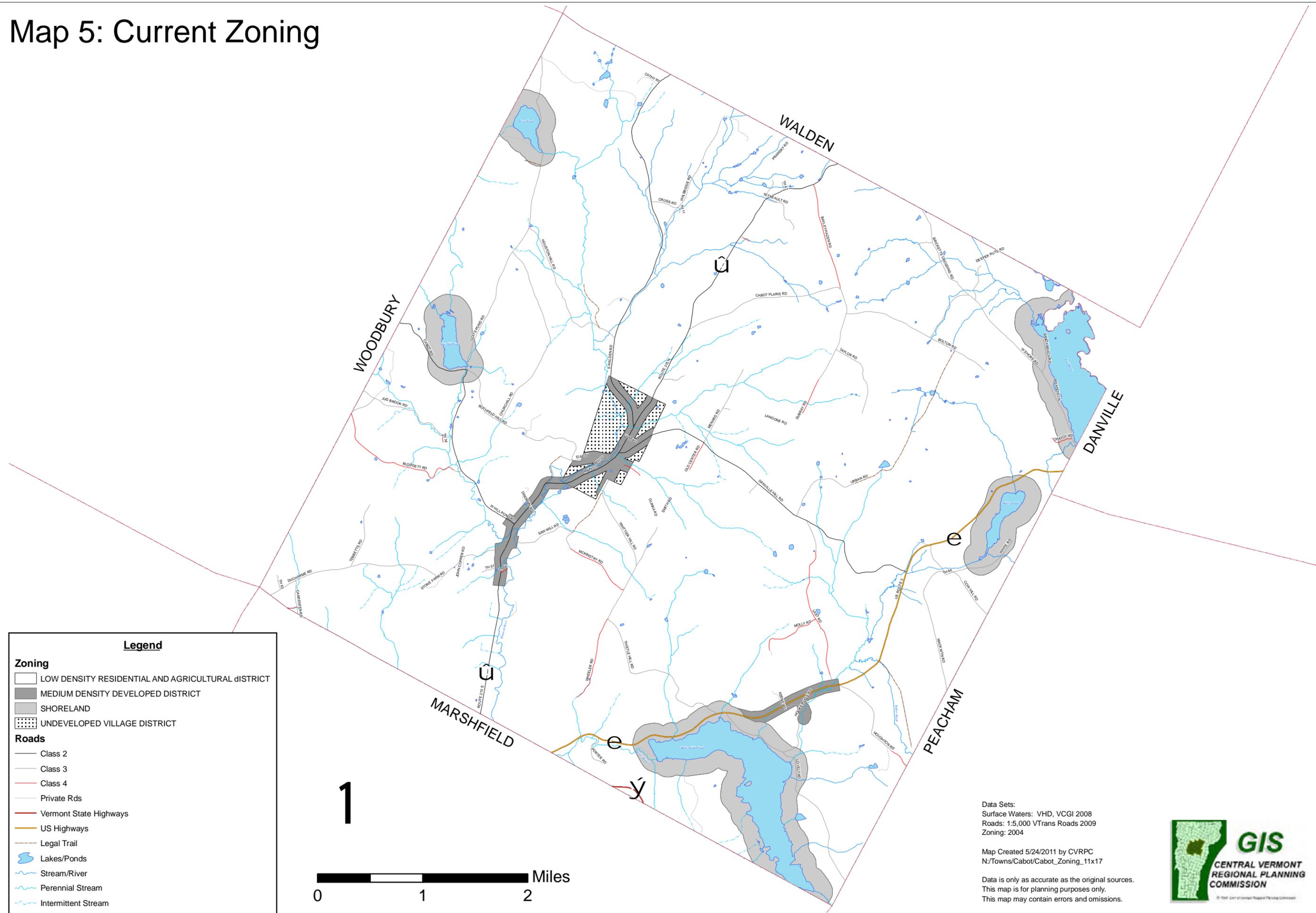
Data Sets:
 Surface Waters: VHD, VCGI 2008
 Roads: 1:5,000 VTrans Roads 2009
 Parcels: Cabot 2008, CVRPC
 Facilities: VT E911 2010
 Sewer and Water: CVRPC 2008
 Wetlands: VSWI - VTANR 2005
 Source Water Protection: VT ANR 2007
 Utility Lines: VCGI
 Culvert Locations - CVRPC 2006

Map Created 8/31/2010 by CVRPC
 N:/Towns/Cabot/Housing Resources_11x17.mxd

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Map 5: Current Zoning



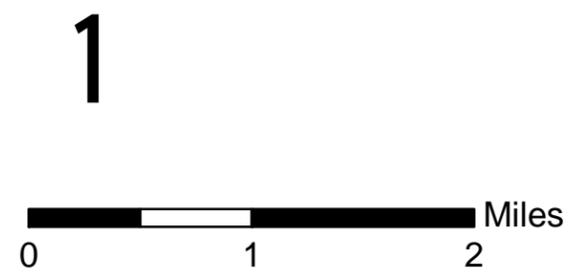
Legend

Zoning

- LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL AND AGRICULTURAL DISTRICT
- MEDIUM DENSITY DEVELOPED DISTRICT
- SHORELAND
- UNDEVELOPED VILLAGE DISTRICT

