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TOWN OF COLCHESTER

2014 TOWN PLAN

COLCHESTER PLANNING COMMISSION

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COLCHESTER SELECTBOARD

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Herbert Downing
Marc Landry
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COLCHESTER COMPREHENSIVE TOWN PLAN

We, the Colchester Selectboard, hereby adopt this comprehensive town plan for the Town of Colchester. The plan shall expire five years from this date unless revised or readopted before that time.

Nadine Scibek

Marc Landry

Herb Downing

Jeffrey Bartley

Thomas Mulcahy

Dated at Colchester, County of Chittenden, State of Vermont.
Adopted this 8th day of April, 2014.
COLCHESTER SELECTBOARD

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PROLOGUE:

The Town of Colchester has developed the Town Plan under the enabling authority of the Vermont Municipal and Regional Planning and Development Act. The authority to prepare and implement this comprehensive plan is granted to the Town through the Vermont Planning and Development Act, Title 24 of the Vermont Statutes Annotated, Chapter 117. It is the intent and purpose of the Act to "...encourage the appropriate development of all lands in this state...in a manner which will promote the public health, safety against fire, floods, explosions and other dangers...and to provide means and methods for the municipalities and regions of this state to plan for the prevention, minimization and future elimination of such land development problems as may presently exist or which may be foreseen and to implement those plans when and where appropriate."

In 2012, the Town undertook a broad visioning process in a community strategic plan: The Heritage Project. The resulting plan has been incorporated into this Town Plan and the vision statement developed in the Heritage Project shall serve as the vision of this Town Plan.

VISION: "Colchester, Vermont located on Lake Champlain's Malletts Bay is a diverse, civic-minded community endowed with a rich heritage of commercial, agricultural, recreational, and educational gifts. Proud of the quality of life already enjoyed here, the people of Colchester seek to build upon this foundation to ensure economic prosperity, recreational opportunity, and an entrepreneurial spirit for future generations."

GOALS:

- Colchester will be governed efficiently, effectively, and cost responsibly.
- Infrastructure should improve the quality of life of the citizens and increase linkages available to businesses.
- The economy should be diverse, create local jobs, and result in responsible and sustainable growth.
- Colchester should build on its natural beauty to provide recreation opportunities for citizens and visitors.
- Colchester should preserve its natural resources for future generations.
- All citizens should be educated to maximize opportunities and improve the community.

The Town Plan is designed for use by Town boards, commissions, residents, and businesses. The Plan shall be: the framework for planning the future of Colchester, a guide for decision making in development review, a basis for evaluating zoning and subdivision and other bylaws, a tool for coordinating Colchester's activities with those of other municipalities and governmental bodies, a guide for development of capital improvement programs, and a reference for other plans developed by the Town. These recommendations are not mandates but are guidelines to help the Town with its long-range planning. Where conflicts between this Plan and the adopted bylaws exist, the Town's bylaws will take precedent. However, the recommendations in this Plan should be undertaken by the Town to help Colchester realize its vision.

Throughout this Plan policies are recommended that will implement the intent of this Plan. Many of these policies are broad and speak to diversified efforts already underway. The best way to determine the intent of the recommended policy is to comprehensively read through the Plan to understand the context for these recommendations.

The following is intended to be a summary of the various policies of this Plan and the tools that may be required to implement them.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

A variety of implementation techniques should be evaluated to assist in implementing this Plan. There are broad categories of implementation techniques that range from education to regulatory changes to funding priorities as well as several recommended policies that are long-range and not intended to be implemented during the term of this Plan. Other policies within this Plan are meant to reinforce current regulations, policies, and practices and do not require any substantial actions. It should be recognized that maintaining current policies often requires flexibility to evaluate regulations and perform regular housekeeping changes to these regulations. Educational efforts include working with individuals and organizations to promote certain opportunities or programs. Coordination includes sustaining local, regional, and state dialogues with various governmental agencies, not-for-profits, and groups. Planning and studies are recommended actions for policies that need to be further developed through such efforts as land use planning, strategic planning, studying capacity, and a wide range of investigative techniques and research. Some policies will require changes to current regulations, such as land use regulations, or policies such as sewer allocation. Still other policies will require funds in order to implement. The funding priority category is not limited to local funding but includes regional, state, and private enterprise sources.

While there are many policies recommended within this Plan, the principal concept at the core of this Plan is that the land use plan for the Town should govern the future actions of the Town. Not all policies will be implemented during the five year term of this Plan.

Many policies are more long-range and designed to implement the land use plan for the Town as the Town gradually evolves. For this reason, care should be taken in changing the course of this Plan even though the term of the Plan is set at five year intervals. Long term benefits should generally out-weigh short-term gains. No one policy should be evaluated in and of itself. In implementing the Town Plan, the whole should always outweigh the sum of its parts. This Town Plan represents a minor update to the 2007 Town Plan and is a continuation of the comprehensive planning process that was begun in Colchester with the adoption of the 1964 Colchester Town Plan. The Plan is meant to lay out a long-term vision for the Town with updates and clarifications provided every five years but with the long term vision for the Town remaining intact. The 2007 Town Plan was a major revision based upon a town-wide survey and variety of public input sessions. The 2014 Town Plan revisions utilize the recently completed Colchester Heritage Project's Community Strategic Plan 2012-2022 as its foundation of town-wide input. While the majority of changes to the Town Plan in 2014 stemmed from including the goals of the Heritage Project, several topically public input sessions were also held by the Planning Commission and 2010 Census data helped shape the revised Plan as well.

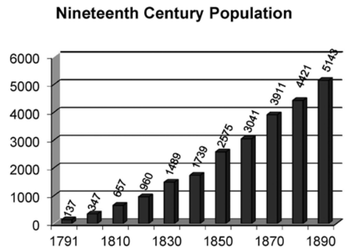
Following the revision process, the Planning Commission held a public hearing on the cumulative changes to the Town Plan and forwarded the Plan to the Selectboard which held two public hearings before adopting the Plan. The Plan is scheduled to be updated again in 2018 in time for re-adoption in 2019.

1 COLCHESTER'S COMMUNITY: PAST, PRESENT & FUTURE

PAST

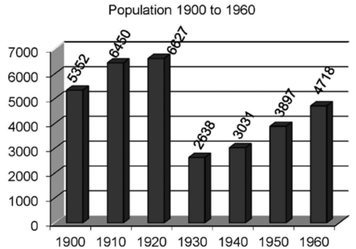
Colchester's location has made it a desirable place for settlement since prehistoric times. Colchester was chartered in 1763 and was previously inhabited by native peoples. At the time the US Census was first taken in 1791, the Town's population numbered 137. Historic records lack information on demographics, however it can be gleaned from the records that Colchester was a rural farming community primarily settled by families of European descent born in southern New England.

Agricultural censuses performed during the mid-nineteenth century provide information on farming operations in Colchester, including family possessions, farm yields and acreage. These historic censuses can be found at the University of Vermont's Bailey-Howe Library in Burlington and are now available online. http://www.uvm.edu/~hp206/2010/Colchester/Colchester/census.html. For the majority of the nineteenth century, Colchester's population saw a steady increase that mirrored statewide trends, with the exception that Colchester did not see a significant decrease in population attributable to the Civil War.



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

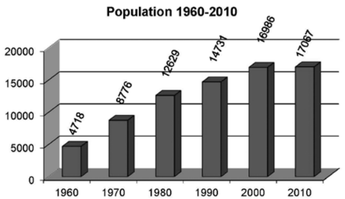
Colchester's population began to blossom in the late nineteenth century as industrialization along the Winooski River brought mills and workers to Town. When the urban center of Colchester, what is now known as the City of Winooski, separated from the rest of Colchester in 1922, it removed two-thirds of the community's population and its industry, as reflected in the 1930 Census. The "new" Colchester remained relatively rural and agrarian in keeping with its historic character. During the early 1900s, the Town did see significant growth in its summer seasonal community due to its lakeside location. This seasonal population growth is not reflected in the census; however, Colchester's year-round population continued to grow steadily through 1960.



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

Colchester's population nearly doubled in the 1960s with the completion of Interstate 89 and the introduction of International Business Machines in the neighboring Town of Essex. This was the beginning of Colchester's suburbanization as it quickly became a bedroom community for the greater Burlington area. The population increase seen during this decade was primarily from in-migration as residential developments surged and Colchester's natural amenities made it an attractive place to live. During the 1970s, the rate of population growth slowed only slightly.

During the 1980s and 1990s, the Town's population grew by an average of 218 persons per year, compared with an average of 395 persons per year during the preceding 20-year period. Colchester's annual growth during this time period surpassed that of County and State. The Town accounted for 13% of the County's total population growth during the 1980s, and 15.2% during the 1990s—surpassed in that decade only by Williston. As of the 2000 Census, Colchester ranked fourth in the state in population, behind Burlington, Essex, and Rutland City, making it the third largest community in Chittenden County, and the second most populous town in the state.

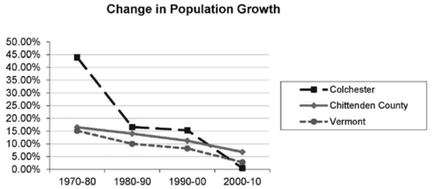


Source: U.S. Census Bureau - Census of Population & Housing, 2010

PRESENT

The 2010 US Census showed that Colchester's year-round population as of April 1st reached 17,067—indicating that the local population increased by only 81 people (0.5%) during the preceding decade. This likely represents an undercount, given the natural increase in population over about the same period, but intercensal estimates (adjusted for the 2010 census) suggest that the Town's population peaked at around 17,100 in 2004, and then declined slightly. Reported census counts suggest that local population growth has stabilized, and that the Town may now be losing a small percentage of its total population to out-migration.

In 2010, South Burlington surpassed Colchester in population, while Rutland City lost residents, thereby maintaining Colchester's rank as the fourth largest municipality in the State. The Town now includes 10.9% of the county's population. Colchester's average annual growth rate fell from 1.53% in the 1990s to 0.05% in the following decade (rates of growth derived from the rate for the decade divided by ten). This lower growth rate may reflect Colchester's long transition from a bedroom community to an employment center, but is also indicative of more recent economic recessions, including the stock market crash of 2001, the "Great Recession" beginning in 2008, and a stagnant housing market. For further detail on daytime populations and employment data please refer to the Economy Chapter.



Source: Calculation with U.S. Census Bureau's Total Population

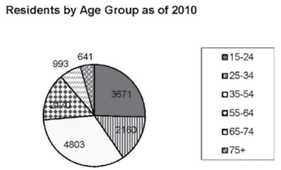
While Colchester's population has become more self-sustaining through natural rates of increase, the impacts of rapid population growth experienced during the late twentieth century will continue to have a significant impact on the demographics of the community.

Colchester's population is aging, mirroring state and national trends. The median age of Town residents in 2010 was 34.6 years—up from 32.6 in 2000 and 28.8 in1990. Colchester's median age remains less than that of the County (36.2 years) and State (41.5 years). Local birth rates have been declining, and there has been a decrease in the number of younger households. Colchester, like the rest of the state, also saw a decline in younger workers (25 to 44 years) who may be leaving Vermont for better economic opportunities elsewhere.

Change in Population by Age Group						
	2000		2010		Change 2000-10	
	(#)	(% Tot)	(#)	(% Tot)	(#)	(%)
Total Population	16,986	100.0%	17,067	100.0%	81	0.5%
< 5 years	1,004	5.9%	840	4.9%	-164	-16.3%
<18 years	2,829	16.7%	3,251	19.0%	422	14.9%
18 to 64 years	12,060	71.0%	12,182	71.4%	122	1.0%
65+ years	1,093	6.4%	1,634	9.6%	541	49.5%
85+ years	87	0.5%	160	0.9%	73	83.9%

Source: U.S. Census 2000, 2010 (SF1, 100%).

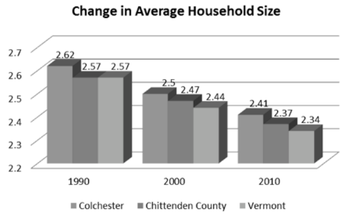
Over the past decade, the Town also experienced a drop in its pre-school population—which may show up in declining school enrollments over the next few years—and little increase in its working population (18 to 64 years). The greatest increase was in the 65+ age group (those nearing or in retirement)—and especially those over 85 years. Growth in the Town's senior population is expected to continue as the Baby Boom generation ages, suggesting the need for more senior housing, service, transportation and care options.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau - Census of Population & Housing, 2010

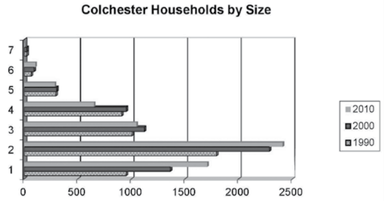
While it will take a while for Colchester to see the full effect of these trends, it has already seen changes in household size and type. Between 2000 and 2010 the number of family households decreased for the first time in decades, by 2%, while the number of nonfamily households increased by 13%. In 2000, 25% of all households were "traditional" family households: married couples with children. While 65% of all households in 2010 were family households, only 20% were traditional family households. The number of households with children declined by nearly 8%, while the number of households with older members (age 65+) increased by 37%—reflecting both the Town's aging population, and a growing number of "empty nesters." The number of older residents living alone increased by more than 20%.

The average size of Colchester households has been decreasing since at least 1990, but remains slightly larger than that of the the



County and State. In 2010 the average size of all households in Town was 2.41 persons; homeowners had slightly larger households (averaging 2.51 persons per household) while renters, on average had smaller households (2.18 persons).

The growth in non-traditional households, and reductions in family and household size, has contributed to an increase in the number



Source: U.S. Census Bureau - Census of Population & Housing, 2010

of smaller households. Growth in household formation (2.8%) exceeded local population growth (0.5%) during the preceding decade—suggesting the need for more housing options, including smaller dwelling units. In 2010, one- and two-person households comprised 66% of all Colchester households.

Also of note—in 2010 nearly 11% of Colchester's population lived in group quarters, including student housing residents at Saint Michael's College and the University of Vermont, and Green Mountain Nursing Home residents (who were omitted in the 2000 census, but included in the 2010 census count.) It should be noted that group quarters are not included in household population.

"Special needs" populations are persons that may require special living arrangements or housing, including the elderly, disabled, and low-income. In 2010, an estimated 8.8% of Colchester residents, and 10.3% of local households, lived below the poverty line. Ten percent of Town residents were over the age of 65; of this group, 22% lived alone and an estimated 9.6% were living below the poverty line. Unfortunately, information concerning the Town's disabled population is no longer reported in census estimates.

A positive local trend is growth in Colchester's reported median household income, estimated in 2010 at $62,399 as compared to the County median of $59,878 and the State median of $51, 841 (American Community Survey, 5-year estimates.) Since 1980, Colchester's reported median household income has consistently tracked higher than county and state medians. 2010 estimates suggest that the largest income growth locally occurred in higher income brackets (above $75,000). It should be noted that the median income reported for Colchester households is not representative of annual wages paid to Colchester residents or workers.

A variety of trends in Colchester's population suggest it will continue to be a vibrant and dynamic community. The Town is becoming more diverse—Colchester's minority population grew by 5.4% in the 2000s versus 1.7% for the state as a whole. This is due in part to the presence of the Vermont Refugee Resettlement Center in Colchester. The majority of Colchester's adult population has at least some college education. In 2010 it was estimated that nearly 50% of local residents possessed a college degree. While Colchester's population is growing at a more stable and self-sustaining rate, it remains dynamic and increasingly tied to regional, state, and even nationwide trends. The growing number of smaller households will continue to drive the need for more housing. An aging population will impact the type of housing desired. Decreases in the young adult population may limit the workforce available to local employers. In the preceeding two years, the Colchester School district has begun to see an increase in enrollment that counters previous decreasing class sizes. This may be a reversal of the community's aging trend; unfortunately it is too soon to tell. As Colchester grows and transforms, the composition of the community will have a significant impact on the Town's future land use and development, and what sort of community Colchester becomes.

FUTURE

There are no recent state-issued population projections or standard predictive population models in place for Vermont towns. The best source of data for inter-census population estimates is provided by the U.S. Census Bureau, but post-2010 estimates have not yet been released. The last state-issued projections for Colchester (MISER), dating from 2003, were based on a cohort analysis. A number of more recent population projections have been prepared for Chittenden County that can be used to estimate Colchester's proportionate share of county population growth, assuming its current share (10.9%) remains constant. Housing studies done for the Town in 2005 and 2012 also included projections developed using simple regression analyses.

Population Projection Comparisons

	Census		Projected Population					
	2000	2010	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035
MISER (2003)	16,986	17,067	18,428	18,976	19,492	--	--	--
Louis Berger (2006)*	16,986	17,067	17,062	17,785	18,651	19,624	20,669	--
Woods & Poole (2011)*	16,986	17,067	16,815	17,895	19,004	20,132	21,263	22,394
2005 Housing Study	16,986	17,067	19,139	20,228	21,318	--	--	--
2012 Housing Update	16,986	17,067	17,067	18,467	19,246	20,024	20,802	21,581

*Based on Colchester's current share (10.9%) of projected county population.

Colchester's annual rate of growth slowed from 1.53% in the 1990s to 0.05% in the following decade (growth rate derived from decade rate divided by ten.) This declining rate of growth reflects

the effects of two national recessions, a stagnant housing market, lower birth rates and declining household sizes. These factors combined result in drastically reduced rates of local population and housing growth. While a recovering economy and housing market should improve Colchester's growth rate over the coming decade, it is unlikely that it will return to above one percent growth annually in the near future. It is likely that population growth for the next decade will fall somewhere between 0.05% and 1% for an annual growth rate, and will likely stay below 20,000, as supported by available projections. It should be noted that the farther out the population is forecast, the less accuracy can be assured.

Colchester's population will likely continue to follow statewide demographic trends over the next twenty years. While there may be minor room for Colchester to affect its composition, Colchester's population will continue to shift to an older demographic with fewer traditional households. Colchester's population will continue to be dynamic, with higher percentages of non-native and minority residents. If Colchester continues to hold its place as an employment center endowed with higher learning institutions, its population will also continue to be more highly educated and more affluent than the greater northwest Vermont region. Given that these trends will have a significant impact on Colchester's rate of growth, development, and prosperity, the Town should continue to carefully monitor the community's population growth and its effects and adapt its plans accordingly.

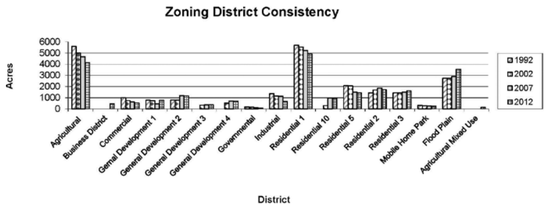
2 LAND USE:

COLCHESTER HAS A UNIQUE DIVERSITY OF LAND TYPES AND USES INCLUDING: seasonal residential, residential, agricultural, recreational, commercial, industrial, institutional, and natural areas. It is important to preserve this diversity to maintain and enhance the character of the Town.

BACKGROUND

Colchester was primarily an agricultural community through the mid-1960's. Agricultural uses and lands remain an integral part of the economy and character of the community. About 20% of the land area in Colchester is currently zoned for agricultural use. The economic viability of agricultural uses has declined regionally in recent years while demand for residential development has remained high creating substantial development pressures on the rural areas surrounding developed portions of the community.