Roads

- Class 2
- Class 3
- Class 4
- Private Rds
- Vermont State Highways
- US Highways
- Legal Trail
- Lakes/Ponds
- Stream/River
- Perennial Stream
- Intermittent Stream



Data Sets:
 Surface Waters: VHD, VCGI 2008
 Roads: 1:5,000 VTrans Roads 2009
 Zoning: 2004

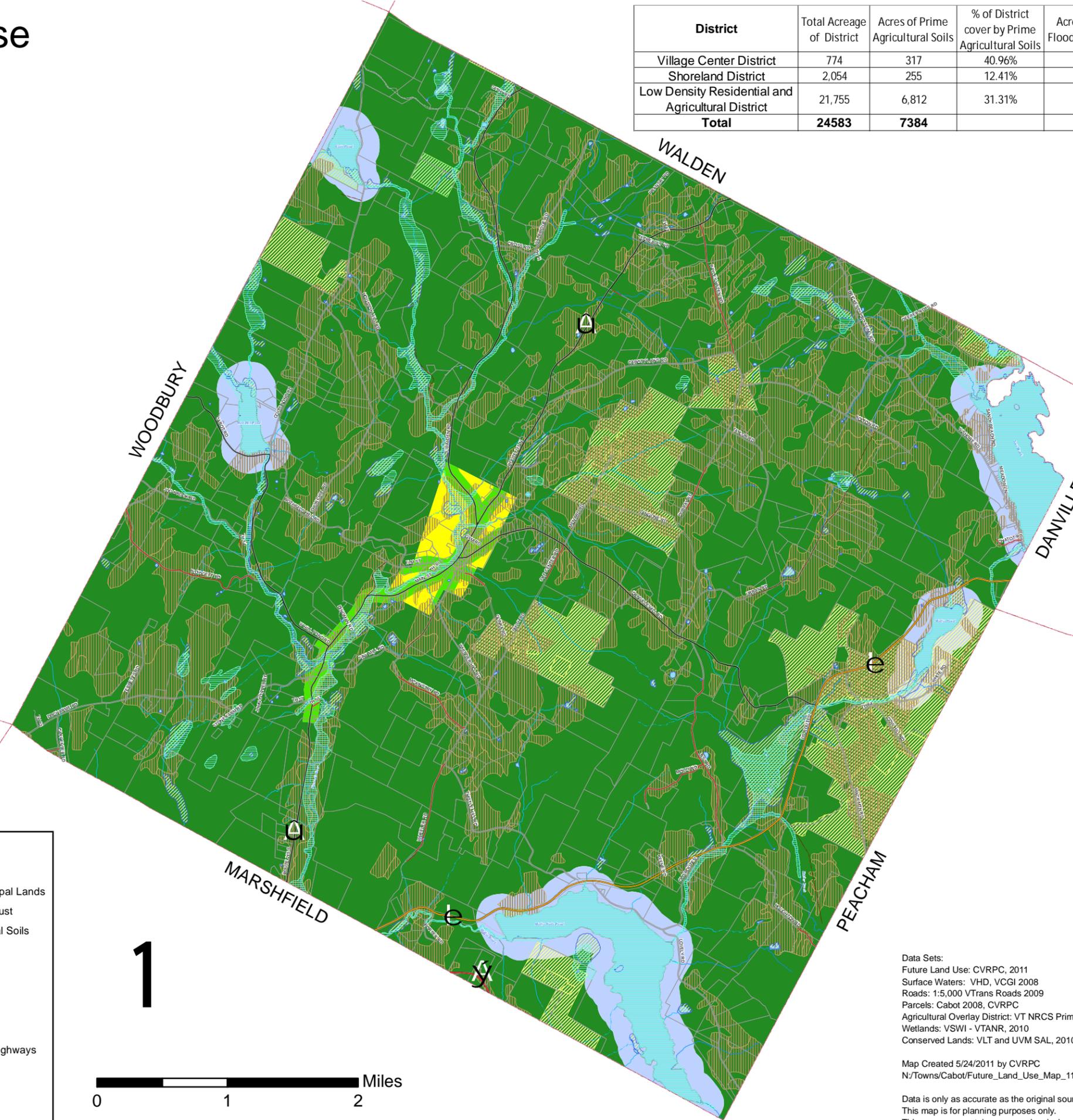
Map Created 5/24/2011 by CVRPC
 N:/Towns/Cabot/Cabot_Zoning_11x17

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 This map may contain errors and omissions.



Map 6: Future Land Use

District	Total Acreage of District	Acres of Prime Agricultural Soils	% of District cover by Prime Agricultural Soils	Acres of Special Flood Hazard Areas	% of District cover by Special Flood Hazard Areas
Village Center District	774	317	40.96%	110	14.21%
Shoreland District	2,054	255	12.41%	862	41.97%
Low Density Residential and Agricultural District	21,755	6,812	31.31%	656	3.02%
Total	24583	7384		1628	



Legend

Future Land Use

ZONE

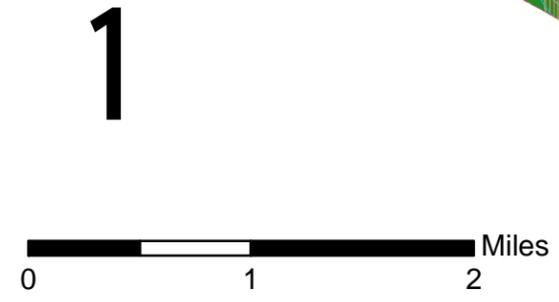
- Low Density Residential and Agricultural District
- Medium Density Developed District
- Shoreland District
- Village Center District (Approximant Boundary)

Preliminary NFIP 2009

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

Roads

- Parcels
- State and Municipal Lands
- Vermont Land Trust
- Prime Agricultural Soils
- Class 2
- Class 3
- Class 4
- Private Rds
- Vermont State Highways
- US Highways
- Legal Trail



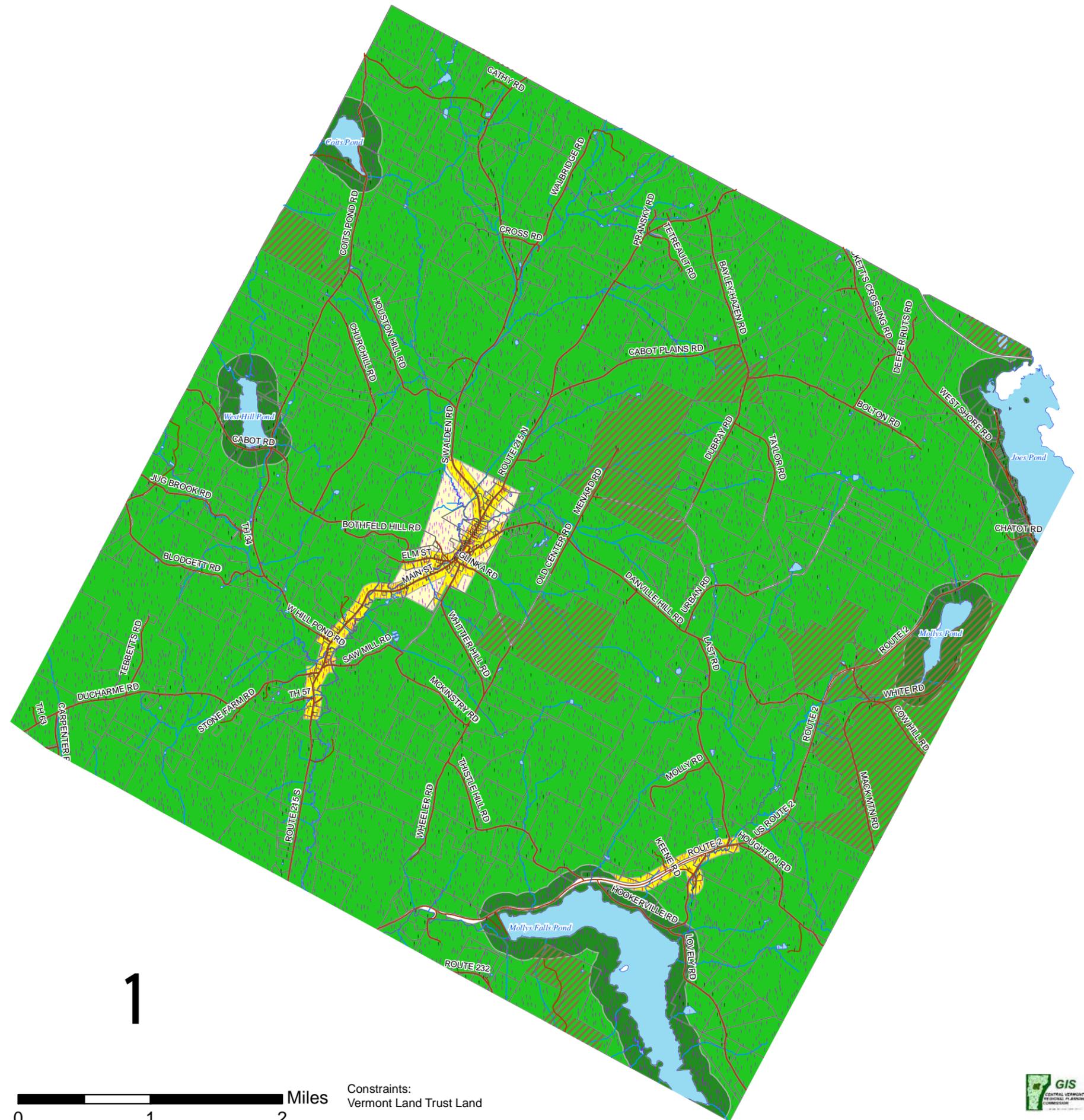
Data Sets:
 Future Land Use: CVRPC, 2011
 Surface Waters: VHD, VCGI 2008
 Roads: 1:5,000 VTrans Roads 2009
 Parcels: Cabot 2008, CVRPC
 Agricultural Overlay District: VT NRCS Prime Ag
 Wetlands: VSWI - VTANR, 2010
 Conserved Lands: VLT and UVM SAL, 2010

Map Created 5/24/2011 by CVRPC
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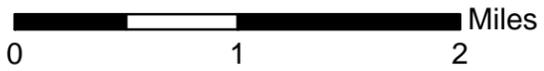
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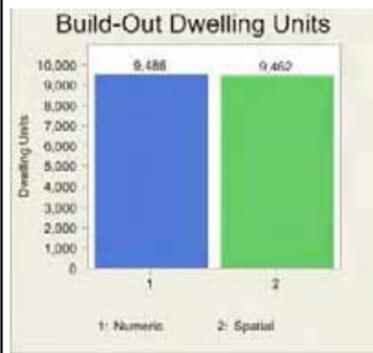
Cabot Build Out 1