The following chart demonstrates the impact of these development pressures in Colchester over the past twenty years:



Source: 2002 Colchester Town Plan & 2005 & 2011 Colchester Zoning Map

The original zoning map for Colchester included a limited number of uses including commercial, industrial, residential, and resort. All of these land uses are still present as predominant land uses with the exception of resort. This land use classification was utilized for summer seasonal camp communities which, although somewhat scattered, exist in areas such as Sand Dunes, Colchester Point, Mills Point, Spauldings West Shore, Porters Point, Coates Island and Goodsell Point. These communities were generally constructed in the 1940's and 1950's and owned by successive generations of the same families; however, over the past decade, these seasonal summer cottages, or camps, have transitioned to year-round occupation. In 2002 the Town developed guidelines to allow for the conversion of camps to year-round structures provided infrastructure and access were sufficient to allow for the expansion of the use to ensure against environmental degradation and devaluation of surrounding properties.

While Colchester continues to transition, the land use patterns it historically developed since its inception continue to persist. The multiple village areas within the Town's boundaries served as commercial centers for various portions of the community at a time when travel was more infrequent and restricted. Suburban residential patterns have grown at the expense of rural areas and created demand for more urban amenities. The following section discusses the current land uses within the community and its planned growth as the community looks to the future.

LAND USE CATEGORIES

The following narrative describes the general land use categories for Colchester. These land use categories set forth the anticipated future land uses for Colchester over the term of this plan and over the long-term. The Future Land Use Map illustrates the location of the general land use categories and should be looked to for guidance in determining the land use plan for a particular area.

The uses indicated within these land use categories will be designated in more detail in the Zoning Code in order to reflect the policies and strategies of this plan and other bylaws.

GROWTH CENTER: This area calls for higher density, compact, well integrated, mixed use development and is intended to be the primary area for new development in Colchester. Some of the uses appropriate for the growth center include office, restaurant, civic facilities, residential, retail and a variety of businesses. There must be a high level of integration between the high density residential development and non-residential uses. Multi-family and high density single-family residential are strongly encouraged as permitted uses. Building heights within this area will be higher than other areas of Town providing they can be blended into the topography, are visually compatible with the area and include architectural features that mitigate the visual impacts. The growth center requires substantial infrastructure, including municipal water and sewer, and should be a priority area for allocations of municipal resources and public amenities.

VILLAGE MIXED USE: These are primarily existing developed areas and future development is meant to be compatible with the existing diverse mix of uses. Additional infrastructure will generally not be required to support desired levels of growth and density with the exception of the Exit 17 neighborhood. Uses appropriate for village mixed use include small office, restaurant, small retail, agriculture, and many businesses integrated into neighboring residential uses. Appropriate industrial uses should be conditioned on their ability to fit with neighboring uses. Although Planned developments (PUD, PRD), multi-family and higher residential densities are to be encouraged, lower densities such as R-1 and especially R-2 are also compatible in village mixed use areas. These areas are generally zoned GD1, GD2, or GD4.

RURAL: These areas generally are distant from facilities and services and tend to be open and sparsely developed. Agricultural uses and low density residential uses are compatible land uses within these areas that often include significant natural resources, prime agricultural soil, and other characteristics that generally make these areas unsuitable for development. Some limited sivicultural activities, such as firewood operations, also occur within these areas although these activities tend to be small and informal.

SUBURBAN RESIDENTIAL: These areas are appropriate for residential development at a medium density of one to three units/acre, generally matching the existing development pattern. Limited development of neighborhood commercial services, such as professional offices or small stores may also be considered where appropriate.

BUSINESS USE: This area is primarily within the Exit 16 core and serves as the dominant community commercial and industrial business center. This area also exists in a more limited area directly abutting Colchester's railroad right-of-way along Route 2A. These areas support large scale commercial development and/or manufacturing and distribution uses. These areas are zoned commercial, industrial, or business district with care being taken to, when necessary, separate these uses within the land use categories. Growth and expansion of existing businesses, especially research and high-tech uses, is encouraged within this area.

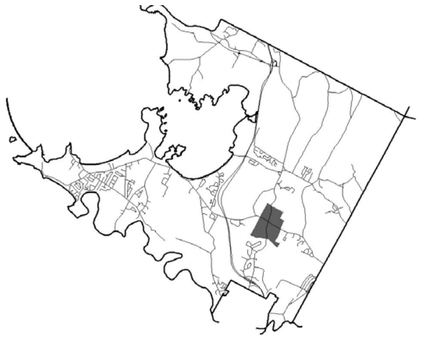
AGRICULTURE / MIXED USE: This area consists of the agricultural lands located along Malletts Bay Avenue and Lavigne Road, at the top of Shipman Hill. This area's unique characteristic is the farming community located within its boundaries. These farms are an important part of Colchester's economy, community character, and heritage; the Town seeks to retain and support these farms. The majority of this area is classified as primary agricultural soil by the State of Vermont and therefore limited in development potential through the State's land use permitting process. The Agricultural / Mixed Use Zoning District, coupled with the enablement of transfer of development rights, balances continued agricultural use with property owners' needs and also includes opportunities for agricultural tourism and the commercial elements that are necessitated by the changing face of agriculture. The Town should also encourage the work of land trusts within this area to provide land owners with fair compensation for their development rights.

NEIGHBORHOOD AREAS

Within land use categories are individual neighborhood areas. Neighborhoods are more easily recognized by community members. Neighborhood areas sometimes overlap land use categories, however, more often serve as subsets of land use categories. When focusing on individual neighborhood areas, care should be taken to ensure that continuity throughout the neighborhood areas and the larger community is examined particularly for natural resources and pedestrian and bicycle circulation. Neighborhood areas provide for specific implementation strategies for future land use plans and recognize the specific characteristics and qualities of an area as well as physical limitations and opportunities. The Neighborhood Area Map should be looked to for guidance on the location and boundaries of these areas.

SEVERANCE CORNERS GROWTH CENTER

Severance Corners is located at an important transportation hub at the intersection of Route 7, Blakely/Severance Road. The area is confined to properties around the intersection and future interchange and is surrounded by low and rural density zoning districts. The Town adopted General Development Three zoning



for this area to promote a dense, mixed use village type development pattern for this area. The area is intended to contain pedestrian amenities and connectivity, community spaces, and access to public transportation.

Development for this area should be balanced in terms of residential and commercial development. As the growth center develops, residential density increases may be considered especially to help the commercial uses be more viable. Form based zoning was implemented for the growth center in 2013 to encourage higher densities and additional commercial development.[1] This area is entirely within an approved sewer district and is served by municipal water. This area is a high priority for infrastructure. The Town completed a study with the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission to determine the scope and location of pedestrian and bicycle facilities within the growth center. These recommendations should be implemented as the area develops and links are made to surrounding neighborhoods. While civic uses are permitted and encouraged in the growth center, the Town will maintain its core service area in the Town Services Neighborhood. Satellite town facilities, churches, and private schools could be developed within the growth center as it grows.

The Town obtained State New Town Center designation and Growth Center designation for Severance Corners in order to help facilitate the development of this area. One of the predominant benefits of State designation of a growth center is prime agricultural soil mitigation rights which makes it advantageous to develop within growth centers and in-fill development and more restrictive to build on agricultural soils outside of these areas. Under Vermont State Title 24 Section 2791, the Town may only designate one growth center for a period of twenty years. A growth center must accommodate the majority of the Town's growth over this twenty year period. At this time, the majority of new development is occurring in the growth center. It should be noted that although commercial growth has stagnated due to the economic recession it is anticipated that it will help balance the growth center as this sector rebounds. Penalty ordinances such as growth caps in other areas of Town are not appropriate at this time.

[1] *Correlates to the Colchester Heritage Project's Community Strategic Plan 2012-2022, Economic Development recommended action three.*

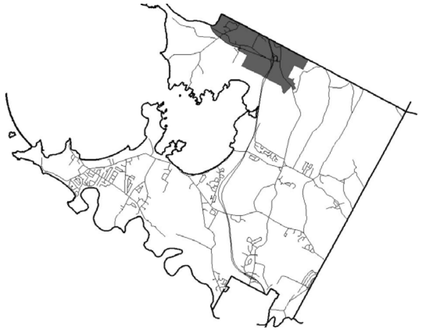
As the growth center develops and background traffic continues to increase, traffic improvements will be necessary including improvements to the Severance Corners intersection. The Town should continue to work with the State of Vermont and developers within the growth center to preserve options for this intersection and ensure that improvements occur in a manner that will continue to facilitate growth within the neighborhood.

POLICIES

1. Form based zoning should be implemented in the growth center to create higher densities and additional commercial development.
2. Development for this area should be balanced in terms of residential and commercial development with a greater emphasis on commercial development during the term of this plan.[2]
3. This area is a high priority for infrastructure.
4. The Town should work to implement the recommendations of the bicycle and pedestrian study of this area conducted by the Regional Planning Commission.
5. The Town should maintain State New Town Center designation and State Growth Center designation for Severance Corners.
6. The Town should continue to work with the State of Vermont and developers within the growth center to preserve options for this intersection and ensure that improvements occur in a manner that will continue to facilitate growth within the neighborhood.
7. Severance Corners is designated as a growth center on the Future Land Use Map.

EXIT 17

This neighborhood is bounded on the north by the Milton Town Line, on the south and east by the rural lands of the Northeast Quadrant, and on the west by Niquette Bay Road, Route 2, and the Lamoille River. This neighborhood, classified as Village Mixed Use, will need additional infrastructure to support its development. The Exit 17 neighborhood is bounded on the south and east by the rural lands of the Northeast Quadrant, on the south by Niquette Bay Road, on the west by the intersection of Raymond Road to the north, and on the north by Jasper Mine Road and the Milton Town Line. It is bisected by the Interstate 89 Exit 17 interchange and US Route 2: a limited access highway. Originally adopted as a growth center in 2000 (see Exit 17 Growth Center Plan), this area is best



characterized as a long-term economic future village mixed use area to be fully utilized after the Severance Corners growth center is completed. It is largely undeveloped with some light industrial and residential uses scattered mostly within the area east of Interstate 89. Development within this area is inhibited by poor on-site soils, a lack of water and sewage infrastructure, and limited access opportunities. Until the Town can focus on improving the infrastructure available for this area it is unlikely that significant construction will occur here. The Town should work to ensure that as development continues to occur within this neighborhood, it is compatible with the goals of the village mixed use future land use including provisions for recreation and pedestrian/bicycle circulation. The Town should also continue to work with the State to implement traffic improvements within the area, such as those detailed in the 2006 Exit 17 Traffic Scoping Project, that preserve capacity for the future growth center and sufficiently handle background growth in traffic. A comprehensive development plan should be developed for this area for future development that takes into account all the required improvements: sewer, water, traffic, pedestrian, recreation, etc. The existing zoning should remain intact to preserve economic growth opportunities for the Town as it develops over the long-term. The CCRPC ECOS Plan has identified the need for additional industrial parks in the Chittenden County area and the lack of land that is possible for this needed growth. Exit 17 with its proximity to Interstate 89 would be considered an ideal area. The present zoning should be evaluated for this use as the current discussion between the Selectboard and the Town of Milton regarding sewer service for this area advances this intiative.

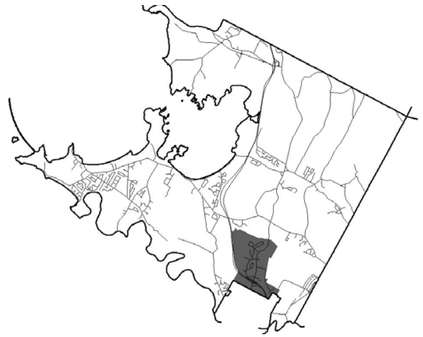
The low density residential area north of Route 2 lacks sufficient potable water to sustain build-out even under current zoning. On-site soils vary widely in this area but are mostly marginal. Long-term municipal potable water should be planned for this area in part to provide adequate fire protection. Residential densities should remain as-is. The village mixed use area between Route 2 and Jasper Mine Road also suffers from the same infrastructure deficiencies and therefore should continue to be of a limited scale and primarily serve the immediate neighborhood.

POLICIES

1. Zoning within the future growth center shall continue to be in accordance with the Exit 17 Growth Center Plan (2000).
2. Plans should be developed to serve the land west of Interstate 89 with potable water.
3. The 2006 Exit 17 Traffic Scoping Project should be accommodated in development plans. To this end, the Town may request the Regional Planning Commission to assist in reviewing traffic impacts of proposed developments. The Town should continue to work with the State to implement traffic improvements within the area that preserve capacity for the neighborhood and sufficiently handle background growth in traffic.
4. Development within this neighborhood should be in accordance with long-term plans for this area which include pedestrian, bicycle, infrastructure, and roadway improvements. Limited developments under current conditions should be planned to accommodate future infill. The 2003 Exit 17 Wastewater Study should be utilized in considering proposed development within this neighborhood.
5. Exit 17 is a gateway to Colchester, Franklin County, The Champlain Islands, and Milton. These communities should realize and respect the impact their communities have on this neighborhood. The Town will continue to work with these adjacent communities in planning for the future of Exit 17.
6. This area is designated as suburban residential and village mixed use on the Future Land Use Map.

EXIT 16

Exit 16 is a densely developed commercial and industrial area bounded on the south by the City of Winooski, on the east by the Fort Neighborhood, on the north by Severance Corners, and on the west by Interstate 89. Exit 16 of Interstate 89 and Roosevelt Highway bisect this area. It is geographically separated from Severance Corners by Sunny Hollow: a ravine. Municipal water and municipal sewer serve the entire area.



This area is the current center of business within Colchester with several hotels, a national retailer, a grocery store, heavy industry, a quarry operation, numerous small businesses, Class A office space,

[2] *Correlates to the Colchester Heritage Project's Community Strategic Plan 2012-2022, Economic Development strategy one.*

and the University of Vermont's medical research facility. While a residential neighborhood, Sunderland Woods, was constructed within a high-density residential zone on the northern cusp of this neighborhood this zone is built out. No extension of this residential zone should be considered during the term of this plan, as this area should remain the center of large-scale commercial and industrial development for Colchester. Existing commercial and industrial uses are encouraged to grow and expand within this area. Current projections demonstrate that this area has the potential to accommodate many additional years of continued commercial and industrial growth. The Exit 16 area contains the majority of commercial and industrial land within Colchester. Areas for expansion include undeveloped sites at Water Tower Hill and the area surrounding the former Rathe landfill. Redevelopment of existing sites is also encouraged. The recent arrival of the Albany College of Pharmacy and the expansion of UVM's research facility and the State of Vermont Health Laboratory are promising developments for high-tech growth within the area.

The Town of Colchester is working with both the State of Vermont Agency of Transportation and the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission to implement significant transportation improvements to the Exit 16 neighborhood to correct existing deficiencies and create capacity for future development. It is expected that these improvements will be made during the term of this plan, with concturction currently slated to begin in fiscal year 2015. These improvements have been identified as, in part, fulfilling the capacity improvements sought from the previously planned circumferential highway.[3] Although capacity and safety issues have made these transportation improvements vital, development should continue to be facilitated while these improvements are made.

Exit 16 currently lacks many of the gateway distinctions necessary for a business center that also serves as a primary entrance to the community. The Town is currently working to curb infrastructure deficiencies in the area that include a lack of pedestrian and bicycle facilities as well as streetscape. These efforts will require the continued cooperation of the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission and the State of Vermont as many of these improvements must occur in the State's right-of-way. It is expected that many of these deficiencies will be addressed through the larger planned transportation corridor improvements to Exit 16. These improvements will be important to the area's continued growth as a commercial and industrial center. New developments and redevelopments should positively contribute to these planned infrastructure improvements. Traffic improvements that increase capacity within the area for the Town's economic growth will remain a high priority for the community. Improvements to State and Federal intersections should give equal priority to local traffic and through-traffic. A future connection to Route 15 and a full interchange at Exit 15 are also supported. Public transportation that connects this neighborhood to adjacent communities and the Severance Corners growth center should also be considered as a long-range transportation improvement for this area.

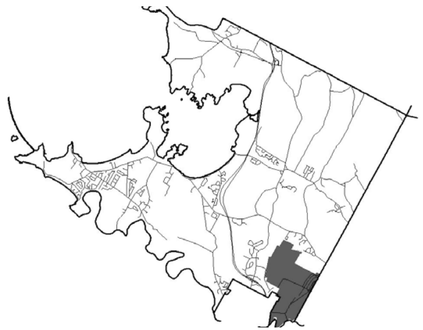
Separations of commercial uses and heavy industrial uses should remain to ensure the continued viability of both uses. An example is that heavy industry should remain physically separated from retail uses and Class A office space. Integration of mutually sustaining uses such as fitness centers and daycares within employment centers is encouraged. As this area becomes more fully built-out in the long-term it may be appropriate to look to integrating mixed use as being mutually sustaining with certain commercial uses within pockets of the larger neighborhood area. Residential infill would need to have a minimum density so as not to create scattered, unorganized development and to maintain the current office park look to the area.

POLICIES

1. This area should continue to be the dominant commercial and business center for Colchester.
2. The Town should provide opportunities for high-tech and research uses within this area and continue to work with the Albany College of Pharmacy and the University in accommodating its research facilities and other high-tech developments as well as complementary amenities within the community that will make Colchester competitive with other communities for these uses.
3. Infrastructure improvements necessary for the Exit 16 transportation corridor as well as pedestrian, bicycle, and traffic circulation as well as streetscape improvements is a priority to ensuring the continued economic viability of this area.
4. A future connection to Route 15 and a full interchange at Exit 15 are encouraged.
5. The Planning Commission may consider residential in long-term planning in a comprehensive manner. Single-family residences should not be allowed.
6. This neighborhood is designated as business use on the Future Land Use Map.

FORT ETHAN ALLEN

This neighborhood occupies the southeastern tip of Colchester bounded on the east by the Town of Essex, on the south by South Burlington, on the west by the City of Winooski and the Exit 16 neighborhood, and on the north by the Severance neighborhood. The neighborhood is only accessed from the rest of Colchester by Route 15 which requires that one cross through either Essex or Winooski to reach the Fort. The neighborhood is significantly impacted by the high volume of through-traffic on Route 15 and the presence of Exit 15 on Interstate 89 immediately to the west. The neighborhood is separated from South Burlington by the ravine of the Winooski River which is spanned by the newly constructed Lime Kiln Bridge. The neighborhood is designated as village mixed use on the Future Land Use Map and the majority is zoned General Development Two.



Three major institutions occupy this neighborhood and have a significant impact on land use patterns within the area as well as the greater community's economy: Saint Michael's College, Fanny Allen Hospital, and Camp Johnson. The Fort Ethan Allen is the

historic military outpost of the area that has transitioned into Camp Johnson. The historic Fort is mostly in Colchester but partially in the Town of Essex. Adaptive reuse, rehabilitation, and repair of these historic National Register structures has occurred over the past thirty years that has allowed these structures to be used for multi-family housing, small businesses, and cultural organizations. A variety of communication facilities occupy the historic Fort making for a small yet intense high-tech sector within the Fort. The University of Vermont maintains its married student housing within the Fort Ethan Allen area. There are also several residential developments within the area such as Winchester Place and the State of Vermont owned

[3] *Correlates to the Colchester Heritage Project's Community Strategic Plan 2012-2022, Economic Development recommended action four.*

mobile home park. The historic parade grounds are now a park jointly managed by the Town of Colchester and the Town of Essex. In many ways the Fort is poised to serve as a cultural center for Colchester that could accommodate additional civic uses. While the entire Fort neighborhood is served by municipal water and sewer, a portion of the historic Fort is served by the Town of Essex and the remainder of the area is served by Colchester Fire District One, supplied by the Champlain Water District and the South Burlington Airport Park Wastewater Facility.