1



Constraints:
Vermont Land Trust Land

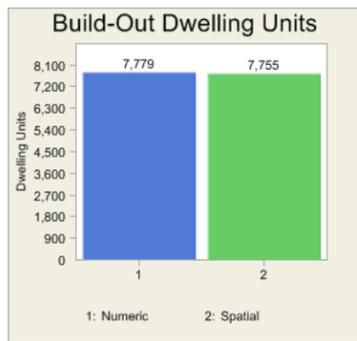
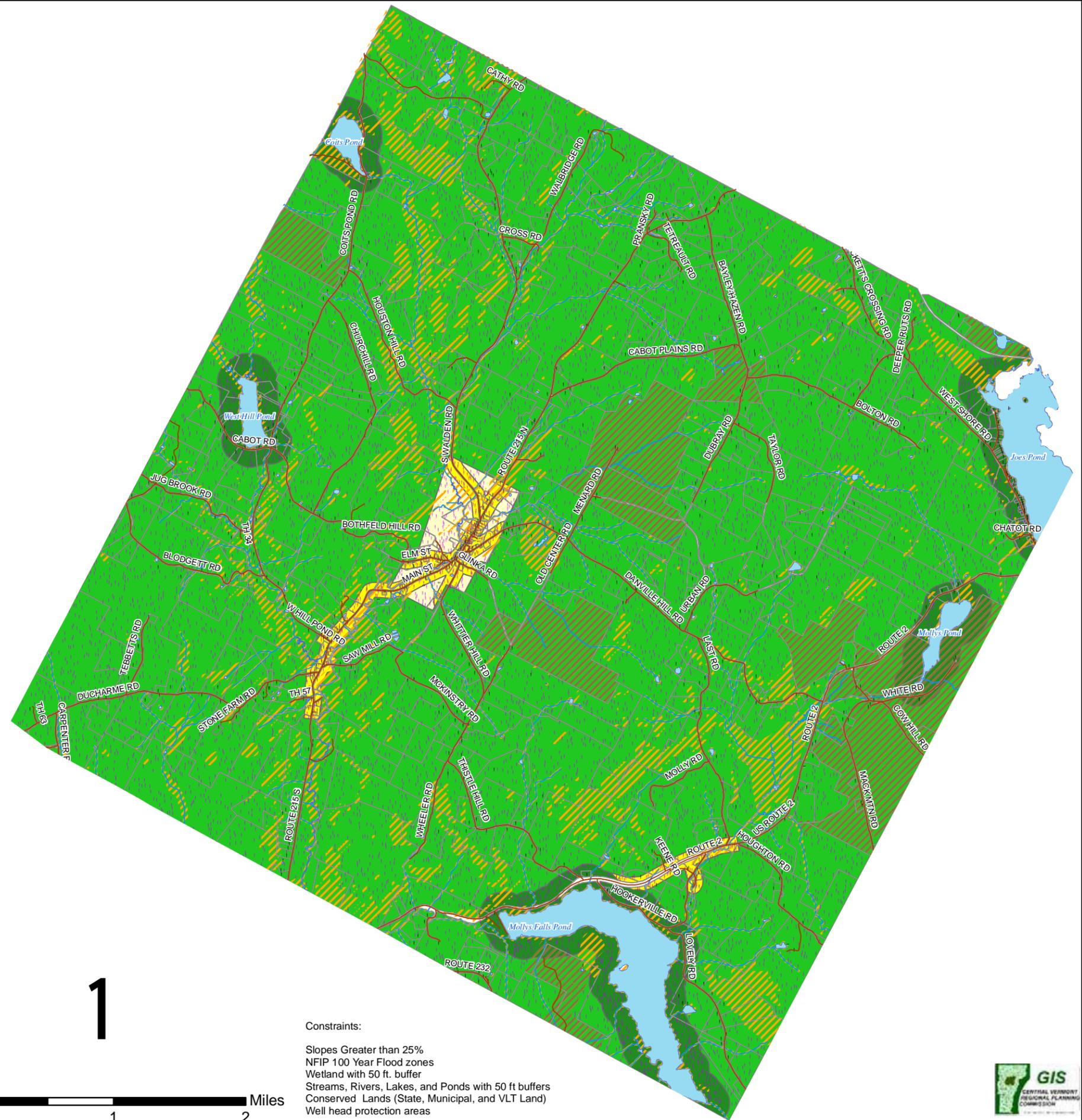


Legend

- Roads
- Buildings**
 - Potential Residential
 - Potential Non-Residential
 - Existing Residential
 - Existing Commercial and Institutional
- Parcels
- VT Land Trust
- Lakes and Ponds
- Rivers and Streams
- Zoning**
 - Low Density Residential and Agriculture District
 - Medium Density Developed District
 - Shoreland District
 - Undeveloped Village District