Saint Michael's College is a private, Catholic, liberal arts school that confers bachelor's degrees as well as graduate degrees. The majority of its approximately 2,000 students live on campus which makes the campus a rather self-contained facility along the northern edge of Route 15. Recent expansions have moved some of the College functions east into the historic Fort Ethan Allen Area. The Campus Connector Road Project will assist the College in providing a safe means of connecting its functions at the historic Fort with the main campus. The College also maintains a volunteer fire and rescue squad as well as other facilities on the south side of Route 15. These emergency services are coordinated with the Town with the St. Michael's Fire Department acting as a subsidiary of the Colchester Center Volunteer Fire Company. As mentioned throughout this plan, the College significantly contributes to the community and its continued expansion and redevelopment plans should continue to be supported by the Town.

Fanny Allen Hospital is operated by Fletcher Allen Health Care. The hospital complex now functions less like a traditional hospital and has a variety of missions including medical rehabilitation, medical office, and a commuter parking lot for the main Fletcher Allen Campus. The hospital continues to be religiously affiliated with a Catholic order of nuns maintaining the cemetery to the rear of the property. The recent installation of a mid-block crossing on Route 15 has improved pedestrian connection between the Hospital and the surrounding community.

Camp Johnson is a military facility currently used for training and administrative activities for the Vermont National Guard. The majority of the structures located on the base are on State-owned land while the undeveloped training areas are located on Federally-owned land. The Guard's operations have recently changed to become a light infantry unit and it is expected that training facilities will need to change accordingly. The Camp is also expanding its training capacities by stationing active duty soldiers at the Camp and housing them within the community. The Town should be supportive of the expansion of the Camp's mission and provide all possible support to military families within the community as the Camp currently lacks many of the provisions of larger military installations. While the Camp contains a significant amount of undeveloped land, no change in use for this area is expected during the term of this plan. The Town should, in its long-term planning, address how this area could be transitioned to accommodate the existing institutions in the area as well as economic expansion that could link to Exit 16. Environmental concerns such as the presence of sandplains and brownfields could present difficulties in the adaptive reuse of the Camp should the military use be discontinued.

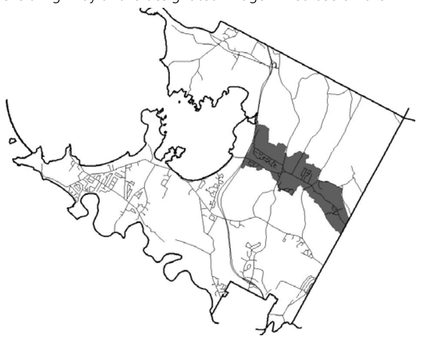
Traffic issues will continue to be a concern for this area as background traffic on Route 15 continues to increase, suffocating circulation of local traffic. The recent replacement of the Lime Kiln Bridge may increase the number of trucks traversing this area as an alternate route to the Burlington Airport. The Town should continue to work with the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission to mitigate the possible impacts of increased truck traffic. While a full interchange at Exit 15 would benefit the Exit 16 neighborhood, care should be taken to ensure that such an interchange would not overly increase truck traffic on Route 15 as well. This area is lacking sufficient bicycle and pedestrian facilities for safe access. The Town should continue to work with other Route 15 communities to ensure the construction of these facilities. Public transportation is limited to the Chittenden County Transportation Authority's Route 15 service and the Special Services it is required to maintain within one mile of its route. This public transportation links the Fort to adjacent communities and provides a safe means for people within the area to link to adjacent communities without exacerbating traffic on Route 15. As the Town is not an active sponsor of the bus service it is unlikely that this service will be expanded in the near term. The Town should continue to be supportive of infrastructure improvements along Route 15 particularly multi-modal solutions such as a transportation hub.

POLICIES

1. No changes in zoning are needed over the term of this plan for this area. The campus/ institutional uses and the historic character of Fort Ethan Allen should be maintained and enhanced.
2. The balance among the businesses, residences, and cultural facilities within this area should be maintained and enhanced to include community gathering places, civic facilities and other amenities that would foster the development of the neighborhood as a cultural center.
3. High-tech industry, such as the communications industry, should be encouraged at Fort Ethan Allen.
4. The Town should maintain its current cooperation and outreach with the various institutions of this neighborhood to encourage the expansion and vitality of these businesses within Colchester.
5. Improvements to Route 15 are needed to better facilitate current volumes of traffic; however, these improvements should not be done at the expense of local traffic and circulation. The Town should continue to work with Route 15 communities to complete bicycle and pedestrian facilities for safe access along the Route 15 corridor.
6. A full interchange at Exit 15 and connection road between Exit 16 and Route 15 should be pursued by the Town.
7. The Campus Connector Road should be incorporated into the Official Map.
8. The Town should continue to work with the Regional Planning Commission to mitigate the possible impacts of increased truck traffic on Route 15 and Lime Kiln Road.
9. Long term, the Town should address how Camp Johnson could be adapted should the current military use be abandoned. Reuse of this area should accommodate the existing institutions in the area as well as economic expansion that could link to Exit 16. Environmental concerns such as the presence of sandplains and brownfields could present difficulties in the adaptive reuse of the Camp.
10. This area has been designated as village mixed use on the Future Land Use Map.

COLCHESTER VILLAGE

Colchester Village extends in a linear fashion from the Interstate to the Essex Town Line mostly along Main Street (Route 2A). It is bounded on the north by the Northeast Quadrant, on the west by the East Lakeshore Drive Neighborhood, and on the south by the Mill Pond and Poor Farm Road Neighborhoods. It is bisected by Roosevelt Highway and is designated village mixed use on the



Future Land Use Map. The area is currently characterized by a mix of zoning ranging from industrial to high density residential. The entire area is served by municipal water and on-site septic (with the exception of Creek Farm Plaza and Brault's Mobile Home Park which have municipal sewer).

The historic core of the Village lies within the greater Village area. The core begins along Roosevelt Highway and proceeds easterly along Main Street to the vicinity of the intersection of Mill Pond Road and East Road. This area has much of the character expected of New England villages but not found elsewhere in Colchester, including old homes close to the road, small stores, churches, small businesses and public buildings all in a compact setting close in proximity to a rural area. In recent years, the area in proximity to Main Street was rezoned to General Development One to preserve this blend of commercial and residential development and encourage sympathetic infill.

The greater Village area includes some commercial properties but mostly consists of residential neighborhoods. With the exception of the existing commercial/industrial properties along the railroad right-of-way, commercial growth outside the Village core should be limited. Those properties fronting along the railroad right-of-way should be maintained as commercial/industrial properties as indicated on the Future Land Use Map as these are the only properties in Colchester that have the opportunity to have a rail-siding; however, care should be taken to discourage additional truck traffic from these properties traversing the Village core. In the absence of the Circumferential Highway, the Town should pursue new opportunities to make this area more viable for commercial/industrial development and evaluate alternative truck routes to the east.

Other existing commercial properties outside the Village core should not increase in intensity and only rezonings that result in these properties transitioning to residential should be considered during the term of this plan. Opportunities for residential infill outside the Village core should be examined, although care must be taken to preserve connectivity of natural resources, minimize impacts to agriculture, and not to expand the Village north or south into rural areas. The natural corridors of Indian and Pond Brook should be maintained and enhanced and deer wintering yards should be kept open. The greater Village area, as well as the core area, are in need of improved pedestrian and bicycle facilities particularly between neighborhoods outlying the Village core such as Country Meadows and Creek Farm developments and the core. Pedestrian connections across Route 7 should be a priority.

Within the Village core are a variety of commercial buildings and businesses that are of a local scale that blends in with the historic fabric. The Village was rezoned to General Development One District to encourage a mix of the continued development of small businesses, appropriate infill, and the retention of residential while preserving the historic character of the area that residents value. There is also a significant park planned south of Main Street stretching from Mill Pond Road to Roosevelt Highway that the Town has purchased and is currently designing. It is hoped that the first phase of this park will begin during the term of this plan; however construction is contingent upon funding. The area has a neighborhood school that should be connected to any planned or existing recreational facilities and public facilities.

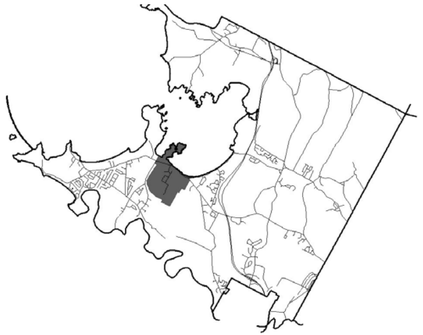
The entire Village area suffers from high traffic volumes on Route 2A which detract from its character and inhibit pedestrian movement. The Circumferential Highway has been partially completed and now terminates at Rte. 2A in Essex, just to the east of the Village, greatly increasing traffic volumes through the Village. Should the full remainder of the highway not be completed, the Town must then identify viable alternatives to alleviate the heavy traffic that includes large trucks in the Village. During the writing of this plan, the Town of Colchester partook in the Colchester/Essex Network Transportation Study (CENTS) with the CCRPC. This project will evaluate the impact of not constructing the remaining Circ Highway segments. During the term of this plan, the CENTS project will develop a vision for the VT2A and Severance/Kellogg Road corridors and identify strategies to address the region's transportation issues. The gateway to the Village core is hampered by the intersection of Roosevelt Highway and Route 2A. While the State has plans to remedy this poorly designed intersection, it is unknown if this critical intersection will be fixed during the term of this plan. Improvements to this intersection, particularly pedestrian safety, should be undertaken as soon as possible.

POLICIES

1. The Village should remain zoned GD1 and no rezonings are anticipated during the term of this plan within this neighborhood.
2. Opportunities for residential infill outside the Village core should be examined although care must be taken to preserve connectivity of natural resources, minimize impacts to agriculture, and not to expand the Village north or south into rural areas.
3. Improved pedestrian and bicycle facilities particularly between neighborhoods outlying the Village core such as Country Meadows and Creek Farm developments and the core are a priority.
4. The park under design for the Village will provide significant recreational facilities for the Village. These facilities should be connected with the school and other public buildings in the Village through pedestrian and/or bicycle facilities.
5. The Town should continue to promote other viable transportation alternatives that would replicate the benefits of the Circumferential Highway in order to curtail regional truck and commuter traffic onto Main Street.
6. The Town should continue to work at the Regional and State levels to accelerate improvements made to the intersections of Roosevelt Highway and Route 2A.
7. This area is designated as village mixed use on the Future Land Use Map.

WEST LAKESHORE DRIVE

The area of Lakeshore Drive from the corner of Blakely Road to the corner of Prim Road is recognized as an important asset for the Town. With the Town beach and many boating opportunities, this is the center of recreational use on Malletts Bay, and a variety of commercial and service uses. This area is designated village mixed use on the Future Land Use Map and is served by municipal water and on-site septic. The southern boundary of this neighborhood has significant natural communities.



A fixture of this area is the Hazelett Stripcasting Company, an existing industrial use. Lakeshore Drive through this area carries

heavy traffic volumes in excess of 10,000 vehicles/day. This road serves local road functions as well as regional arterial highway functions as part of the Route 127 Corridor. The current configuration and condition of the road need significant improvement. Plans for improvements are detailed in the 1998 Route 127 Corridor Plan. Other possible road improvements that could alleviate traffic within this corridor include the Lakeshore Bypass. Of particular importance to the area is the continued expansion of pedestrian and bicycle facilities.

This area should be a focal point for tourism and recreation. Commercial uses in this area serve recreational activities, local residents and regional commuters. The neighborhood should be improved to better provide services and recreational access for residents and tourists. The Hazelett Company should remain as an employment center in this area and expand as needed. Small businesses are important to maintaining the economic vibrancy of the Bay. A comprehensive land use plan is needed for this area that addresses the current diversity of zoning within the neighborhood but that maintains the scale and sense of place of the area. Previous plans for this neighborhood, such as the 2007 West Lakeshore Drive Plan, indicated that transportation infrastructure improvements were critical to supporting desired land uses. Comprehensive land use planning must go hand-in-hand with transportation infrastructure planning. During the term of this plan, it is anticipated that alternatives to the Circumferential Highway will continue to be studied and consideration of transportation infrastructure within this neighborhood should be a priority in these considerations. Implementing a comprehensive land use plan for this area should also be a priority during the term of this plan.

POLICIES

1. During the term of this plan, other viable transportation alternatives that would replicate the benefits of the Circumferential Highway will continue to be studied and consideration of transportation infrastructure within this neighborhood should be a priority in these considerations. Implementing a comprehensive land use plan for this area, such as noted in the 2007 West Lakeshore Drive Plan, should also be a priority during the term of this plan.
2. Land use plans should take into account the viability of on-site septic as well as municipal sewer.
3. Development in this area should meet the highest possible standards to protect water quality in Malletts Bay.
4. This area is designated as village mixed use on the Future Land Use Map.

TOWN SERVICES CENTER

The area is located west of Interstate 89 along Blakely Road extending to the intersection of West Lakeshore Drive and East Lakeshore Drive. It is bounded on the north by the East Lakeshore Drive Neighborhood and on the south by the Shipman Hill Neighborhood.

This neighborhood contains the majority of the Town's school facilities as well as the Town Office Building, Public Works Facility, and Rescue Building. The school facilities contain significant recreational amenities including the primary playing fields for the high school and all of the community functions that accompany sporting events. The Town's only Post Office lies on the southern edge of this neighborhood. While the Town Hall is located within this area, the Town currently holds its meetings in the Village Neighborhood and not within the Center. The Police Station will be fully rehabilitated during the term of this plan to complete its transformation from the old town office building. A number of small businesses, predominantly professional office space, line Blakely Road within this neighborhood. Surrounding neighborhoods are medium to high-density in nature. This neighborhood should continue to be the center for Town services. A variety of zoning districts can currently be found within this neighborhood. Zoning for this neighborhood should be considered during the term of this plan to ensure the potential of this area as a Town service center. Natural resources such as the sand plain at the rear of the high school property should be taken into account with possible rezonings.

This neighborhood is significantly tied to the West Lakeshore Drive neighborhood. The Colchester Bike Path connects the recreational uses within this neighborhood to those in the West Lakeshore Drive neighborhood, especially Bayside Park. The recent Town purchase of an undeveloped lot that spans from Blakely Road to East Lakeshore Drive provides the opportunity for additional community facilities within this neighborhood that could link to the recreational uses of the West Lakeshore Drive neighborhood. Both of these areas are noted as "village mixed use" on the Future Land Use Map. For these reasons these neighborhoods may be combined for planning purposes. At a minimum, rezonings in one neighborhood must carefully weigh impacts to the other. While Severance Corners is designated as the Town's growth center, the Town Service Center is significantly removed from the growth center both in distance and by the presence of geographical and physical barriers. For these reasons, the Town Services Center should remain separate and distinct from the growth center.

POLICIES

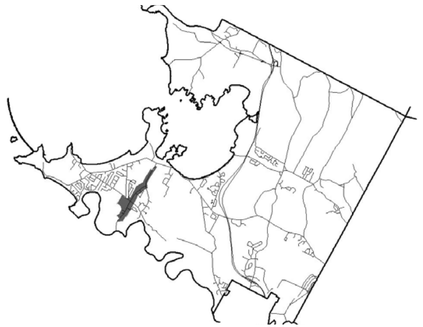
1. Most expansion of Town facilities should take place in this area if possible. The same is recommended for school facilities.
2. This is a high priority area for improvements to transportation infrastructure.
3. Land in this area may be considered for rezoning from residential to other categories that allows for development of governmental facilities, recreation facilities, and/or professional and small scale commercial uses.
4. This area is designated as village mixed use on the Future Land Use Map.

PRIM ROAD/WARNER'S CORNER/ HEINEBERG DRIVE

This area includes parcels fronting on all of Prim Road and Heineberg Drive, as well as on Macrae Road and Porters Point Road in the immediate area of Warner's Corner. It is a gateway to the Town from the City of Burlington. It is currently developed with a high density of commercial and professional office uses surrounded by medium density residential neighborhoods. This area is designated as village mixed use on the Future Land Use Map.

Heineberg Drive and Prim Road function as regional arterial roads as part of the Route 127 Corridor and also serve local road

functions. Porters Point Road functions as an arterial road. There is a lack of access management in this area with many curb cuts, open drainage, and a lack of pedestrian or bicycle facilities making this corridor heavily auto dependent. The Route 127 Corridor Plan, adopted by the Selectboard after its completion in 1998, provides an action plan for road improvements that includes streetscape and pedestrian / bicycle improvements. Over the term of this plan the Town will implement some of these improvements and seek funding for implementation of the rest of the plan. Improving pedestrian circulation within this area and to the surrounding neighborhoods is crucial to linking these businesses to the residences they serve. Streetscape improvements are also a priority to improving this gateway to Colchester.



The majority of the properties along Prim Road are zoned for general development with a medium density residential neighborhood along the east side of Prim in the vicinity of Bean Road. Many of the general development properties along Prim Road are narrow, deep lots, the development potential of these properties is limited by a large Class Two wetland. Land along the eastern side of Prim Road north of Bean has topography limitations with steep ledge.

A General Development One Commercial Overlay District is concentrated on Porters Point Road, Macrae Road, and Heineberg Drive in the vicinity of Warner's Corners. General development zoning lies beyond on Macrae and Heineberg Drives eventually transitioning into medium and high-density residential zoning. Development potential throughout the corridor is limited by marginal on-site septic soils.

In 2013 the Planning Commission comprehensively evaluated the current uses and zoning of this neighborhood. Many properties were rezoned from Commercial to General Development One and a new overlay district, General Development One Commercial Overlay, was created to facilitate more intensive commercial uses at Warners Corners and the western portion of Prim Road. This overlay district will allow for dense commercial without detriment to the surrounding residential uses. Multiple uses and mixed uses are now allowed on properties. As the new zoning has yet to be implemented, changes to the new overlay as well as the zoning in general may be needed during the term of this plan to resolve any unintended issues as the concept for the area is translated into site specific development. During the development of this plan, Fire District Two will continue to investigate serving this area with sewer. Should sewer service for the neighborhood come to fruition, zoning may also be re-evaluated to increase densities. This is an area that could also benefit from public transportation linking the surrounding neighborhoods to the north end of Burlington. Public transportation could help to mitigate the impact of increased densities upon the Route 127 corridor. At a minimum, during the term of this plan the Planning Commission should examine a series of steps to implement a comprehensive land use plan within this area beginning at the term of the next plan and to be fully implemented over the next twenty years.

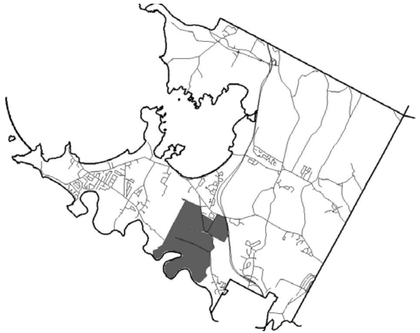
POLICIES

1. Neighborhood-scale commercial services should be encouraged in this corridor without allowing for high-turnover traffic uses that could further degrade traffic beyond current problems.
2. Multiple uses and mixed uses should be allowed on properties as long as they are in keeping with the intended village mixed use future land use for the area.
3. It is important to recognize that the businesses within this neighborhood have the ability to serve the surrounding residential neighborhoods. Efforts should be made to sustain this neighborhood as the commercial service area for the adjacent medium and high density residential neighborhoods.
4. The Town will work with the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission and the State to implement the Route 127 Corridor Plan. The Warner's Corners portion of this plan should be implemented during the term of this plan.
5. New curb-cuts to Heineberg Drive and Prim Road are to be discouraged. Access management planning for this corridor should be a priority.
6. An alternate east/west roadway to relieve traffic congestion on Prim Road and Heineberg Drive and improve traffic safety, such as noted in the 2007 West Lakeshore Drive Plan, should continue to be evaluated in light of the termination of the proposed Circumferential Highway.
7. Public transportation that would link this neighborhood to the north end of Burlington is encouraged.
8. This area is designated as village mixed use on the Future Land Use Map.