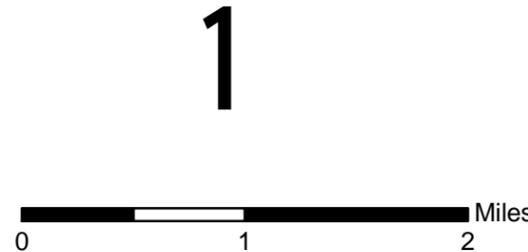


Cabot Build Out 2



Legend

- Roads
- Buildings**
 - Potential Residential
 - Potential Non-Residential
 - Existing Residential
 - Existing Commercial and Institutional
- Parcels
- Lakes and Ponds
- Rivers and Streams
- VT Land Trust
- Constraints (See List)
- Zoning**
 - Low Density Residential and Agriculture District
 - Medium Density Developed District
 - Shoreland District
 - Undeveloped Village District



Constraints:

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

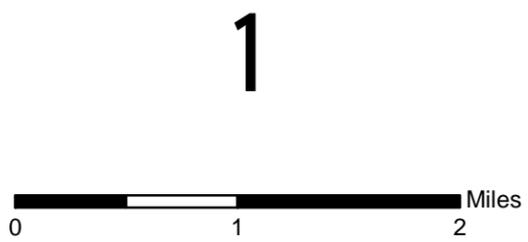


Cabot Build Out 3



Legend

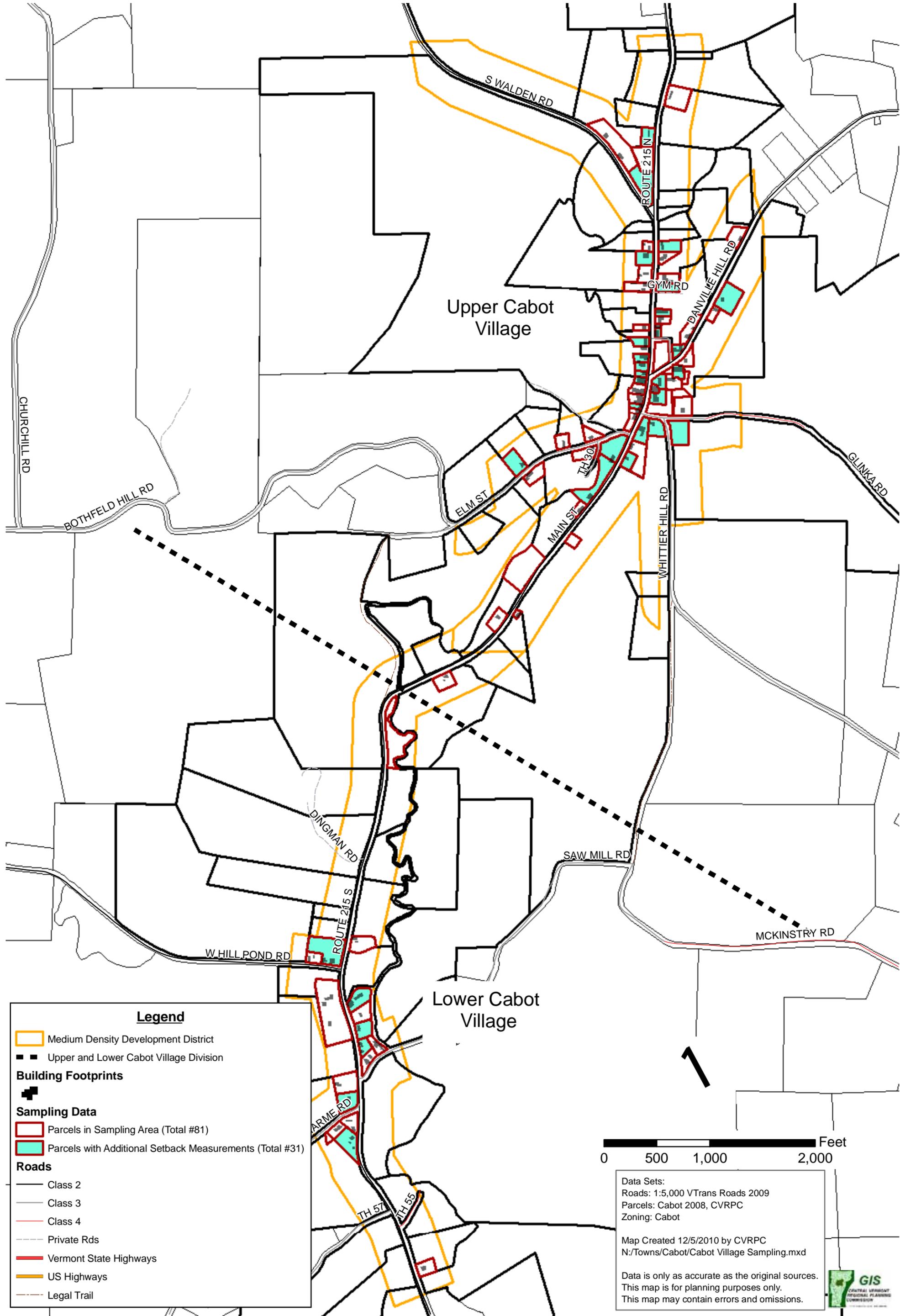
- Roads
- Buildings**
 - Potential Residential
 - Potential Non-Residential
 - Existing Residential
 - Existing Commercial and Institutional
- Parcels
- Lakes and Ponds
- Rivers and Streams
- VT Land Trust
- Constraints (See List)
- Zoning**
 - Low Density Residential and Agriculture District
 - Medium Density Developed District
 - Shorland District
 - Undeveloped Village District



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



Map7d: Cabot Village Sampling



Legend

- Medium Density Development District
- Upper and Lower Cabot Village Division
- Building Footprints**
-
- Sampling Data**
- Parcels in Sampling Area (Total #81)
- Parcels with Additional Setback Measurements (Total #31)
- Roads**
- Class 2
- Class 3
- Class 4
- Private Rds
- Vermont State Highways
- US Highways
- Legal Trail

0 500 1,000 2,000 Feet

Data Sets:
 Roads: 1:5,000 VTrans Roads 2009
 Parcels: Cabot 2008, CVRPC
 Zoning: Cabot

Map Created 12/5/2010 by CVRPC
 N:/Towns/Cabot/Cabot Village Sampling.mxd

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 This map may contain errors and omissions.



**Town of Cabot
Build Out and Village Sampling Report
March 2011**

**Prepared by:
Daniel Currier, GIS Manager
Clare Rock, Senior Planner**

Purpose

The Build Out and Village Sampling Report is intended to provide a general picture of development issues in the Town of Cabot in the context of its existing settlement patterns, as well as its potential to accommodate new growth under its current land use policies. CVRPC analyzed these parameters using Geographic Information Systems computer software (GIS) to conduct a Build Out Analysis, as well as a survey (or “sampling”) of existing parcels and structures within the Upper and Lower Village.

The Build Out Analysis attempts to identify the general location and intensity of future growth based upon physical restrictions, available infrastructure, and allowable zoning density. It is not intended to suggest or predict the exact sites of futures homes or businesses.

The Village “sampling” of existing conditions within Cabot’s Upper and Lower Villages was conducted to determine prevailing lot sizes, setbacks and building footprints in order to compare them to current regulatory requirements as established in the Town Zoning Ordinance.

This report is not intended to be an in-depth critique of Cabot’s land use regulations or planning policies, nor an endorsement of any particular regulatory strategy, but rather a broad-brush look at current conditions, existing controls, and future planning options.

Town of Cabot Build Out

The Build Out analysis utilized the current parcel configuration, zoning requirements, and existing development to identify the general location and intensity of future growth for the Town of Cabot.

Three build out models were run. They all included the same parcels, zoning, and existing development but they differ in the constraints that were identified to remove development:

- Build Out 1 Constraints: - Vermont Land Trust (VLT) Conservation Land
- Build Out 2 Constraints: - Slopes greater than 25%
 - NFIP 100 year flood zones
 - Wetlands with 50 ft. buffer
 - Stream, rivers, lakes and pond with 50 ft. buffers
 - Conserved lands (State, Municipal, and VLT Land)
 - Well head protection areas
- Build Out 3 Constraints: - Slopes greater than 25%
 - NFIP 100 year flood zones
 - Wetlands with 50 ft. buffer
 - Stream, rivers, lakes and pond with 50 ft. buffers
 - Conserved lands (State, Municipal, and VLT Land)
 - Well head protection areas
 - Prime agricultural soil intersecting with existing agricultural/open lands*

Numeric and Spatial Results

Each Build Out contains “Numeric” and “Spatial” results. The “Numeric” build-out is a mathematical calculation that measures the holding capacity of land, simply a raw calculation of the number of potential units. The “Spatial” Build Out converts the numeric building counts into points representing individual structures. It then refines the numeric building counts by taking into account the actual geometry (i.e. setbacks) of land-use areas and buildings. The “Spatial” Build Out therefore provides a more accurate indication of potential buildings based upon Cabot’s current Zoning Ordinance.

Density Rules

Density rules were applied to calculate the amount of potential future development. The number of potential residential units are calculated based upon Cabot’s minimum lot size and are referred to as Dwelling Units. CVRPC converted Cabot’s commercial

* Cabot requested this additional constraint to help determine the impacts of permanently conserving current farmland and open space. CVRPC Land Use/Land Cover data was utilized.

development regulations into a floor area ratio (FAR[†]) which is used to calculate the amount of potential commercial square footage. Allowances for roads (and also driveways in the Med. Density Developed District) were incorporated and reduce the overall density on a parcel. The remaining developable land is referred to as the areas “efficiency factor.” For example, in the Low Density Res. and Ag. District, 10% of the parcel is removed to accommodate new roads, leaving a 90% Efficiency Factor for future development.

The table below outlines the density rules used in the build out.

Density Rules			
Land-Use Designation	Dwelling Units	Floor Area Ratio	Efficiency Factor (%)
Low Density Residential and Agriculture District	2 acre min. lot size	0 FAR	90
Medium Density Developed District	0.57 acre min. lot size	0.31 FAR	72
Shoreland District	1 acre min. lot size	0 FAR	90
Undeveloped Village District	1 acre min. lot size	0 FAR	92

[†] FAR is the ratio between the total floor space in a building (including all stories) and the area of the land it is built on. It is calculated by dividing the total floor area of all buildings or structures on a lot by the total area of the lot to calculate the amount of commercial space possible.