SHIPMAN HILL

This area consists primarily of the agricultural lands located along Malletts Bay Avenue and Lavigne Road at the top of Shipman Hill and also includes the floodplains along the bottom of the hill. This area's unique characteristic is the farming community located within its boundaries. Climate, soils, location and property ownership have made this area a center of farming operations which produce vegetables, fruits, eggs, dairy products, livestock, flowers and landscape plantings. Several of the farmers are able to capitalize on their location by running farm stand operations.

The level topography, well drained soils and proximity to population centers that make this area ideal for truck farms also makes the land very attractive for residential development. The Shipman Hill farms are seen by many residents as an important part of Colchester's community character. Land use planning for this neighborhood should promote the continued agricultural use of



this area while respecting property owners' needs to access the equity in their land. Given the current State Primary Agricultural Soils regulations, there are limited options as to what can be developed within this area.

An Agricultural Mixed Use Zoning District was created specifically for this neighborhood to recognize the opportunities in this area for agri-tourism and complimentary commercial uses. While several properties have been rezoned to this new district, it remains not fully implemented or tested. The Planning Commission should continue their willingness to evaluate the new district, its effectiveness, and consider changes as needed to the district to make it a viable solution to preserve the character of the area while allowing for economic return on the land. Should State restrictions on primary agricultural soils change substantially, the Planning Commission should examine any new opportunities that may accomplish the goal of balancing the continued agricultural use of this area while respecting property owners' needs to access the equity in their land. The Town authorized transfer of development rights as a potential approach to this issue, but it hasn't implemented due to unresolved concerns of landowners. The Town should continue to work with landowners on solutions.

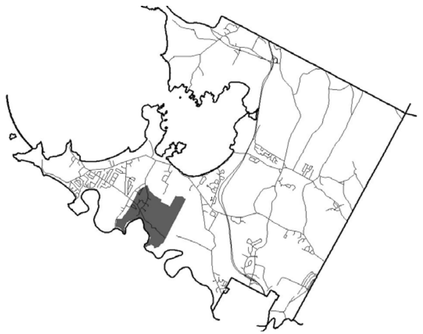
The future of this neighborhood area should include opportunities for agricultural tourism and the commercial elements that are necessitated by the changing face of agriculture. The Town should also encourage the work of land trusts to provide land owners with fair compensation for their development rights. A local land bank that could purchase development rights for fair value should also be encouraged. To this end, the Town may consider establishing a local development rights bank either within the local government or associated organizations such as the Colchester Land Trust. Such a bank could be a key factor in Colchester's future economic development.

POLICIES

1. During the term of this plan, the Planning Commission should continue to evaluate the Agricultural Mixed Use District zoning to ensure that it promotes the continued agricultural use of this area while respecting property owners' needs to access the equity in their land.
2. The current transfer of development rights provision in the Zoning Regulations should be reevaluated as the Planning Commission continues to work with property owners on solutions for balancing continued agriculture use with the need of owners to access the equity in their land.
3. The Planning Commission should examine any new opportunities that may accomplish the goal of balancing the continued agricultural use of this area while respecting property owners' needs to access the equity in their land.
4. The future of this neighborhood area should include opportunities for agricultural tourism and the commercial elements that are necessitated by the changing face of agriculture.
5. The Town should encourage the work of land trusts to provide land owners with fair compensation for their development rights.
6. Rezoning of this area to a higher-intensity district that could not be developed under current State Primary Agricultural Soil restrictions should not be considered as this would unduly increase tax burdens on property owners without providing for a means of accessing the equity in their land.
7. Piecemeal rezoning of agricultural land in this area to residential use should be discouraged in order to avoid conflicts between residential and agricultural uses.
8. This area should continue to have a distinct designation as agriculture/mixed use on the Future Land Use Map during the term of this plan.

BEAN/MACRAE

This neighborhood spans the area from the Winooski River north to the West Lakeshore Drive Neighborhood bounded on the west by the Prim / Heineberg / Warners Corner Neighborhood and on the east by the Shipman Hill Neighborhood. It includes the medium and low-density residential neighborhoods along Prim Road and the large floodplains to the south and east.



Drainage issues and marginal soils will require that densities within this area not be substantially increased although opportunities for infill may be feasible. The environmental constraints of the area should be taken into consideration with any proposed development. The steep and eroding banks of the Winooski River are in need of stabilization. The flood plains and the Winooski Valley Park District's Macrae Park provide for continuity between the habitats of this neighborhood with the larger intervale and Malletts Bay Avenue floodplains. New development should accommodate plans for the highway. While pedestrian and bicycle connectivity is important in this area, the majority of the area may be best served by informal trails that promote accessibility to the River.

The residential character of this neighborhood should be sustained and enhanced. Context sensitive infill development may be considered within this area as long as environmental constraints can be adequately addressed.

POLICIES

1. The character of the area should be sustained with no substantial changes to density.
2. Development should be sensitive to existing environmental issues such as drainage issues, marginal soils, unstable river banks, wildlife habitat, and floodplains.
3. This area is designated as suburban residential and rural on the Future Land Use Map.

PORTERS POINT

This area includes the majority of the Bay area stretching from the Winooski River and Lake Champlain to the boundary of the Prim/ Heineberg/ Warners Corner neighborhood on the east to the Marble Island / Malletts Head neighborhood on the north.
The majority of this suburban residential neighborhood is built-out containing a significant number of homes that were constructed in the mid to late twentieth century with a significant number of seasonal camps that have been converted to year-round use. Medium to high density residential zoning is typical within this neighborhood although low density residential and flood plain zoning are present in the more environmentally sensitive portions of this area. While the majority of the neighborhood has municipal water, the entire area is served by on-site septic.

The infrastructure in this area has been retrofitted to meet current needs with a variety of storm water improvements and pedestrian, and bicycle improvements completed in recent years. Airport Park continues to be a significant community resource for this area. The significant amount of lakeshore and river frontage make the area vibrant in the summer months; however, present development difficulties such as unstable banks and limited soils present environmental concerns. A variety of sensitive natural areas exist within this neighborhood, including Delta Park, Rosetti Natural Area, Half Moon Cove, and sandplains. Infill development has been occurring with several properties converted from single-family to multi-family residences. This area is home to the majority of the community's affordable housing with smaller older homes that have typically served as starter homes as well as the Town's only

senior apartments. While infill opportunities should be encouraged in this area, care should be taken to ensure that infill development does not severely erode the affordable housing stock in this area or adversely impact the infrastructure of the area. The character of the area should be maintained and care taken to ensure that lakeshore and river frontage development does not detract from this character or present environmental concerns.

POLICIES

1. The residential character of the area should be maintained; however, increases in densities to promote residential infill should be considered.
2. Additional pedestrian and bicycle facilities in this area are planned to better connect the neighborhood internally and externally and should be addressed as part of any development application.
3. Public transportation opportunities within this neighborhood should be planned for in the long-term.
4. This area should be recognized as significantly contributing to

the community's affordable housing stock and care taken to preserve these opportunities as the neighborhood continues to transition.

5. This area is shown as suburban residential on the Future Land Use Map.

BLAKELY ROAD

This area is clustered between the Severance Corners growth center on the east, Interstate 89 on the west, the Poor Farm neighborhood

on the north, and the Exit 16 neighborhood on the south. The properties included in this area are low or medium density residential properties that front directly on Blakely Road or are located in the Edgewood neighborhood which loops off of Blakely Road.

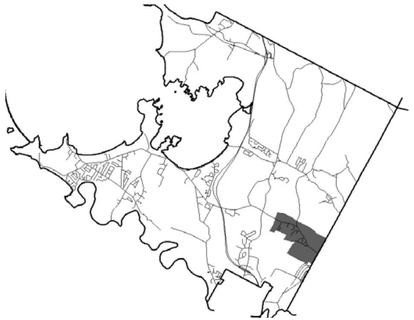
This neighborhood is mostly built-out and is constrained by traffic safety issues on Blakely Road particularly in the vicinity of Poor Farm Road, although a few infill opportunities exist. Expansion of the Severance Corners growth center into this area, even in the long-term, is therefore not reasonable. No substantial changes in character or increases to density should be considered for this area. Pedestrian and bicycle facilities should be constructed that connect the neighborhood to surrounding neighborhoods. Recreation areas are also encouraged.

POLICIES

1. The character of the area should be maintained. No increases in density should be considered within the time frame of this plan.
2. Pedestrian and bicycle facilities should be constructed within this area that connect to the neighborhoods to the east and west. Recreation areas are also encouraged.
3. This area is designated as suburban residential on the Future Land Use Map.

SEVERANCE ROAD

This neighborhood lies east of the Severance Corners growth center, south of the Circumferential Highway right-of-way, north of Camp Johnson extending to the Essex Town Line. It is bisected by Severance Road and is predominately suburban residential in character with a range of low to high density neighborhoods including a mobile home park, although pockets of agricultural use exist.



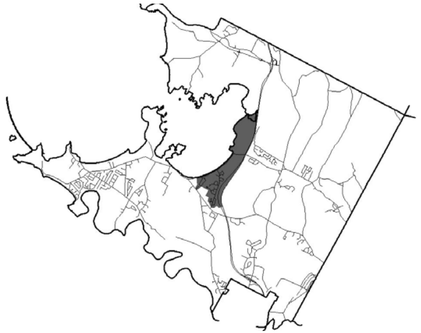
Increases in density to this area may be considered as long as they do not result in adverse impacts to the remaining agricultural uses. Any consideration of density increases should address traffic safety on Severance Road, storm water impairments to Sunderland Brook, and on-site septic capacity. This area is most logical for possible future expansion of the Severance Corners growth center in the long-term. It is therefore important to ensure that pedestrian and bicycle improvements are incorporated into current development projects that will facilitate connection to the Severance Corners growth center.

POLICIES

1. Any consideration of density increases should adequately address traffic safety on Severance Road, storm water impairments to Sunderland Brook, and on-site septic capacity. Density increases must not adversely impact existing agricultural uses.
2. A comprehensive bicycle and pedestrian network must be incorporated into both short-term and long-term plans for this area that will facilitate connection to the Severance Corners growth center.
3. This area is designated as suburban residential on the Future Land Use Map.

EAST LAKESHORE DRIVE VICINITY

This area includes the lands west of Interstate 89 from Malletts Creek to Blakely Road. Williams Road, portions of Bay Road, East Lakeshore Drive, and Sunset View Road are included in this area. East Lakeshore Drive, one of the longest sections of roads immediately abutting Lake Champlain, has several design deficiencies, although provides for many fine scenic vistas. High traffic counts on East Lakeshore Drive indicate that it serves as an arterial roadway and perhaps a bypass to Route 127. The area is currently developed with a high density of camps and year-round residences. A number of physical deficiencies, including non-conforming sewage disposal systems, erosion and slumpage of steep banks, and chronic drainage problems make the narrow strip of land between East Lakeshore Drive and the shoreline less than an ideal setting for structures. The area east of East Lakeshore Drive and surrounding Williams Road functions as a suburban residential neighborhood as does much of the area along Bay Road. North of Bay Road is the seasonal campground Lone Pine that still brings in many summer residents to the community. The areas west and north of Lone Pine decrease significantly in density and become a scattered collection of summer seasonal and year round homes affected by poor access and limited infrastructure in a low density residential zone.



The areas south of Bay Road are somewhat concentrated and function cohesively as a walkable medium density residential neighborhood area. The presence of seasonal camps along East Lakeshore Drive preserves the historic summer seasonal culture of Colchester and positively contributes to the character of the area with the majority of residences between the road and the Lake still occupied only seasonally. These area attributes should be sustained and enhanced. If the Lone Pine campground transitions into a more permanent use, care should be taken to tie it into the existing neighborhood to the south while limiting effects on the rural areas to the north and west. The current character of the area should be sustained and enhanced. Environmental concerns arising from the close proximity of the area to the Lake, roadway deficiencies, and rugged geography north of Bay Road limit densities in this area. While infrastructure should be improved in this area, increases to density should be discouraged. Care should be taken to increase traffic safety and limit overall traffic in the long term on East Lakeshore Drive.

POLICIES

1. Areas along the Lake should continue to be a priority for conservation particularly those areas immediately adjacent to existing Town or State owned lands.
2. Reconstruction of structures between East Lakeshore Drive and the Lake should preserve views of the Lake from the road and provide for adequate bank stabilization.

3. Water quality remains a high concern in this neighborhood. The Town should continue to encourage the upgrading of on-site septic systems within this area and educate homeowners on system maintenance. To this end, an on-site sewage disposal management program could be developed.
4. Traffic safety is a high-priority issue within this area. Pedestrian and bicycle circulation should be encouraged and additional traffic should be discouraged. Design improvements to East Lakeshore Drive are a traffic safety priority; however, traffic reduction measures should also be considered.
5. This area is designated a combination of suburban residential and rural on the Future Land Use Map.

MARBLE ISLAND/ MALLETTS HEAD

This is the headland extending into Malletts Bay and defining the boundary between the inner and outer bays. Malletts Head has low density, year round and seasonal residential uses as well as commercial recreational uses at the Marble Island Marina and Brown Ledge Camp. There are also significant natural areas, including three undeveloped hills which are prominent natural landscapes, particularly as seen from the water. Marble Island and Cave Island are part of the Lake Champlain Paddlers Trail which encompasses this area.

While this area is designated as suburban residential on the Future Land Use Map, low-density residential zoning exists. Low-density residential uses along the shoreline assist in preserving lake views. The Marble Island Resort has recently transitioned to a residential community and, although zoned for general development, should be constructed per the approved planned residential development.

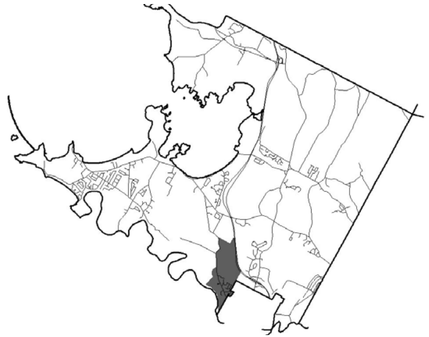
Residential densities should be maintained within this area. Additional development should be sensitive to existing uses such as Brown Ledge Camp, sensitive to the natural features and resources of the area, and have sufficient emergency access. The existing marina is an important private recreational amenity; however, care should be taken to mitigate the impact of marina traffic on paddling resources. Views of the lake and from the lake should be preserved to the greatest extent possible.

POLICIES

1. Development applications, both residential and non-residential, in this area need to be carefully evaluated for compatibility with surrounding uses.
2. Continued development of recreational amenities in keeping with the character of the area, such as walking paths, should be encouraged to the greatest extent possible.
3. The right of Brown Ledge Camp to keep horses for their camp use should be in no way limited.
4. Existing residential densities and commercial/recreational uses should be retained and embellished; however, commercial uses not compatible with the character of the area should not be allowed. Rezoning of the area currently designated as GD1 may be considered in the long term to a new district in order to keep this balance.
5. The natural area, with views, at the crest of Malletts Head should be considered for acquisition by a Land Trust or the Town.
6. Public access to the Lake should be maintained in this neighborhood.
7. This neighborhood is designated as suburban residential on the Future Land Use Map.

MALLETTS BAY AVENUE

This is the area between Interstate 89 and the Flood Plain, south of Shipman Hill, along Malletts Bay Avenue extending south to Winooski. This area includes a pre-existing industrial park, a quarry, active farms, and residential areas. Zoning varies accordingly from industrial to agricultural to low-density residential to high-density



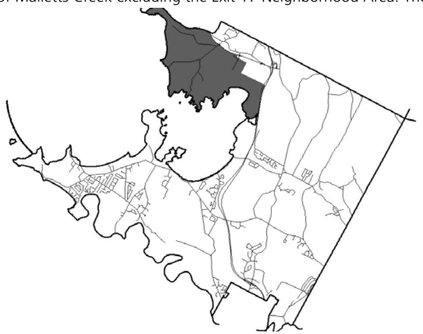
residential. The highest residential density is along the Winooski Town Line. Residential development has been allowed with the stipulation that property owners be made aware of the pre-existing industrial and agricultural uses in the area although this does not seem to mitigate neighbor complaints. Any future development must be sensitive to these pre-existing uses and the design limitations of Malletts Bay Avenue which include curves that limit sight distance and a less than ideal cross section. As the majority of high-density residential zoning has been built out within this area, future development within this area is anticipated to be limited. Cluster developments that limit impacts to agricultural uses, natural resources, and industry are encouraged. Development should be compatible with the varied environmental conditions in this area and not create undue impacts to Malletts Bay Avenue or other infrastructure.

POLICIES

1. No re-zonings within this area should be considered within the time frame of this plan.
2. The adjacent floodplains and wetlands are undevelopable and should continue to be excluded from density calculations for development.
3. Pedestrian amenities along Malletts Bay Avenue are needed due to high residential densities along the Winooski Town Line and increased traffic.
4. New development should be designed to be sensitive to pre-existing agricultural uses, natural resources, industry, and the design limitations of Malletts Bay Avenue.
5. This area is designated a combination of suburban residential and commercial/industrial on the Future Land Use Map.

CLAY POINT AREA

This area includes all land west of I-89, south of Route 2 and north of Malletts Creek excluding the Exit 17 Neighborhood Area. The



Clay Point Area is geographically rugged, with striking lakeshore ledges, thick forests and numerous rock outcrops, beaver ponds and other wet areas. While this area is attractive due to its natural beauty, development is inhibited by marginal soils, a lack of potable water, poor access, and deficient road infrastructure characterized

by many long, narrow, dead-end private roads. This area is also removed from municipal and emergency services. A significant portion of this neighborhood has been set aside as Niquette Bay State Park. This area is zoned for low density residential use.

This area should remain at a very low density of residential development with no up-zonings considered during the time of this plan. All proposed development must adequately address the existing road deficiencies within this area. Property owners and residents should be aware that the Town does not plan to significantly improve municipal services or road infrastructure in this area. Development should be context sensitive and not negatively impact the lakeshore.

POLICIES

1. Frontage on public roads should continue to be required for any new subdivisions.
2. Development on existing lots without frontage should be allowed only by the Development Review Board if negative impacts to the character of the area can be mitigated and sufficient access can be constructed.
3. Agricultural uses should continue to be allowed and encouraged within this area.
4. No re-zonings within this area should be considered within the time frame of this plan. Allowed development densities should not be increased beyond the levels allowed at the time of adoption of this plan.
5. Although not currently a priority, the Town should in the long-term evaluate developing a unique zoning district for this area that recognizes the natural features of the area and develops target densities in-line with preserving these amenities.
6. This area is designated as rural on the Future Land Use Map.

POOR FARM ROAD

This area surrounds the unpaved road of the same name that extends from Blakely Road to Route 7. It is bounded on the west by Interstate 89 and on the east by Roosevelt Highway. Parcels range

in size from a little more than two acres to over 100 acres, with the majority of parcels being zoned agricultural. Low density residential zoning also exists in this area primarily in the immediate vicinity of Blakely Road. No increases to density north of Blakely Road should be considered as this area includes one of the few sizable deeryards in Colchester as well as Quartzite Highlands. While this area is bisected by a sewer force main, all properties rely upon the marginal soils for on-site septic. This area is valued as an outstanding rural setting by those that own and live there. While the rural characteristic of the road should be preserved, safety concerns necessitate improvements to the intersections of Poor Farm Road with Blakely Road and Roosevelt Highway. The Poor Farm Road area should remain rural in character. The further development of agricultural operations within this area should be encouraged.