Build Out 1

The first Build Out removed potential development from Vermont Land Trust Land.
 - See map "Cabot Build Out 1"

Build out 1 - Existing and Potential Residential units

Dwelling Unit Quantities				
Land-Use Designation	Numeric Build-Out	Spatial Build-Out	Difference	Existing Dwelling Units
LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL AND AGRICUL	8196	8181	15	523
MEDIUM DENSITY DEVELOPED DISTRICT	266	262	4	144
SHORELAND	863	862	1	85
UNDEVELOPED VILLAGE DISTRICT	161	157	4	2
Total	9486	9462	24	754

Build Out 1 - Existing and Potential Commercial floor area (sq ft)

Commercial Floor Space				
Land-Use Designation	Numeric Build-Out Floor Area (sq. feet)	Spatial Build-Out Floor Area (sq. feet)	Difference	Existing Floor Area
LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL AND AGRICUL	0	0	0	44140
MEDIUM DENSITY DEVELOPED DISTRICT	604598.491	600668.958	3929.533	252478
SHORELAND	0	0	0	2900
UNDEVELOPED VILLAGE DISTRICT	0	0	0	197268
Total	604598.491	600668.958	3929.533	496786

Build out 2

The second Build Out removed potential development from the following areas:

- Slopes greater than 25%
 - NFIP 100 year flood zones
 - Wetlands with 50 ft. buffer
 - Stream, rivers, lakes and pond with 50 ft. buffers
 - Conserved lands (State, Municipal, and VLT Land)
 - Well head protection areas
- See map "Cabot Build Out 2"

Build Out 2 - Potential Residential unit

Dwelling Unit Quantities			
Land-Use Designation	Numeric Build-Out	Spatial Build-Out	Difference
LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL AND AGRICUL	6844	6829	15
MEDIUM DENSITY DEVELOPED DISTRICT	175	171	4
SHORELAND	652	650	2
UNDEVELOPED VILLAGE DISTRICT	108	105	3
Total	7779	7755	24

Build out 2 - Potential Commercial floor area (sq ft)

Commercial Floor Space			
Land-Use Designation	Numeric Build-Out Floor Area (sq. feet)	Spatial Build-Out Floor Area (sq. feet)	Difference
LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL AND AGRICUL	0	0	0
MEDIUM DENSITY DEVELOPED DISTRICT	418943.062	411799.488	7143.575
SHORELAND	0	0	0
UNDEVELOPED VILLAGE DISTRICT	0	0	0
Total	418943.062	411799.488	7143.575

Build Out 3

The third Build Out removed potential development from the following areas:

- Slopes greater than 25%
 - NFIP 100 year flood zones
 - Wetlands with 50 ft. buffer
 - Stream, rivers, lakes and pond with 50 ft. buffers
 - Conserved lands (State, Municipal, and VLT Land)
 - Well head protection areas
 - Prime agricultural soil intersecting with existing agricultural/open lands[‡]
- See map "Cabot Build Out 3"

Build Out 3 - Potential Residential unit

Dwelling Unit Quantities			
Land-Use Designation	Numeric Build-Out	Spatial Build-Out	Difference
LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL AND AGRICUL	5783	5765	18
MEDIUM DENSITY DEVELOPED DISTRICT	124	121	3
SHORELAND	630	628	2
UNDEVELOPED VILLAGE DISTRICT	90	87	3
Total	6627	6601	26

Build Out 3 - Potential Commercial floor area (sq ft)

Commercial Floor Space			
Land-Use Designation	Numeric Build-Out Floor Area (sq. feet)	Spatial Build-Out Floor Area (sq. feet)	Difference
LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL AND AGRICUL	0	0	0
MEDIUM DENSITY DEVELOPED DISTRICT	331231.016	326324.005	4907.011
SHORELAND	0	0	0
UNDEVELOPED VILLAGE DISTRICT	0	0	0
Total	331231.016	326324.005	4907.011

[‡] Cabot requested this additional constraint to help determine the impacts of permanently conserving current farmland and open space. CVRPC Land Use/Land Cover data was utilized.

Build Out Summary

Dwelling Units

Dwelling Unit Quantities				
Land-Use Designation	Existing Dwelling Units	Spatial Build-Out 1	Spatial Build-Out 2	Spatial Build-Out 3
LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL AND AGRICUL	523	8181	6829	5765
MEDIUM DENSITY DEVELOPED DISTRICT	144	262	171	121
SHORELAND	85	862	650	628
UNDEVELOPED VILLAGE DISTRICT	2	157	105	87
Total	754	9462	7755	6601

Commercial Floor Space

Commercial Floor Space (square foot)				
Land-Use Designation	Existing Floor Area	Spatial Build-Out 1	Spatial Build-Out 2	Spatial Build-Out 3
LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL AND AGRICUL	44140	0	0	0
MEDIUM DENSITY DEVELOPED DISTRICT	252478	600668.958	411799.488	326324.005
SHORELAND	2900	0	0	0
UNDEVELOPED VILLAGE DISTRICT	197268	0	0	0
Total	496786	600668.958	411799.488	326324.005