POLICIES

1. This is an area that should not be rezoned within the time-frame of this plan.
2. Connections to the Poor Farm Road sewer line should continue to be prohibited by the Town.
3. The intersections of Poor Farm Road are a safety concern. Any additional development accessed off of Poor Farm Road should be evaluated for traffic impacts to these intersections. Improvement to Poor Farm Road and its intersections should be studied and considered in conjunction with any development proposals. New development should not be allowed to occur unless plans for recommended road improvements also occur.
4. This area is designated as rural on the Future Land Use Map.

MILL POND

This area encompasses the lands north of Severance Road from the Essex Town Line to Roosevelt Highway bounded on the north by residential developments including Cannon Estates, Country Meadows and the rest of the Village Neighborhood. The area provides east-west

connectivity for natural areas along Indian Brook and is characterized by rolling terrain and marginal soils. Residences are scattered among small agricultural operations along Mill Pond Road and Roosevelt Highway; the two roads that currently traverse this neighborhood area. This area is currently zoned agricultural with some low-density residential zoning immediately along Mill Pond Road.

The current mix of agricultural and low-density residential zoning should continue to be preserved within this area. Over the longer term, ten to twenty years out, infill opportunities may be supported within the area if increased residential development can be clustered so as to maintain the rural feel of the area and provide open space conservation that recognizes the natural topography. This area may also be suitable for the development of outdoor recreational uses, such as a golf course, that are compatible with the low-density residential and agricultural uses.

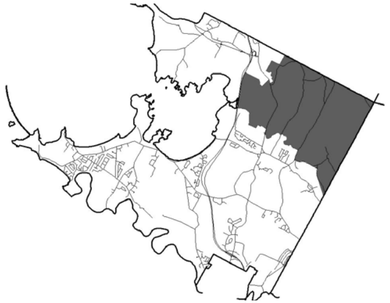
POLICIES

1. This is an area that should not be rezoned within the time-frame of this plan.
2. Efforts should be made to financially encourage continued farming.
3. Road improvements such as the replacement of the Mill Pond Bridge are necessary.
4. This area is designated as rural on the Future Land Use Map.

NORTHEAST QUADRANT

This area is the most rural area of Colchester and is characterized by small farms, large residential lots, limited soils for on-site septic systems, and difficult terrain to develop. The area is bounded on the east by the Essex and Westford Town Lines, on the north by the Milton Town Line, on the west by Interstate 89, and on the south by the Village Neighborhood. The northwestern edge of this area has naturally occurring radioactive properties within the bedrock underlying the area causing issues for potable water and radon. The area contains the only railroad line in Colchester and has three main transportation routes bisecting the area: Roosevelt Highway, East Road, and Middle Road. East Road is becoming more of a commuter route to Milton. This area is home to Colchester Pond which is owned and managed by the Winooski Valley Park District.

The rural and agricultural character of this area shall be preserved. The area should continue to be zoned as agricultural or low density residential in order to limit growth. Large scale development is inappropriate in this neighborhood partially due to limited soils and transportation networks. The high level of connectivity between natural features, particularly between Colchester Pond and Essex's Indian Brook Park, which fosters wildlife habitat, should be recognized and maintained. The rise of horse farms and equestrian facilities in this area should be recognized and encouraged.



POLICIES

1. The zoning districts shall remain agricultural or very low-density residential.
2. The preservation of additional land surrounding Colchester Pond should be encouraged.
3. East Road is discouraged as an alternate commuter route to Roosevelt Highway.
4. Residential construction and outdoor recreational opportunities should positively reinforce the agricultural activities in this area.
5. Property owners and residents should be made aware of the radioactive bedrock properties and new development should not increase the degree of human exposure to these properties.
6. The rail line should be recognized as an important transportation corridor which should be maintained. Railyards and rail spurs are not in keeping with the rural character of the area and should not be permitted.
7. Railyards and rail spurs are not in keeping with the rural character of the area and should not be permitted.
8. This area is designated as rural on the Future Land Use Map.

3 CULTURAL RESOURCES:

VISION: The Town should continue to preserve and maintain its diverse cultural and historic resources while encouraging the development of new cultural amenities and traditions.

OVERVIEW

Colchester is a diverse community rich in historic resources and a variety of cultural amenities. These amenities help to define the Town's community and create a sense of place. As Colchester continues to grow, it will be challenged with preserving and enhancing these amenities while incorporating new resources and cultures. The following is not meant to catalog Colchester historic and cultural amenities, but rather provide a context of the role these resources play in the current community and in planning for Colchester's future.

HISTORY OF THE COMMUNITY

Approximately 12,000 years ago, glacial sheets receded and gave way to the Champlain Sea which cloaked most of the Champlain Valley under its waters. As the Sea receded, evidence can be found that Native populations began to utilize the lands of Colchester. Archaic and Woodland Period archaeological sites, located along present and former stream channels, provide evidence that native peoples made use of the area's stone raw materials for tools and abundant plant and animal resources for food and other necessities of life.

In 1609, Samuel de Champlain entered the area during an exploration of the waters now called Lake Champlain, introducing a European presence to the area. In 1763, New Hampshire Governor Benning Wentworth chartered the Town of Colchester. The first European settlers of Colchester purchased land from the Onion River Land Company and attempted to take residency during the years preceding the Revolutionary War. After the War, the settlement of Colchester began to take hold as the region stabilized and land feuds between neighboring states were settled. Ira Allen was among the first residents of Colchester when the Town held its first Town meeting of record in 1793. The first parcels of land were mapped by Remember Baker in 1802.

In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, Colchester was primarily reliant on agriculture as its economic base. The gently rolling, fertile soils of Colchester were well-suited to agriculture, but often required substantial clearing. Saw and grist mills developed along waterways and dams were built to exploit water power. The Village of Colchester was the Town's first center. Malletts Bay was developed as a port of trade. Later, nineteenth century developments brought the railroad to Town. The turn of the twentieth century brought substantial change to Colchester with the advent of the automobile, but the Town remained relatively agrarian until the second half of the twentieth century when development pressures from neighboring urban areas spilled out onto the Colchester landscape.

HISTORIC CULTURAL RESOURCES

The landscape of Colchester has changed significantly over the centuries. Remnants of Colchester's past have begun to disappear from the landscape. Gone are many of the prehistoric and early historic sites. Quickly vanishing from the landscape are structures and features associated with the agricultural history of the landscape. As new development takes place, Colchester's pre-European contact sites and historic buildings and structures should be preserved. Archaeological sites offer insights into the most distant past when people did not write and also provide information about more recent people and activities that no one wrote about. As with archaeological sites, significant historic structures should be preserved, although some structures may not be worth preserving because of their condition or age (less than fifty years old). Preserving historic structures often requires repair or rehabilitation to provide continued use.

Pre-contact and historic period archaeological sites and historic buildings and structures constitute Colchester's rich and diverse heritage resources. The State of Vermont Division of Historic Preservation has published a State Register of Historic Places that lists the historic structures and properties in the Town of Colchester. The list includes 40 properties which range from large complexes such as Fanny Allen Hospital and Fort Ethan Allen, to historic houses, and even bridges. Fort Ethan Allen is the only National Register of Historic Places District in Colchester. The State also maintains a State Archaeological Inventory which lists known archaeological sites in Colchester. Several of Colchester's archaeological sites are also included on the State Register for their significance. The State has developed a predictive model for archaeological sites that can be utilized to help identify potential sites. Identification and protection of historic sites is generally required as part of the State's Act 250 permitting system.

HISTORIC RECORD

Colchester benefits from a well-documented and preserved historical record. The Town is fortunate to have an active Historical Society that is a resource for researchers as well as an active steward of several of Colchester's historic buildings. The Historical Society maintains the Parsonage in the Village as a museum and meeting space and the School House at Airport Park as a seasonal interpretative museum and information center. The Society is a steward for Colchester's history and its efforts to promote and educate local history should be supported. Burnham Library is another local resource for historical research. Several books have been written on Colchester including: *Colchester, Vermont from Ice Cap to Interstate* by Ruth Wright, *Look Around Colchester and Milton, Vermont* published by the Colchester Historical Society, *Colchester Center the Evolution of a Village* by Kenneth Degree, and *Images of America…Colchester* by Inge Schaefer. A variety of other organizations provide access to primary historical records such as letters, maps, and deeds. These include the Colchester Town Clerk's Office, the University of Vermont Special Collections, St. Michaels College's archives, and the Vermont Historical Society.

Once historic cultural resources are gone they can never be replaced. For certain eras of history, cultural resources may be the only clues to our past. Destroying cultural resources can therefore permanently destroy opportunities to understand and interpret our history. As Colchester's history continues to develop, cultural resources that represent the community's past should be recognized and preserved even as we plan for the Town's future. The Town should encourage the preservation and rehabilitation of all historic structures in Colchester through its regulations, policies, and budget. Changes to historic structures should be sympathetic to the structure and, to the extent possible, in accordance with the Secretary of Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. Development should be sensitive to Colchester's historic and archaeological sites and structures as these serve as visible reminders of the community's past. The Town should explore potential opportunities for funding preservation projects with not-for-profit organizations as well as State and Federal partners.

CONTEMPORARY CULTURE

The community has a variety of cultural facilities and a variety of active social groups. Cultural facilities range from theaters such as St. Michael's Playhouse and Colchester High School to private camps such as Brown Ledge Camp or Camp Dudley. There are also a variety of community events such as Winter Carnival, the Fourth of July parade and fireworks, Green Up Day, and Town Meeting.

Fourth of July parade on Main Street

Social groups include formal facilities, such as the Colchester Senior Center or the American Legion, and groups that meet in a variety of places, such as the Rotary and the Lions Club. These community organizations contribute to the culture of Colchester as well as provide a range of recreational offerings and are further detailed in the Parks & Recreation Chapter of this plan.

COMMUNITY LIBRARY

The Burnham Memorial Library in Colchester Village is a cultural facility that provides library services for the Town as well as study space, internet access, facilities for meetings, educational programs, and children's activities. The Library is a department of

Summer concert at Bayside Park

the Town of Colchester and has professional staff as well as many volunteers and a five member, elected Board of Trustees. Its 51,824 volume collection includes books, maps, periodicals, and audio-visual materials such as audio books, music CDs, and DVD movies. The Library provides life-long learning opportunities as well as assistance with early childhood literacy. The Library's Long-Range Plan directs the library's services and provides guidance for its growth. The Library is reshaping its services to become a clearinghouse for information on arts, culture, and related events in Colchester. In changing its mission and services, the Burnham Library facility will also need to change and adapt. While the Library is evaluating options for renovation and expansion, its location on the Town's historic green presents opportunities as well as challenges for expansion. Care should be taken to maintain and enhance the Village Green as the Library looks for ways to maintain and expand its services within its historic home. Satellite library facilities in the Town's growth centers and other villages should be explored as a way of broadening the Library's audience and providing additional space.

PRIVATE AND RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS

A variety of private cultural centers and groups include Colchester's various religious organizations. These organizations include the Islamic Center at Fort Ethan Allen, Day Break Church, Jehovah's Witnesses Congregation, the United Church of Colchester, St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, Our Lady of Grace, Holy Cross Church, Chapel of Saint Michael the Archangel, and Catholic Charities. The Catholic Church has been perhaps one of the most active religious organizations with a senior housing project on Church Road and several cemeteries. The Catholic Church also had a role in the establishment of Fanny Allen Hospital and Saint Michael's College. These organizations engage in community-building by providing services, events, and contributing to charitable causes. Religious organizations also preserve and sustain cultural and ethnic traditions. As Colchester continues to grow more diverse, these organizations will be important in facilitating a sense of community while supporting cultural diversity.

ETHNIC DIVERSITY

In recent years, the Vermont Refugee Resettlement Center began operations at Fort Ethan Allen. While refugees are settled in a variety of communities, mostly within the greater Burlington area, Colchester is a center for services for these diverse ethnic groups. Saint Michael's College is a major supporter of the Vermont Council on World Affairs (VCWA) which provides educational programs as well as hosts delegates from around the world. The future of Colchester is likely to be more culturally and ethnically diversified and the work of organizations such as the VCWA should be supported as providing exposure to and education on various cultures.

CULTURAL FACILITIES

As the community becomes more diverse, the Town should look to preserve and expand upon its cultural facilities, including private facilities, in order to sustain and enhance the community's quality of life. Summer camps for children and seasonal cottages contribute to the Town's tourism economy and the community's sense of place as a lakeside community. The Fort area continues to evolve as a cultural center for the Town with the Elley-Long Music Center serving as the home for the Vermont Youth Symphony Orchestra. St. Michael's College is also looking to attract similar organizations to under-utilized properties at the Fort. Private development of cultural facilities, including religious facilities, should continue to be encouraged. Cultural facilities should continue to be integrated into the existing fabric of the community as well as incorporated in multi-use areas. As the Town looks to fulfill the need for a community center and other facilities, it should also evaluate the potential to incorporate cultural facilities such as satellite library facilities or a community theater.

CULTURAL RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND EXPANSION

Colchester's historic and cultural properties are opportunities for economic development through expanded tourism and adaptive reuse of historic buildings. Historic buildings serve as attractions and destination places as they create a unique sense of place. To the extent possible, State and Federal Programs such as the Certified Local Government Program should be tapped to assist in developing local tourism and reuse projects. A recent example of adaptive reuse is the Log School House now located at Airport Park serving as a seasonal interpretive museum and informational center. Efforts to encourage the adaptive reuse of historic properties should be continued. The current zoning for the Fort Ethan Allen area provides several exemptions for the renovation, reuse, and rehabilitation of historic properties in exchange for preserving the historic fabric of the property. Similar zoning may be looked to for Colchester Village to incentivize the reuse of historic buildings. These historic resources help to define the landscape of Colchester and should continue to be utilized in defining the community's future.

Fort Ethan Allen Officer's Row

POLICIES

1. Predictive modeling of archaeological sites should be explored by the Town as a tool to locate potentially important sites and assist developers in recognizing archaeological resources before final plans are developed and thereby reducing project costs. To the extent possible, the Town should encourage important archaeological sites be avoided and thereby preserved for future generations.
2. The State Register and National Register listings for the Town should be used to assess the significance of historic buildings and structures. These listings should be maintained and updated by the Town to provide accurate documentation of the Town's historic resources.
3. Colchester's historic and cultural properties are opportunities for economic development through expanded tourism and adaptive reuse of historic buildings. The Town should encourage the preservation and rehabilitation of all historic structures in Colchester through its regulations, policies, and budget. Changes to historic structures should be sympathetic to the structure and, to the extent possible, in accordance with the Secretary of Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.
4. The Town should explore participating in the Certified Local Government program and other State or Federal historic preservation programs.
5. Community organizations, such as the Historical Society, that serve as stewards of the Town's history and its historical and cultural resources are important community assets and should be sustained.
6. The Burnham Library should continue to provide life-long learning opportunities and assistance with early childhood literacy as it expands upon its mission to become a clearinghouse for information on arts, culture, and related events in Colchester.
7. Care should be taken to maintain and enhance the Village Green as an important amenity and public gathering place.
8. Satellite library facilities in the Town's growth centers and other villages should be explored as a way of broadening the Library's audience and providing additional space.
9. Private development of cultural facilities, including religious facilities, should continue to be encouraged. As Colchester continues to grow more diverse, religious organizations will continue to be important in facilitating a sense of community while supporting cultural diversity.
10. As the community becomes more diverse, the Town should look to preserve and expand upon its cultural facilities, including private facilities, in order to sustain and enhance the community's quality of life. Cultural facilities should continue to be integrated into the existing fabric of the community as well as incorporated in multi-use areas.
11. The work of organizations such as the VCWA should be supported as providing exposure to and education on various cultures.

4 NATURAL RESOURCES:

VISION: The Town of Colchester should continue to conserve and protect its natural resources for their intrinsic value as well as for their importance to quality of life within the community. It should also continue to demonstrate leadership in environmental stewardship and infrastructure resilience for the benefit and safety of all so that Colchester can thrive in a rapidly changing world.[1]

OVERVIEW

From the shores of Malletts Bay and Lake Champlain to the adjacent wetlands, fertile uplands, and dry sandplains, Colchester has an abundance and diversity of natural resources rarely found within the borders of a single town. The total land area of the Town is 24,000 acres. Approximately 12% of these lands are owned by local, state, or federal government or by other public or not-for-profit entities. In addition to these lands, another 20% of Town land is characterized as floodplain, wetland, significant habitat site or other natural area. As a result of public ownership and these natural features, one third of total town acreage is "Open Space". Colchester also contains 2,662 acres of water resources just within Malletts Bay. These varied resources provide an attractive and healthy place to live and work, however, these resources can be challenging to manage and integrate into land use planning.

The following will focus on several aspects of the Town's natural resources including Open Space. While natural resources is a very broad subject that can often include discussion of parks, working lands and multi-use path corridors, these subjects are covered within the Parks and Recreation Chapter, the Agricultural section of the Land Use Chapter and the Transportation Chapter respectively. It should also be recognized that Open Space often means different things to different people. For the purposes of this Chapter, the Open Space discussion will focus on those areas that contain important natural features and those areas that enhance a natural feature or enhance access and enjoyment of a natural feature. It should be noted that within the Neighborhoods Chapter additional information may be found on specific areas of Town.

LAKE CHAMPLAIN - Colchester's single greatest asset is Lake Champlain. The Town has twenty-seven miles of shoreline which influences our economy, land use patterns, and everyday life in the community.

Mallets Bay Aerial

Outstanding views can be enjoyed, both from the shoreline and from the water. Views of Colchester from the Lake generally belie the developed nature of the Town. Structures that are well screened and meet the substantial setbacks from the shoreline required by current regulations minimize intrusion into these views. It is important for the town to continue to encourage new development as well as re-development that is sensitive to the Lake views.

Water quality in Malletts Bay is a community-wide concern. Increasing pollution from storm water runoff, septic contamination, invasive species, blue-green algae and acid rain are some of the variety of water quality inhibitors that plague the greater Lake. The inner bay continues to be plagued by sporadic outbreaks of high bacterial counts that close beaches to swimmers. Heavy metals have been detected in the sediments off Porters Point. The problem has unknown origin and extent. Recent outbreaks of blue-green algae have occurred in a variety of locations. While the Lake provides for a diversity of wildlife species, pollution such as blue-green algae threatens the habitat of these animals. Exotic species such as Eurasian milfoil, Zebra Mussels, and Alewife fish have entered the Lake and are spread by unwitting boaters and fishermen. Due to the high volume of boat traffic in Colchester, exotic species will continue to be a threat to the natural state of the Bay.

In 2003, the Town of Colchester developed a Strategic Water Quality Plan for the Town. This Plan comprehensively evaluates all of the water quality influences, history, and current conditions and provides recommended courses of action for the Town. In 2013 the Town completed the Integrated Water Resources Management Plan that was funded by an Environmental Protection Agency Demonstration Grant. The Plan provides a comprehensive evaluation of town-wide water quality issues and solutions. On-site septic systems and stormwater collection were evaluated as to risks posed, possible new management systems, and preferred solutions based upon cost, impact, and feasibility.The Plan also built upon 2001 microbial source tracking investigation that was conducted by the Town in cooperation with the University of New Hampshire and identified the source of E.coli pollution in the Bay as being mostly deer and waterfowl through the use of DNA ribotyping. As the Town works toward a larger implementation of the Plan's recommendations, it will continue its current efforts to perform summer water quality testing. Several recent changes in regulations should also serve to provide greater water quality protections. The Shoreland Overlay District section of the Zoning Regulations encourages preserving natural vegetation around the Lake and limits disturbance within 100 feet of the mean water mark (elevation 95.5') which provides opportunities for preserving natural habitat, views, and filtering runoff. The Colchester Code of Ordinances Chapter Eighteen also regulates storm water runoff and erosion control more directly and assists in enforcing water quality standards to maintain and improve all of Colchester's water resources.[3]

WINOOSKI AND LAMOILLE RIVERS - Colchester's southern border consists of about 9 miles of frontage on the Winooski River between the Lime Kiln Gorge and Delta Park. The river corridor in Colchester upstream of the City of Winooski is undeveloped and a spectacular gorge and a hydro-electric dam exist between the Lime Kiln Bridge and I-89. Between the City of Winooski and River Road, the river bank consists of uninhabited flood plains. Between River Road and the confluence, there is a high, steep, eroding bank, with some structures close to the edge.

Bicycle Bridge at mouth of Winooski River

The lower Winooski River is currently assessed as not fully fishable or swimmable under the criteria of the Clean Water Act. The lower Lamoille is rated as fully fishable and swimmable. Given the drainage basin characteristics it is not likely that significant contamination enters either the Winooski or Lamoille River from Colchester. The State of Vermont created a Lower Winooski River Basin plan process in 2010 listing draft objectives, goals, and action plans for treating stormwater, managing roads and parking lots, and stream crossings.

[1] *Correlates to the Colchester Heritage Project's Community Strategic Plan 2012-2022, Infrastructure Goal.*

[2] *Correlates to the Colchester Heritage Project's Community Strategic Plan 2012-2022, Environment and Agriculture Goal strategy one.*

[3] *Correlates to the Colchester Heritage Project's Community Strategic Plan 2012-2022, Environment and Agriculture Goal objective.*

Colchester has three miles of frontage on the Lamoille River. The shoreline of the river is forested, inaccessible, and sustains productive wildlife habitat. A Lamoille River Basin Plan was approved in 2009 for the 84 miles of river. This plan identifies the top water quality issues in the basin and gives guidance through actions that can be taken to address these issues over the next five years. The Lamoille River Watershed Council has been formed to assist in the implementation of this plan. While the quality of the Lamoille River is generally in better shape than that of the Winooski River, the Town should also participate in this larger planning process as a way of improving water quality at the mouth of this river in Colchester.

Both the Lamoille and Winooski Rivers are protected by the Shoreland Overlay District in the Zoning Regulations. In addition, the majority of parcels along the rivers are restricted by the Zoning Regulations' top of bank setback requirement. Many properties along the Winooski River were developed prior to these regulations, though, and are threatened by bank slumping and erosion. New development and redevelopment of these properties should stabilize the bank and meet current setbacks in order to limit threats to water quality as well as threats to public infrastructure and public welfare.

COLCHESTER POND - Colchester Pond is located in the far Northeast corner of Town and is one mile long and a quarter mile wide. The Pond is within the Shoreland Overlay District that prohibits most development and clearing within 100 feet of the mean water mark. The Pond results from impounded drainage. Most of the shoreline of the pond is undeveloped woodland and pasture. The Pond is hydrologically isolated, has good water quality, and no known exotic species. Colchester Pond and most of the surrounding land is owned by the Winooski Valley Park District. The State of Vermont has recognized Colchester Pond as an exceptional water resource and has excluded motor-boats.

FLOODPLAIN RESILIENCY – The Town of Colchester is situated between the mouths of the Lamoille River and the Winooski River along Lake Champlain. As a result of these significant features, Colchester has a long history of regulating the floodplain,

Colchester Pond

shoreland, and river corridors. Fifteen percent of the land area in Colchester has been identified as wetlands or floodplains. The majority of the floodplain area in Colchester lies along Lake Champlain and the Winooski and Lamoille Rivers. The fertile floodplain of the Winooski River, often referred to as the Intervale, is involved in active agricultural production and contains a substantial portion of the Town's working lands. The 100 year flood elevation of Lake Champlain (Zone A), as determined by the Federal Flood Insurance Program, is at 102 feet above sea level and is depicted on the FIRM maps. The floodplains as well as the Town's shoreland district are identified on Map 13 herein.

The Town of Colchester has established an All Hazards Mitigation Plan in conjunction with the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission and also participates in the National Flood Insurance Program. In 2013 the Town was also in the process of updating its Emergency Operations Plan that provides directive for emergency preparedness and response planning. Minimum federal standards prohibit any construction within the designated "floodway" and require any development within the 100 year floodplain (Zone A) to be built on sufficient fill to avoid being subject to flood hazard. The Town of Colchester has always exceeded this federal minimum. Development within the Flood Zone has been prohibited in Colchester for several decades, however significant development predated the regulations and there 292 structures located in the flood hazard zone. The majority of these structures are seasonal residences and accessory structures that are occupied during the summer months. Similarly, Colchester has prohibited development within 100 feet of the mean water mark of Lake Champlain and the Lamoille and Winooski Rivers for the better part of three decades. Within the past two decades Colchester has also enacted within the Town's Zoning Regulations a steep bank setback of 50 feet from the top of bank for steep slope and more recently a streambank buffer ordinance that provides an 85 foot setback from the centerline of the stream. These measures collectively mitigate risks to public safety, infrastructure, and personal property.

In 2011 Lake Champlain exceeded the 102 ft. level and many structures in the flood hazard area were damaged and destroyed. In areas exposed to wave action even structures above the 102 ft. level were damaged. Inundated homes and associated infrastructure such as private on-site wastewater systems caused water pollution and public infrastructure was damaged. As a result of these events, all of the substantially damaged structures, except one, were rebuilt and "floodproofed" to Federal standards. Several other structures that were damaged were also elevated and floodproofed as well. The Colchester Zoning Regulations currently require that substantially damaged structures be floodproofed if rebuilt and also limits the rebuilding to the current footprint. Filling and raising of the grade is not allowed within the floodplain. Colchester will maintain its current Flood Plain Zoning District standards prohibiting any further intrusion into the floodplain to protect the public good. In addition, the Town should maintain its cooperation with Federal Agencies in reviewing floodplain projects.

The Town of Colchester has recently partnered with the Chittenden Country Regional Planning Commission and VT Agency of Natural Resources to conduct Fluvial Erosion Hazard Assessments within the Pond Brook tributaries noted on Map 12 herein. These assessments identify areas where stream processes can occur to enable the stream to re-establish and maintain stable conditions over time. The area boundaries also attempt to capture the lands most vulnerable to fluvial erosion in the near term as well as the area needed by a river to maintain equilibrium. The mapped areas of assessment are within sparsely populated areas with little development. After these assessments, the benefits of establishing Fluvial Erosion Hazard Overlay Districts was considered however current stream bank buffer regulations are currently providing adequate protection coupled with the Town's rural zoning areas.

During the term of this Plan, the Town will look to implement the recommendations of the Integrated Water Resources Management Plan. This comprehensive water quality study of the Town will likely result in the re-examination of streambank buffers, fluvial erosion, and other flood resiliency items that relate to water quality. While Colchester has not pursued fluvial erosion hazard zoning, due in large part to the very restrictive floodplain regulations that govern the Town's two rivers, smaller streams and tributaries will likely be examined for additional protection measures. It should be noted that the need to provide a safe area for natural features must also be weighed against current federal and state regulatory requirements pertaining to water quality such as the Town's designation as a "MS4" community for stormwater impairment by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency that require the Town to limit phosphorus discharge into waters. The Town will continue to be proactive in its work to mitigate future losses from such events as the 2011 flood of Lake Champlain and will also continue its endeavors to protect and enhance water quality during the term of this Plan.

WETLANDS - There are extensive areas of wetlands in Colchester. Wetlands enhance water quality, are important wildlife habitats, attenuate flooding, and are recreational resources. About 93% of Colchester's wetlands are functionally significant (Class 2) according to the State Wetland Rules. Class 2 wetlands are identified on National Wetland Inventory (NWI) maps. These mapped wetlands, and any additional wetlands that are found to directly connect to NWI wetlands, are subject to both State and Federal regulations. Federal definitions of wetlands have expanded since the NWI maps were prepared. Additional "wet meadows" and other lands are also now considered wetlands (Class 3) under the federal definition, however remain unmapped. Several of the Natural

Areas within Colchester contain significant wetland areas such as Half Moon Cove. Colchester requires a fifty-foot buffer from the edge of Class Two wetlands in keeping with State requirements through its Water Protection Overlay District. The Town maintains communications with the State and Federal permitting agencies to provide consistency in regulating these areas to the greatest extent practicable.

WATERCOURSES – Watercourses consist of named and unnamed streams, brooks, tributaries, and drainage ways. The majority of watercourses have been mapped using remote sensing technology, however, these resources are undergoing constant changes that can alter the course of mapped resources. Mapped resources also do not accurately depict intermittent drainage ways and streams. Colchester has implemented, within the Water Protection Overlay District, streambank buffers that require an 85-foot setback from the centerline of watercourses. These buffers have been created with the intention of providing protection for the natural areas along the Town's surface waters and to provide improved protection for water quality and the provision of open space areas and wildlife habitat. While the buffers prohibit most disturbances within the setback, there are exemptions for pre-existing residences which allow encroachment. Whenever feasible, encroachment should be minimized. While the buffering has worked well and should be maintained, it is likely the more restrictive State requirements will result in the Town eliminating these exemptions in the short term. The State of Vermont also regulates most aspects of watercourses.

SIGNIFICANT HABITAT SITES – Significant habitat sites are considered to be rare or irreplaceable natural or fragile areas or wildlife or endangered species habitat. These habitat sites are regulated by the State and Federal Governments and can carry the consequences of criminal prosecution for alteration or demolition.

DEERYARDS – The locations and boundaries of deeryards were determined using color infrared aerial photos by the State. Like watercourses, deeryards are dynamic and prone to change location as well as size. Deeryards are critical winter habitat for deer and other wildlife. While protection is provided to deeryards under State Act 250 permitting it generally must be found to be "necessary" habitat or habitat of high quality and not widespread for its location. There are no regulations regarding deer or other wildlife habitat. While several adjacent communities have studied wildlife corridors, experts remain mixed on how to best conserve wildlife habitat. Given the significant natural areas within the community that are publicly owned, privately protected, and permanently restricted, such as floodplains, the Town should consider how to provide connectivity between these resources that might foster wildlife habitat. As described in the Parks and Recreation Chapter, wildlife habitat conservation is an important resource in Colchester that is vital to preserving passive recreation and hunting opportunities.

ENDANGERED SPECIES SITES – The Nongame and Natural Heritage Program (NNHP) of the Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife has identified a number of sites containing one or more rare, threatened, or endangered species or one or more significant natural communities within Colchester. The size of these sites varies and State mapping is intentionally not exact to hide the location of these sites. Since all potential areas have not been inventoried, additional sites may exist. In 2005-2006 the State adopted rules that make the alteration or destruction of these sites criminally prosecutable. It is therefore recommended that all potential development projects seek determinations from the State as part of the development design process. Many of Colchester's natural areas contain these endangered sites limiting recreational development opportunities. In addition, many biological natural areas such as Sand Plains contain endangered species sites.

BIOLOGICAL NATURAL AREAS – In 1991, the Vermont Nongame and Natural Heritage Program (NNHP) prepared a report entitled "Biological Natural Areas of Chittenden County." Approximately 30 sites were identified in Colchester and included several sandplains, vernal woodland pools, peat bogs and other ecologically significant natural communities. The approximate dimensions of all of these areas were mapped. One additional site was identified and mapped in a 1994 sandplains report. Simultaneous to the NNHP's effort, the Agency of Natural Resources inventoried natural areas throughout Chittenden County in 1991. Many of these areas overlap with those identified by the NNHP. Colchester, with 29 sites with statewide significance, was noted for supporting "one of the greatest biotic diversities of any town in Vermont." Some are now under protection to a greater or lesser degree. Both the NNHP and ANR sites areas overlap with the endangered species sites. Less than five percent of the original sandplain habitat exists and for these reasons, State permitting within sandplain habitat has become increasingly difficult. While Colchester recognizes the need to protect endangered species,

these habitats are often smaller parcels within developed areas that may not be logical to retain for habitat purposes.

An important subset of the Biological Natural Areas and ANR's Natural Areas is sandplain habitat. Colchester is the only area in Vermont with extensive areas of sandy well-drained soils. The Pine/Oak/Heath plant community that inhabits these sandplains is largely unique to Colchester. Sandplains are characterized by flat, well-drained soil (making it desirable for development) that is acidic and nutrient-poor. They have an open canopy more characteristic of woodlands than forest. Pitch pine, white pine, black oak, red oak, and heath shrubs predominate. Colchester's sandplains are home to 27 rare plants, including 6 grasses, 4 sedges, 13 herbs, 3 shrubs, 1 tree and 2 rare animals.

Opinions differ on the minimum size of land necessary to sustain the community, ranging from a low of 25-40 acres to a high of 2000 acres. It is generally believed that with proper management, communities as small as 50 acres could preserve a large majority of the natural community's members. While Colchester lacks forestry operations and industry, the active management of woodlands that does occur in Colchester stems from the need to manage sandplains as these sites often require disturbance to sustain themselves. No sandplain communities larger than 250 acres exist in Colchester. Public and private development occurring either prior to or after the 1991 report has significantly reduced the natural portion of some mapped areas. Diminished sites include the Old Colchester Airport (fringes of sandplain at the edge of town ballfields), Porters Point Road Sandplain (Crossfield subdivision) and the Holy Cross Church Woodland (elderly housing complex).

Because the lowest estimate of minimum size needed is 25-40 acres, the Vermont Natural Heritage program considers the following sites to be "Rare and Irreplaceable Nature Areas":

- Camp Johnson (250 acres): no legal protection; MOU governs current management
- Colchester High School Vicinity (164 acres)
- Sunderland Brook (92 acres): 25 acres protected to mitigate impact of Circ Highway
- Holy Cross Vicinity (45 acres): no protection currently in place

Other smaller parcels containing sandplains (acreage as of 1997):

- Smith Hollow Vicinity (26 acres)
- Bayside (20 acres)
- Sunny Hollow (15 acres)
- Winooski Bluff (8 acres)
- Little Gap Woods (10 acres)
- Twin Bridges (5 acres)
- Macrae Road (5 acres)

Though the largest remaining local habitat at Camp Johnson has a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) covering ecological management, none of these sandplains have permanent legal protection. Since sandplains are unique to Colchester, there are

many challenges in how to manage these areas. Sandplains exist on public as well as private property and can restrict the potential use of these areas. The Town will continue to work with State agencies to determine suitable alternatives for these areas.

OPEN SPACE PROTECTION METHODS

A variety of techniques are appropriate for the protection of open space resources including education, regulation, and public policy. One of the most important open space protection techniques is simply a general public awareness of natural resources. Colchester's natural resources serve a variety of purposes from enjoyment of open space to animal habitat to storm water filtration. Colchester's many natural areas under public or not-for-profit ownership often

include a variety of educational signage and interpretative materials. Efforts to sustain and enhance on-site interpretive resources and awareness of these resources should be supported by the Town. Another educational tool is Geographic Information Systems (GIS). GIS is a software tool that can depict the location of natural resources on the land in relation to landmarks, roads, property lines, and geographic features allowing users to easily visualize the scope of the resource. The Town of Colchester maintains a GIS system in ArcGIS that is used in-house by staff in reviewing projects and long-term planning. However, efforts are underway to expand this system for public use. These efforts should be sustained and enhanced to better delineate and define geographic data as well as involve the public in management and stewardship of natural resources. Wildlife habitat mapping is a data set that is currently deficient in Colchester and deserving of development.

REGULATING OPEN SPACE

Federal, State, and Local Regulations also provide for open space preservation techniques. Local Regulations most often guide new development, resource protection, and sustainable land use patterns and therefore can have significant impacts on open space preservation. Local Regulations impacting open space range from the broader goals for Planning Areas in the Town Plan to the specific Zoning District requirements of the Zoning Regulations.

ZONING & OPEN SPACE

The minimum requirement of 25 acres per dwelling unit in the Agricultural District is in keeping with the Rural Planning Areas' goal to be open, sparsely developed, and low-density. This District, due to its high minimum lot size requirement, is very effective at conserving open space and overall rural character. It is also important to take natural resource limitations into consideration with zoning as an area zoned for high density but containing significant natural resources such as wetlands or rare and endangered species may not permit the area to be developed in keeping with the high density expectations. Similarly, natural resources should be taken into consideration when designing infrastructure such as sewers as natural resources can change anticipated designs and expected densities. Planned Unit Developments (PUDs) are a type of development allowed under the Zoning Regulations that allows for clustering of development and dimensional waivers. PUDs are effective at fitting development in areas that have limitations due to natural resources and are an effective open space conservation tool. PUDs often result in the creation of open space lots or recreational amenities that are privately held by an association in perpetuity. As development occurs on smaller and smaller lots, thought should be given to the minimum lot size requirements for PUDs. The PUD regulations should also be reviewed from time to time to ensure that the goals of these regulations to enable and encourage flexibility of design and development of land is being maintained. Large tracts of undeveloped land that are being considered for development should be encouraged to comprehensively plan for the entire parcel and connectivity to adjacent parcels and natural areas. Well-thought-out conservation plans are encouraged and piece-meal developments of large tracts of land are discouraged. To this end, it may be advantageous for applicants to utilize the PUD regulations to subdivide large tracts of land.

OPEN SPACE & TOWN POLICY

Public policy may include a variety of funding and other decisions. Public policy includes sustaining current efforts of cooperation among Town Boards and Departments to conserve open space. Support should be provided to re-activate the Colchester Land Trust to assist the Town in open space conservation efforts and to work with these Boards and Departments to achieve Town open space goals. This category also includes developing and sustaining management plans for the Town's various natural areas, parks, conserved land, and public parcels that include significant natural resources. The Town also encourages the development of management plans for privately held lands that contain significant natural resources as well as privately conserved land such as PUD open space lots. The Winooski Valley Park District has recently undertaken several wildlife surveys of its lands that will contribute to the stewardship of its natural areas.

OPEN SPACE TAXATION

State and local tax policy also affects private ownership and protection of open lands. An often criticized State law is that all property must be taxed at "fair-market" value. This results in land being taxed based upon development value rather than the current use value as working land or other open space. The necessitated development of property as a result of skyrocketing taxes is not a desirable outcome. While the Town could put into practice a localized current use program that reduces taxes for properties committed to a multi-year stewardship program, this would not substantially reduce taxes for property owners as the majority of tax burden is the State property tax. While the State has current-use programs available for properties that are currently worked, a more comprehensive restructuring of State tax laws is perhaps needed.

FUNDING OPEN SPACE

Most often local public policy is set by funding priorities. Public funding can be used to acquire land outright, acquire the development rights of a parcel of land, or to purchase easements. In the purchase of development rights, a landowner retains the right to work the land but loses all rights to develop the land. In the purchase of easements, these easements are usually used for trails or for view protection along scenic corridors. Public funds are limited though and prioritization must be given to the use of funds as well as given to which properties are acquired. Often the Town is offered undevelopable lands that do not contain significant natural resources or recreation potential and that will become a liability to the Town in terms of cost of ownership and maintenance. Preference for acquisition should be given to those projects where money can be leveraged or stretched to accomplish several goals such as the purchase of easements or development rights in conjunction with other not-for-profit entities. The Town should develop a policy of prioritization for land acquisition and study preferred financing options. Local funds, derived primarily from the tax dollar, are limited, however could be supplemented through fees, partner organizations with outside funds, and State and Federal funding sources.