Potential Environmental and Social Impacts

Indicator[§]	Build Out 1	Build Out 2	Build Out 3	Units
Common Impacts - Annual CO Auto Emissions	11,371,752	9,320,222	7,933,306	lbs
Common Impacts - Annual CO2 Auto Emissions	106,570	87,345	74,347	tons
Common Impacts - Annual Hydrocarbon Auto Emissions	1,436,377	1,177,246	1,002,063	lbs
Common Impacts - Annual NOx Auto Emissions	712,941	584,322	497,371	lbs
Common Impacts - Commercial Energy Use	54,661	37,474	29,695	million BTU / year
Common Impacts - Commercial Floor Area	600,669	411,799	326,324	sq feet
Common Impacts - Commercial Jobs	730	500	397	commercial jobs
Common Impacts - Commercial Jobs to Housing Ratio	0.08	0.06	0.06	commercial jobs / dwelling unit
Common Impacts - Labor Force	9,076	7,438	6,331	workers
Common Impacts - Population	23,087	18,922	16,106	persons
Common Impacts - Residential Dwelling Units	9,462	7,755	6,601	dwelling units
Common Impacts - Residential Energy Use	872,396	715,011	608,612	million BTU / year
Common Impacts - Residential Water Use	3,699,642	3,032,205	2,580,991	gallons / day
Common Impacts - School Children	6,603	5,412	4,606	school children
Common Impacts - Vehicle Trips per Day	56,772	46,530	39,606	vehicle trips / day

[§] Indicators were calculated with default GIS Build Out software settings with the following exceptions: Population – based upon Cabot 2000 Census. Vehicle Trips per Day – based upon UVM Transportation modeling for VT Rural Towns.

Cabot Village Sampling

The Cabot Village Sampling analysis compares existing settlement patterns to Cabot's current zoning regulations to identify compatibility between current conditions and potential future development.

The Village Sampling analysis focused on Cabot's Medium Density Development District in and around the Upper and Lower Village areas. Currently there are 155 parcels partially or fully within the Medium Density Development District. For the purposes of "sampling", only those *completely* within the Medium Density Development District boundaries were considered. Eighty one (81) parcels (or 52%) met this requirement.

The selected parcel data was further divided into an Upper and Lower village area. Of the 81 parcel 63 were identified as being in the Upper Village and 18 in the Lower Village.

All 81 parcels were "sampled" for lot size, road frontage and lot coverage characteristics. Because setbacks are not automatically calculated by the GIS program used in this project, CVRPC took a smaller sample and used "hand measurements" to derive setback data. A random sample of 25 upper village sample parcels and 6 lower village sample parcels was used. These parcels displayed a similar range of lot sizes as the larger core sample and are therefore believed to be fairly "typical" for the Zone.

- See map titled "Cabot Village Sampling."

Cabot Village Sampling

	Area	Lot Size	Road Frontage	Set Backs			Lot Coverage
				Front	Side (left/right)	Rear	
Regulations	Residential	0.57 acres (25,000sq ft)	125 ft	40 ft	25ft	25ft	>10%
	Commercial	(20,000 sq ft)	125 ft				
	Group Service	(40,000 sq ft)	200 ft				
Mean	Upper Village	0.50 acres	196 ft	50 ft	65 ft/61 ft	88 ft	1,912 sq ft
	Lower Village	0.81 acres	243 ft	65 ft	67 ft/54 ft	82 ft	1,680 sq ft
Median	Upper Village	0.40 acres	151 ft	44 ft	21 ft/36 ft	59 ft	1,726 sq ft
	Lower Village	0.58 acres	165.5 ft	68 ft	64.5 ft/32.5 ft	83 ft	1,492 sq ft
% Non-Compliant	Upper Village	75%	44%	40%	48% / 36%	16%	62%
	Lower Village	50%	22%	33%	17% / 17%	0%	47%

Conclusions and Considerations

According to the recently released Census data Cabot's population has increased over 18% in the last ten years and housing units have increased over 21%. These figures rank Cabot as a town with one of the highest percent change in the Central Vermont Region, following Roxbury and East Montpelier. While any change is more drastic in rural towns, the numbers indicate that Cabot is most likely feeling and seeing the impacts of these changes. The information contained within this Build Out and Village Sampling Report provides some of the data to assist Cabot in pro-actively planning for the future.

Cabot's 2003 Municipal Plan indicates the town's desire to:

- Concentrate residential growth in or near existing village settlements;
- Promote and develop the concept of hamlets for more concentrated residential development; and
- Allow development to occur in a manner that thoughtfully preserves open space, both forested and un-forested, and maintains the rural character of Cabot.

While CVRPC understands the town is currently in the process of updating the Municipal Plan and the Town Goals may change, it is probably a safe assumption that similar goals which align with the State's planning goals will most likely continue to be valid. Therefore based upon the analysis contained within this report Cabot may want to consider the following:

- Increase densities in the Upper and Lower Village. According to the Vermont Growth Center Planning Manual average historic lot sizes in Vermont are 4,800 sq ft (approx 0.11 acres). Setting maximum lot size requirements instead of minimum lot size requirements is an innovative zoning approach to promote smaller lot sizes for more compact development.
- To maintain rural character consider increasing minimum lot size in the Low Density Residential and Agriculture District. The following document provides some suggestions for densities in rural zoning districts:
<http://www.growsmartmaine.org/docs/Maximum-Lot-Size-and-Densities-Rural-Zones.pdf>

Additional resources

Vermont Growth Center Planning Manual
Vermont Land Use Planning Implementation Manual
Rural by Design by Randall Arendt