COLCHESTER'S OPEN SPACE PLAN

The 2000 Colchester Open Space Plan identified parcels that are considered to be high-priority parcels for conservation based upon their importance as natural areas and their risk of significant alteration. The 2000 Open Space Plan should be referenced for specific parcels and conservation techniques. Below is a listing of the areas mentioned in the 2000 Open Space Plan that are identified as having a high priority for further identification of natural resources, public funding for conservation, creation of tax policy that encourages retention of open space, conservation of

specific areas through the PUD development review process, and / or development of appropriate maintenance plans for the areas:

- Camp Holy Cross Vicinity
- Sunny Hollow Area
- Smith Hollow Area
- Camp Johnson Vicinity
- The undeveloped lands to the north and east of Segment I of the Circumferential Highway Right-of-Way including those undeveloped lands in the Shipman Hill vicinity along Malletts Bay Avenue.

The following areas that have been identified by the Town as sites of natural resource significance that, should development be proposed within these areas, care should be taken to conserve these features and mitigate any long term adverse impacts to these resources:

- Cave Island contained within parcel: 57-012002
- Cave West of Indian Brook contained within parcel: 08-014003
- Clay Point Road Caves contained within parcels: 16-057000 and 16-042000
- Colchester Bog contained within parcels: 33-056002, 33-058002, 34-100002, 34-101002, 44-004072, 43-034002, 43-026002, 44-045012, 44-007022, 44-007002, 43-009002, 31-007062, and 30-002002
- Colchester Point Rush meadow contained within parcel: 29-002002
- Colchester Pond Ridge contained within parcels: 12-036000, 12-030000, 15-001000, 12-035000, and 15-011000
- Colchester Sea Caves contained within parcels: 14-007020 and 14-007010
- Devil's Den Caves contained within parcels: 08-014003 and 08-014013
- Mallets Head contained within parcel: 56-004002
- Malletts Bay North Shore Headlands – From Niquette Bay State Park westwardly along the shoreline terminating on parcel 77-020000
- Malletts Creek Marsh – Munson Flat contained within parcels: 11-016020, 11-020000, 11-017010, 11-025000, 14-020000, 14-022000, 11-004003, and 14-026020
- Marble Island contained within parcel: 57-013002
- Parrot Jasper Mine contained within parcel: 13-003000
- Walnut Ledge Cave contained within parcels: 16-028000 and
- Pine Island Flood Plain contained within parcels: 06-013002, 02-026052, and 02-006002

POLICIES

1. The Town should continue to encourage new development as well as re-development that is sensitive to the Lake views.
2. The Town will strive to work with other organizations and governments to find long-term cost effective solutions to water quality issues.[4]
3. The Town should work with its neighbors within the Winooski River Basin to improve water quality.
4. New development and redevelopment of properties along the Winooski and Lamoille Rivers should stabilize the banks and meet current setbacks in order to limit threats to water quality as well as threats to public infrastructure and public welfare.
5. Colchester should maintain its current Flood Plain Zoning District standards prohibiting any new floodplain construction to protect the public good.
6. The Town should maintain its cooperation with Federal Agencies in reviewing floodplain projects.[5]
7. The Town should work with the State and Federal permitting agencies to provide consistency in regulating wetlands to the greatest extent practicable.[6]
8. Colchester should maintain its Water Protection Overlay District and adapt these regulations as needed to comply with all applicable State requirements.[7]
9. The Town should evaluate connectivity between significant natural resources that would foster wildlife habitat.
10. The Town will continue to work with State agencies to determine suitable alternatives for sandplain areas.
11. Efforts to sustain and enhance on-site interpretive resources and awareness of Open Space resources should be supported by the Town.
12. The Town of Colchester should continue to maintain and enhance its GIS system in part to better delineate and define geographic data as well as involve the public in management and stewardship of natural resources.[8]
13. Wildlife habitat mapping should be enhanced.
14. As development occurs on smaller and smaller lots, PUD minimum lot size and other requirements should be reviewed to ensure continued compliance with the intent of these regulations.
15. Large tracts of undeveloped land should be comprehensively planned for connectivity to adjacent parcels and natural areas. Well-thought-out conservation plans are encouraged as well as comprehensive plans of large tracts.
16. The Colchester Land Trust should assist the Town in open space conservation efforts and to work with these Boards and Departments to achieve Town open space goals.[9]
17. Management plans should be developed or sustained for the Town's various natural areas, parks, conserved land, and public parcels that include significant natural resources.
18. The Town encourages the development of management plans for privately held lands that contain significant natural resources as well as privately conserved land such as PUD open space lots.
19. The Town should develop a policy of prioritization for land acquisition and study preferred financing options.
20. The 2000 Open Space Plan should be referenced for specific, high-priority parcels for conservation and recommended conservation techniques.
21. Care should be taken to conserve important features and mitigate any long term adverse impacts of development to natural resource areas of significance listed within this Chapter.

[4] *Correlates to the Colchester Heritage Project's Community Strategic Plan 2012-2022, Environment and Agriculture Goal, strategy two.*
[5] *Correlates to the Colchester Heritage Project's Community Strategic Plan 2012-2022, Environment and Agriculture Goal, strategy two.*
[6] *Correlates to the Colchester Heritage Project's Community Strategic Plan 2012-2022, Environment and Agriculture Goal, strategy two.*
[7] *Correlates to the Colchester Heritage Project's Community Strategic Plan 2012-2022, Environment and Agriculture Goal, strategy two.*
[8] *Correlates to the Colchester Heritage Project's Community Strategic Plan 2012-2022, Environment and Agriculture Goal, strategy two.*
[9] *Correlates to the Colchester Heritage Project's Community Strategic Plan 2012-2022, Environment and Agriculture Goal, strategy one.*

5 PARKS & RECREATION

VISION: The Town of Colchester should continue to develop, encourage, and maintain its diverse offerings of recreational, cultural, educational and wellness opportunities for the community. The Town will continue to serve as a regional recreational center and care should be taken to foster tourism to make Colchester a premier destination as a recreation area.[1]

OVERVIEW

Colchester's various natural resources and open spaces provide for a variety of recreational opportunities. Many of Colchester's parks incorporate important natural features and serve as open spaces for public enjoyment. These recreational opportunities factor significantly into the quality of life of many Colchester residents. There are several entities that provide structured recreation opportunities in Colchester with the Colchester Parks and Recreation Department being first and foremost. Other organizations such as private health clubs, the International Sailing School, and various marinas provide specialized recreational opportunities. There are, however, many recreational opportunities in Colchester that do not require participation in a club or program. These opportunities include various water sports, hunting, fishing, hiking, snowmobiling, and bicycling.

COLCHESTER PARKS AND RECREATION

The Colchester Parks and Recreation Department provides programs in sports, fitness, arts and crafts, wellness, educational and cultural activities, and many other recreational activities for community members. These programs are designed for a range of people from youth to the elderly and include active involvement programs such as youth day camps to more passive programming such as horticultural skill workshops. In addition to year-round programming, the department plans and organizes various events including Winter Carnival, the Fourth of July Parade, and the Colchester Triathlon, with assistance from volunteer committees.

Sailing on Lake Champlain

The Department also provides oversight of all Town recreational facilities, staffs the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board that helps to provide policy and planning guidance, and runs the Colchester After School Program.

MANAGING TOWN FACILITIES

Management and maintenance of the Town's recreational facilities and natural areas often falls to this Department. While the Town has, in the past, accepted ownership or responsibility for small neighborhood parks such as private parks and mini-parks, these parks and small open spaces are generally best owned and maintained by the homeowners' associations they serve. To maintain the Town's current parks and natural areas, the Department often works with various local commissions, State entities, not-for-profits, and private organizations to develop, manage, and maintain the Town's parks and natural areas. Each park or natural area has had some form of management plan created, however, all of these areas would benefit from comprehensive management plans. The Recreation Department maintains a Capital Budget and Parks Plan to purchase and furnish new parks as well as to maintain the current park system. It should be noted that the Parks Plan is contingent upon voter approval every five years.

[1] *Correlates to the Colchester Heritage Project's Community Strategic Plan 2012-2022, Tourism and Recreation Goal and strategy one.*

PARK TYPES

The Town would greatly benefit from the establishment of guidelines for park and natural area acquisition. Parks and natural areas are acquired by the Town through Town initiatives, donation by not-for-profits, and through the development review process. The Town should continue its current policy to prioritize new acquisitions around the community's needs as previous policy to accept donated land resulted in town-owned parcels that have limited recreation potential. The following is a general list of types and sizes of parks and in what circumstances they are recommended.

1. **PRIVATE PARK:** Generally contained within a development and maintained by a homeowners' association for members of the association. These parks generally contain recreational amenities such as tot lots, basketball courts, swimming pools, etc.
2. **MINI-PARK:** Ranging from 2,500 square feet to one acre in size, these parks are generally used for passive recreation and include greens, flag lots, and dog parks. An example is the Town's flag lot at the corner of East Lakeshore Drive and Blakely Road.
3. **NEIGHBORHOOD PARK:** These parks range from five to ten acres in size and serve an adjacent area encompassing ¼ to 1-mile in distance. National standards recommend two acres of neighborhood park space for every 1,000 residents. These parks generally focus on passive recreation and are connected to adjacent neighborhoods through paths or trails. The Fort Ethan Allen Parade Grounds is a neighborhood park for both the residents of Colchester and Essex.
4. **COMMUNITY PARKS:** Between 20 and 50 acres in size, these parks serve a broader purpose than neighborhood parks providing for recreation fields, play structures, game courts, and parking lots as well as passive recreational uses. Bayside Park is a community park with the additional amenity of a public beach. Six and a half acres of community park space is recommended per 1,000 residents.
5. **REGIONAL PARKS:** While these parks serve Colchester residents they generally also serve the larger community of a defined region. An example is the Winooski Valley Park District that maintains several parks and natural areas in the Winooski River Valley for residents within that geographic region. Seven and a half acres of regional park space is recommended per 1,000 residents.
6. **NATURAL AREAS:** These are lands set aside for preservation of significant natural resources, open spaces, visual aesthetics, and buffering that may also include passive recreation such as walking paths or canoe launches. While there are no size requirements for natural areas, these areas must generally be of sufficient size to preserve the natural resources contained on site. The Colchester Bog maintained by the University of Vermont is such a natural area.

Colchester Causeway

PATHS

Not listed within park types, but of significant recreational value, are various types of paths. The Transportation Chapter of this Plan details multi-use paths, however, it is worth noting the significant recreational value of these paths herein. Multi-use paths provide space not only for alternative transportation but for jogging, rollerblading, cross-country skiing, walking, and recreational bicycling. Multi-use paths that do not follow a road corridor but travel cross-country, such as the Causeway Trail, are often tourist corridors and a way for residents to enjoy the outdoors in a way that is similar to visiting a Natural Area. Multi-use paths often connect parks and other destinations. The Colchester Causeway is a park and is also part of a multi-use trail system that connects Colchester to South Hero and Burlington. The Colchester Recreation Path connects the schools to the Village.

PUBLIC FACILITIES

While Town facilities are designed to meet community needs, other public facilities also provide significant resources to community members and attract many from outside the area to Colchester to enjoy its parks and natural areas. State boat launches, Niquette Bay State Park, the University of Vermont Bog, and the various areas of the Winooski Valley Park District are well-utilized by residents. Contained within the maps section is an inventory of all natural areas currently owned and maintained by the Town as well as those owned and operated by not-for-profits and the State of Vermont. Here is a listing of Town-owned facilities, totaling approximatley 241 acres:

1. **AIRPORT PARK:** Airport Park is a 64.5-acre park located on Colchester Point Road. Facilities include a 1.3 mile jogging/cross-country ski trail, parking, restrooms, picnic area, pavilion, playground, 4 ball fields, 2 soccer fields, 2 sand volleyball courts, 6 horseshoe pits, 2 tennis courts, 1 basketball court and lighted ice skating in the winter. More facilities may be installed here in the future although access to the rear of the park is hampered due to wet soil conditions.
2. **BAYSIDE PARK:** Bayside Park is located on both sides of Lakeshore Drive at the intersection with Malletts Bay Avenue. 22-acres including parking, restrooms, bathhouse, picnic area, pavilion, skateboard park, playground, swimming beach, Senior Center, 2 shuffleboard courts, 4 tennis courts, 1 basketball court, 2 sand volleyball courts, 1 small baseball field, 1 lighted softball field and 2 horseshoe pits.
3. **BONANZA PARK:** Bonanza Park is located on Bonanza Park Road off Heineberg Drive. .6 acre neighborhood park with a limited playground and all-purpose field.
4. **CAUSEWAY PARK & RECREATION PATH:** Causeway Park & Recreation Path is a 4 mile path that connects to the original Rutland Railroad bed and causeway across the lake (constructed during 1897-1900). Gravel path suitable for walking, biking and fishing access. Duck hunting allowed (in season). Parking is available at Airport Park or in the Mills Point Road lot. While a ferry is run for a portion of the summer to connect Colchester to South Hero, a more permanent solution such as a permanent ferry is being pursued.
5. **COLCHESTER RECREATIONAL PATH:** Colchester Recreational Path is a 3.3-mile handicap accessible paved path that starts at Bayside Park and ends at Creek Farm Road. This path was completed in 2001. This path connects the village of Colchester to the Malletts Bay area.

6. **HEINEBERG/BILLADO PARK:** Heineberg/Billado Park is a 4-acre park owned by the Town and State. It provides access to the Winooski River off Heineberg Drive. Improvements are planned to provide accessible fishing access, non-motorized boat ramp, picnic area, path, and additional parking.
7. **HERITAGE PARK:** Heritage Park is located off Main Street on Heritage Drive in the Village. 1-acre park with a limited playground, 1 tennis court, 1 basketball court and parking area.
8. **LAW ISLAND:** Law Island Natural Area is west of the Causeway off Colchester Point. The island is 8.5 acres in size, owned by the State of Vermont, and managed by the Town of Colchester. Camping is permitted and duck hunting is allowed (in season). There is no access by land.
9. **PORTER NATURAL AREA:** Porter Natural Area is a 56-acre parcel that has no master plan at this time.
10. **ROSSETTI NATURAL AREA:** Rossetti Natural Area is a 47 acre natural area between Lake Champlain and Lakeshore Drive/Holy Cross Road/Church Road intersection. A boardwalk/trail and 50 car parking lot serve the property.
11. **SUNNY HOLLOW NATURAL AREA:** Sunny Hollow Natural Area is located off Hercules Drive. This 80-acre diverse area has limited parking and three miles of mountain biking, walking and x-country trails.
12. **VALLEYFIELD PARK:** Valleyfield Park is a .65 acre park located off Malletts Bay Avenue. This neighborhood park has a limited playground and all-purpose field.

PLANNING FOR FUTURE FACILITIES

With 66 acres secured for a park in the Village area of Colchester we must now focus on the permitting and development of this park. Permitting has been completed for the first phase. The Parks and Recreation Department is optimistic that the irst phase, a path and parking area, will be completed by early 2014. The challenges of funding will require the construction of the village park in phases over a decade. Talks about creating and constructing a community center are still happening within the community and some preliminary work has been done with this with a core group of volunteers known as the Community Center Intiative.[2] There has been little movement with this as the Town Office and Police Department buildings have been the focus of the Select board. It is expected that within the next year discussions will renew with

Snowshoeing at Winter Carnival

regard to constructing a Community Center forward. To date, these discussions have included discussion of the Town-owned parcel purchased in the 2000s between East Lakeshore Drive and Blakely Road known as the Hazelett Property. Connectivity between this parcel and Bayside Park along the lakeshore should be considered a priority if the opportunity presents itself. As the community looks for revenue generators, Lower Bayside Park would be a great opportunity to develop a community marina with a boathouse. The lake is a significant resource to the community that has yet to be fully utilized by the town. Future recreation plans could also incorporate water resources such as a boat house or transient dock slips or moorings. With these possible projects and the need to prioritize park infrastructure as stated before, the Town should undertake a comprehensive capital planning process for future parks and recreation needs as well as maintaining current resources.

NON-STRUCTURED RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

The physical location of Colchester lends itself to many unstructured recreational opportunities. From hiking to swimming, the natural features of the Town provide a variety of recreational possibilities that do not necessarily require participation in a program or even venturing outside of your neighborhood. Witwh 27 miles of shoreline, Lake Champlain perhaps has the most profound impact on the community offering recreational opportunities from boating, fishing, swimming, birding, ice skating and other winter sports. It is important to recognize these unstructured recreational opportunities as positively and significantly contributing to the character of the community.

SNOWMOBILING

On land there is competition for non-structured recreational opportunities such as snowmobiling, hunting, mountain biking, and four-wheeling. These uses are often in conflict with most types of development. Snowmobile clubs often seek out permission from property owners for corridors for passage to destinations. These corridors are not secured through permanent easements and may change year to year. Where snowmobile trails are present or anticipated, the Town should work with local snowmobile clubs to minimize conflicts between anticipated development and these recreational opportunities. Four-wheeling is a relatively new form of recreation that often mimics snowmobiling in its need for corridors yet lacks formal clubs to secure trails. Like mountain biking, four-wheeling often carves trails on private property in rural areas with little formality or oversight. As four-wheeling and mountain biking increase in Colchester, the Town may need to address these uses

[2] *Correlates to the Colchester Heritage Project's Community Strategic Plan 2012-2022, Tourism and Recreation Goal, recommended actions two and three.*

and work with proponents to plan for these recreational uses in a more structured manner that provides sufficient opportunities but that minimizes property damage and other conflicts.

HUNTING & FISHING

Hunting and fishing are important local traditions that have historically had a significant contribution to the development of Colchester and care should be taken not to preclude these traditions from the town's future plans. These traditions have historically relied upon the right to use private lands for these activities. It is the right of individual property owners to post land limiting use for hunting and other non-structured recreation. Most park lands and natural areas prohibit hunting to prevent conflicts with hiking and other recreational uses. This has led to diminished areas available for hunters. To the extent possible, large landowners should be encouraged not to post property and developments. Rural and outlying areas should be designed so as to be sensitive to these types of recreation.

MANY USES OF MALLETTS BAY

Non-structured recreation such as boating and camping not only contribute to the community's quality of life but to its economy. There are three State Boat Launches in Colchester with two on the Winooski River and one in the heart of Malletts Bay. Each year thousands of boaters visit Colchester, purchase boating supplies and vitals, and use services such as boat mooring, storage, and repair. Each winter the Bay becomes a center for ice fishing, snowmobiling, and skating. Many people do not directly participate in any of these recreational opportunities yet simply visit Colchester for the atmosphere as beach-goers. Fostering these opportunities and environment are public access points to the Lake. Water-based tourism should be emphasized and plans developed to expand water-based opportunities such as a public boathouse.[3] As Colchester continues to grow, care should be taken to preserve and enhance public access to the Lake. It is worthwhile to note that historically Colchester was home to a substantial summer seasonal community with many summer vacation homes, camps, lining the shoreline. Over the past decades a substantial number of these camps have been converted to year-round residences, reducing the effect of summer campers on the community.

MALLETTS BAY: COMPETITION FOR WATER SPACE

With the Town's increasing population and the increasing number of recreational uses competing within relatively small areas, non-structured recreational opportunities often compete for space with each other as well as development and non-recreational uses. The Bay has many competing recreational uses just among boaters. Paddlers, motorboat operators, and sailors compete for open water within a congested area dotted with docks and moorings. The Town of Colchester operates a special police patrol of the Bay during the summer months to supplement state-wide organizations such as the Vermont State Police Marine Patrol and the U.S. Coast Guard operation out of Burlington. The waters of the Lake are often regulated by State and Federal entities with little authority left to municipalities. As competition for the Bay increases, the Town may need to closely examine local regulation of moorings and other issues. Currently it is possible for moorings to be placed throughout the Bay with no oversight as to location or number. This is an issue of concern for many boaters as well as responsible lake-front property owners and commercial marinas. The importance of the Lake to the community and its economy should be continually recognized and action taken where necessary to keep this resource available and attractive for future generations.

PRIVATE INDUSTRY & WELLNESS PROGRAMS

Within Colchester there are a variety of opportunities for structured recreation that are provided by private industry for the general population. These opportunities range from gyms and fitness clubs to studios and schools. Gyms and fitness clubs provide fitness training and equipment for members. Currently there is one gym and two fitness studios in Colchester. No clubs or gyms provide pools, racquetball, climbing walls or similar expanded services. There is also a martial arts studio, two dance studios, and a sailing school within the community. These schools, while serving the community, often draw from a larger regional community. The sailing school hosts meets that often include teams from outside Colchester and Chittenden County. These types of recreational opportunities, while important for community members, can also draw tourism.

[3] *Correlates to the Colchester Heritage Project's Community Strategic Plan 2012-2022, Tourism and Recreation Goal, strategy two.*

MARINAS

Examples of private recreational industry that also significantly impact tourism are the various marinas in Malletts Bay. These marinas range from private residential marinas and private clubs, such as the Malletts Bay Boat Club, to larger commercial marinas such as The Moorings. Colchester provides the majority of moorings and boat slips for Northwestern Vermont. While most of these moorings and slips are reserved, there are fifteen transient spaces available for the passing boater to stop and visit Colchester. Demand for these transient spaces is strong with over 130 boats making use of these few spaces each season with the majority of users coming from Quebec and staying almost three days on average.

CULTURAL & SPORTING FACILITIES

Other private recreational opportunities can be found at Saint Michael's College and the University of Vermont. These institutions provide private venues for sporting and cultural events within Colchester and the greater community. Two major venues that are located on the St. Michael's campus are the St. Michael's Playhouse and the Ross Sports Center. The Vermont Youth Orchestra Association at the Elley-Long Music Center at Fort Ethan Allen has a significant private venue for cultural events. While not private, Colchester Schools also offer venues for sports and cultural events that are generally accessible for a fee. These school venues are centered around the High School on Blakely Road.

HEALTH & FITNESS

All of these recreation opportunities contribute to Colchester being a healthy community. Within the planning and recreation fields, there is increasing emphasis on creating opportunities for personal wellness within community planning and design to counteract national obesity trends. These opportunities for personal wellness are often generated though recreational opportunities. An example is the Federal Highway campaign for Safe Routes to School that encourage children to develop healthy habits by walking to school. While the Colchester Department of Parks and Recreation provides several types of wellness programs, there are also a variety of private wellness programs, activities, and services. Private wellness services include the Colchester Health Center, Fanny Allen Hospital campus, and a variety of other medical offices, physical therapy services, and mental health organizations. Private wellness programs range from programs offered by employers that may include gym memberships and health insurance to private support groups. Also contributing to the health of the community are services such as Colchester Rescue and medical research being conducted by the University of Vermont in the Exit 16 vicinity. The Town should continue to support the range of wellness services and activities that serve the community as these organizations, programs, and services combine to make Colchester a healthier community.

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

Colchester is home to a variety of community organizations that directly or indirectly contribute to the Town's recreational and cultural amenities. Burnham Library and the Colchester Historical Society sponsor educational events open to the public including speakers and workshops. The Colchester Community Garden at Macrae Farm, which is owned by the Winooski Valley Park District, was started in 2009. It provides participants with opportunities for wellness, recreation, community cohesiveness and access to healthy, fresh food on 30,000 square feet. Other organizations include the Colchester Lions Club, the Colchester Rotary, the Colchester American Legion, and the Colchester Community Chorus. To some extent, Colchester's religious organizations also provide recreational and cultural events and activities for the community. Participation in these various organizations can be recreational as well as attending the events of these organizations. These community organizations compliment the range of recreational offerings within the community and often contribute to the Town's diverse culture and community spirit.

POLICIES

1. The Town should undertake a comprehensive capital planning process for future parks and recreation needs including the need for a Community Center.[4]
2. As part of the capital planning process the Town should continue

to plan and secure appropriate levels of funding that reflect the current costs of services, maintenance of existing facilities, and planned projects. The recreation impact fee should continue to be an appropriate part of this process.

3. Multi-use paths and trails have significant recreational value and should be encouraged as both transportation and recreational amenities. These amenities should be interconnected whenever feasible.[5]
4. Non-Town owned public facilities provide significant resources to community members and should be encouraged.
5. Unstructured recreational opportunities contribute positively and significantly to the character of the community and care should be taken to preserve these opportunities.
6. The importance of the Lake to the community and its economy should be continually recognized and action taken where necessary to keep this resource available and attractive for future generations. Water-based tourism should be emphasized, plans developed, and funding identified to expand water-based opportunities such as a community boathouse.
7. Where snowmobile trails are present or anticipated, the Town should work with local snowmobile clubs to minimize conflicts between anticipated development and these recreational opportunities.
8. As it is deemed necessary, the Town should plan for four-wheeling and mountain biking uses in a manner that provides sufficient opportunities but that minimizes property damage and other conflicts.
9. Hunting and fishing are important local traditions. To preserve these traditions, large landowners should be encouraged not to post property and developments within rural and outlying areas should be designed so as to be sensitive to these types of recreation.
10. Private recreational industries, such as marinas, should be recognized as creating important recreational opportunities for the community and also significantly impacting tourism.
11. Private sporting and cultural venues that positively contribute to community recreational opportunities should be encouraged.
12. The Town should continue to support the range of wellness services and activities that serve the community as these organizations, programs, and services combine to make Colchester a healthier community.
13. Community organizations should continue to be encouraged as these organizations compliment the range of recreational offerings within the community and often contribute to the Town's diverse culture and community spirit.
14. As Colchester continues to grow, care should be taken to preserve and enhance public access to the Lake especially within the area connecting Bayside Park to the Town-owned parcel on East Lakeshore Drive.
15. As the Town looks to establish itself as a premier destination for recreation, efforts should be made to increase the visibility and publicity of the area.[6]

[4]*Correlates to the Colchester Heritage Project's Community Strategic Plan 2012-2022, Tourism and Recreation Goal, recommended actions two and four.*
[5]*Correlates to the Colchester Heritage Project's Community Strategic Plan 2012-2022, Tourism and Recreation Goal, recommended action two.*
[6]*Correlates to the Colchester Heritage Project's Community Strategic Plan 2012-2022, Tourism and Recreation Goal and strategy one.*

6 ECONOMY

VISION: The Town of Colchester will plan its economic growth and manage its resources to further strengthen its diverse local economy. The Town will make strategic decisions and investments in its community's physical and social infrastructure that enables Colchester to compete globally and enhance its economic base through education, partnerships, innovation and concerted action. Guiding our efforts is the value we place on our children and our residents of all ages by offering them the highest quality economic, educational, recreational, housing, and social opportunities consistent with the long term financial viability of our community. The Town will foster an approach to local economic development in our commercial areas that supports our current and future economic drivers, provides the necessary physical and social infrastructure, and leverages our assets and resources.

BACKGROUND: An Economic Development Action Plan has been a priority for the Town since the creation of the Colchester Community and Economic Development Office. The Evergreen Efficiency Study, completed in 2009 for the Town, noted the lack of economic vision for Colchester's future and has been cited many times as a hindrance to effect change in Colchester's commercial growth and sustainability. The Economic Development Action Plan accepted by the Town of Colchester Select Board in 2013 provides a comprehensive overview of the local economy, a current and projected future local industry sector analysis, recommends policy direction for economic growth, and provides performance measures and benchmarks to help measure progress, as well as identifies strategies, programs and projects based on the evaluation of key economic indicators to improve the economy over the next ten years. The plan also incorporates the recommendations related to economic development in the Colchester Heritage Project-Community Strategic Plan 2012-2022.

PURPOSE OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACTION PLAN:

1. Provides policy direction for the Town's Select Board; functions as the economic development element of the Colchester Town Plan 2014; provides a background document for use during Act 250 hearings; and provides the strategy and tactics for growing the Town's economic base and demonstrates its positive business climate.
2. Identifies obstacles and challenges impacting the Town's economic development potential and crafts responses to increase competitiveness.
3. Identifies trends, issues, and conditions that will shape Colchester's economic development future and identifies the strongest business development sectors, clusters or operational types with an emphasis on value-added businesses.
4. Focuses on improving the quality of our assets and how to leverage those assets including Lake Champlain, access to I-89, proximity to Burlington and Montreal, vacant land, exceptional recreational opportunities, a diversified economy, and our educational and biotechnology research institutions.

The 2013 Economic Development Action Plan is herein included as Appendix A of the 2014 Colchester Town Plan. Due to the lengthy

Colchester Business Park

process for the 2013 Economic Development Action Plan there were several changes to the community including the arrival of the Albany College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences that are not reflected in the plan. It should be noted that the 2013 Economic Plan includes references to the Community Economic Development Director which is now the Economic Development Director, and also references CEDAC which is a community group no longer in existence. The proposed timelines in the 2013 Economic Plan are likely skewed due, in part, to these changes.

7 EDUCATION

VISION: Education will continue to significantly influence the community through its contribution to the economy, the shaping of students, and its impact on the quality of life within the community. Growth and expansion of higher educational institutions should be encouraged and opportunities for education for community members at all stages of life should be prioritized.[1] Care should be taken to preserve and enhance public school educational opportunities within the community as funding becomes scarce. To this end, municipal and town school resources should be combined wherever legally possible.[2] The Town shall continue to work together with its educational institutions to create an atmosphere that encourages expansion in the educational and business sectors.

OVERVIEW

Colchester is significantly influenced by its educational institutions. The Colchester School District oversees elementary and secondary education for the community within its five school facilities with a total capacity of 2,600 students. Saint Michael's College is a small, private, Catholic, residential liberal arts college located within the Fort Ethan Allen neighborhood that has an estimated student population of 1,900 full time undergraduate students and 500 graduate students. The University of Vermont is also of significant influence in Colchester with married student housing facilities at Fort Ethan Allen and research facilities at Exit 16. Colchester is both impacted by the numerous students of these institutions as well as the economy these institutions create as major employers.

COLCHESTER SCHOOL DISTRICT

The Colchester School District is an independent governmental body, politically distinct from the Town of Colchester. The District is governed by an elected School Board. There are five school facilities in Colchester: Union Memorial (Gr.K-2), Porters Point (Gr.K-2), Malletts Bay (Gr.3-5), Colchester Middle School (Gr.6-8), and Colchester High School (Gr.9-12). The District has 445 employees and is one of the largest employers in Colchester.

SCHOOL ENROLLMENT

School	Capacity	Actual 1997-98	Actual 2002-03	Actual 2006-07	Actual 2011-12	Current 2013-14
Union Memorial	320	343	247	247	218	247
Porters Point	304	284	274	254	245	262
EEE	24	22	N/A	33	44	65
Malletts Bay	650	532	591	495	436	461
Total Elementary	**1298**	**1181**	**1112**	**1029**	**943**	**1,035**
Middle School	572	585	599	562	514	448
High School	761	742	798	795	723	716
Total Secondary	**1333**	**1327**	**1397**	**1357**	**1237**	**1164**
Total School System	**2631**	**2508**	**2509**	**2386**	**2180**	**2199**

Source: Colchester School District 2013

HISTORY OF COLCHESTER SCHOOL DISTRICT

Prior to the establishment of the School District's current facilities, Colchester tuitioned its high school students to adjoining school municipalities. Historically, Colchester and Winooski's educational systems were linked until the Colchester High School was completed in 1975. While these communities often shared schools, Colchester had a variety of independent school districts within its bounds that were consolidated when the Colchester School District was formed in 1972. While Colchester now has three elementary schools, there were once fourteen neighborhood schools scattered throughout Colchester. School standards implemented in the early 1900s forced the consolidation of these schools into more modern facilities. The Colchester Historical Society has recently undertaken the preservation and renovation of one of Colchester's earliest schools that has

[1] *Correlates to the Colchester Heritage Project's Community Strategic Plan 2012-2022, Education Goal, strategy two.*
[2] *Correlates to the Colchester Heritage Project's Community Strategic Plan 2012-2022, Education Goal, strategy one.*

been moved to Airport Park. The Log School House was constructed in 1815 to serve Colchester's South Beach #14 District and was originally located on West Lakeshore Drive. The Log School House will continue to serve as an educational facility for the interpretation of Colchester's educational and historical past.

ALBANY COLLEGE OF PHARMACY AND HEALTH SCIENCES

In 2009, Albany College opened a satellite campus on Water Tower Hill at Exit 16. Founded in the 1880's in the New York State capital region, the College provides both undergraduate and graduate degrees in pharmacy, pharmaceutical sciences and the health sciences as well as is engaged in research in drug discovery, disease state management and health outcomes. The Vermont Campus of Albany College began with a Doctorate of Pharmacy (Pharm D.) degree: the first such program in Vermont. Enrollment has climbed to 210 students and may expand to nearly 300 in the 2012-2013 academic year. Recently, the College has begun to offer a Master's Degree in Pharmaceutical Sciences at the Vermont Campus. The Campus will help fill a larger regional need for pharmacists as well as foster synergy with other biotech opportunities within the Exit 16 area such as UVM's research complex. While the College does not provide dormitory housing, the College has established a relationship with Severance Village to place many of its students in rental units within the growth center. The College will continue to

enrich Colchester with its students and staff. Additional investment and growth in the Albany College's local campus is expected and encouraged.

SAINT MICHAEL'S COLLEGE

Saint Michael's College was founded by Edmundite priests in 1904 as an Institute. It has grown from just over thirty students to approximately 2000 within the span of its first 100 years. It employs over 400 full time employees including 150 faculty and occupies over 440 acres within Colchester. Traditionally the school was male with women being admitted as students only in 1970. Now the school's student population is 54% female and enrollment has stabilized. The mission of Saint Michael's College is to contribute through higher education to the enhancement of the human person and to the advancement of human culture in the light of the Catholic faith. This mission has made the College a strong member of the community with many students and faculty volunteering to serve within the community of Colchester in various capacities from rescue squads to hosting forums in conjunction with the Vermont Council on World Affairs.

UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT

The University of Vermont has a presence in Colchester at Fort Ethan Allen and at Exit 16. The University's married student housing occupies an area adjacent to St. Michael's College although far detached from the University's own main campus. Recently the University's housing at the Fort was renovated. There are no plans at this time to significantly alter or change the University's presence at the Fort. The University also owns several historic properties at the Fort, albeit on the Essex side, that have yet to be redeveloped. The families of the University will continue to play an important role in the atmosphere and culture of the Fort. The University's research facilities at Exit 16 are a relatively new development with the University recently purchasing property it had leased with an eye toward expansion. This new development has the potential of positively influencing industry within Colchester.

FUNDING OUR SCHOOLS

The nationwide demographic shift occurring over the next decade will lead to fewer students among all levels of the educational system and perhaps competition for students at least at the post-secondary level. The educational sector is dependent upon its students as revenue generating clients. State-wide school funding is generated by the local school property tax. Act 68 structures state-wide public school funding based in part upon how many students a school has in an attempt to provide educational equity. As student population goes down so does a community's public school funding. A school's operational cost is partially dependent upon the cost of utilities, supplies, personnel, and benefits and does not generally decrease proportionally as the student population decreases. Utilities and benefits have seen steady increases in recent years. This leaves many public schools in the difficult situation of having to increase local taxes to make up the difference between their operational costs and state funding or reduce educational services. Act 68 requires towns to keep current assessments and collect taxes based upon the value of a person's property. In Colchester this results in high school taxes as house values are relatively high comparatively state-wide. Colchester, under Act 68, will continue to see high school taxes with less return of these funds to the community. This is a trend that many do not see as sustainable and various state-wide solutions have been proposed, such as shifting the property tax burden to the income tax, as the value of a person's property is not always indicative of the individual's ability to pay. It is recommended that municipal and school resources be combined wherever legally possible to help minimize costs.[3] To this end, it is recommended that management and leaders from the town and the schools meet with the community and members from the recent Heritage Project and Colchester School District Vision Summit to integrate plans and ensure community consistency in action.[4] Community resources for the town and schools should be assessed and surveyed for the purpose of determining assets that may be leveraged to further create educational opportunities for student and adults.[5] Existing statutes should be examined to determine what changes to current policy and practice would be needed in order to maximize the impact of the town and school resources.[6] More local solutions include the implementation of local sales taxes such as in Williston. It is feared without a State solution to school funding that increasing school taxes will drive out the families from Colchester that are needed to sustain enrollment numbers.

[3] *Correlates to the Colchester Heritage Project's Community Strategic Plan 2012-2022, Education Goal, recommended action one.*
[4] *Correlates to the Colchester Heritage Project's Community Strategic Plan 2012-2022, Education Goal, recommended actions three and five.*
[5] *Correlates to the Colchester Heritage Project's Community Strategic Plan 2012-2022, Education Goal, recommended action four.*
[6] *Correlates to the Colchester Heritage Project's Community Strategic Plan 2012-2022, Education Goal, recommended action six.*

The average cost per student for all Colchester Schools in 2011-2012 was $16,35711,625. Colchester was ranked 190th in the state out of 284 school districts for per pupil equalized educational spending. While the previous 2007 plan noted that only 80% of the children born into the community graduate from Colchester High School due to a net loss of twenty children a year, this trend has recently changed with 160 births in 2012 and 161 students currently enrolled in their senior year. It should be noted though that school choice, by which students from Colchester may attend other area high schools and students from other area schools may instead choose Colchester, has perhaps made it harder to fully evaluate student retention.

SCHOOL FUNDING SOLUTIONS & THE FUTURE OF OUR SCHOOLS

Short-term solutions to school funding include attracting tuition students from other communities to bolster enrollment numbers. While some have advocated for trying to encourage more single-family homes to increase the number of children in the community, both single and multi-family forms of housing are needed as multi-family dwellings such as townhouses have become starter-homes for many families. Mid-term solutions to school funding include forming a school facilities committee to evaluate the efficiency of the current school infrastructure and how the infrastructure can be economically adapted for future needs. Long-term solutions include attracting former students back to the community to raise their families with the necessary quality jobs and affordable housing. In 2011 the Colchester School District developed a five year strategic plan and held a Vision Summit to help navigate the district's future and leverage all the strengths and resources of the community. This plan, the Colchester School District Vision/Strategic Plan 2012-2017, will provide the goals for the school district and the community with regard to K-12 education during the term of this plan.

HIGHER EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

The cultivation of Colchester's higher educational institutions and their resources is important. These institutions provide the area with a trained and educated workforce that enables the creation and attraction of business to Colchester. In recent years a regional technical academy was proposed; however, the regional vote on the academy failed and no further action has been taken although the need for technical training still exists. The expansion of the University of Vermont's research facilities in Colchester will present the Town with the opportunity to supply technical workers for this endeavor as well as take advantage of technology spin-offs and attract business with similar pursuits and interests. To this end, Colchester must create an attractive atmosphere for these businesses and their employees. Lifelong learning in the community should be an educational priority.[7]

Saint Michael's College is pursuing opportunities to enhance the Fort Ethan Allen area for its students and faculty. The College has partnered with not-for-profits to renovate some of the College's properties at the Fort into cultural opportunities such as the Vermont Youth Symphony Orchestra. The College continues to be involved in the culture of the Fort and encouraging an environment within Colchester that promotes academic and cultural growth. The College is also concerned with affordable housing opportunities for its faculty within Colchester that will enable the College to continue to increase its roots within the community. To this end, Saint Michael's College is indicative of the struggle private industry faces.

POLICIES

1. As part of any Town effort to quantify costs and benefits of residential development, costs associated with school capital projects, which are attributable to a development, should be paid by the permittee. The Town and School District should work together to monitor and maintain capital plans, budgets, and impact fees to ensure that this occurs.
2. The Town should seek opportunities for mutually beneficial sharing of services, facilities and personnel with the School District. It is recommended that municipal and school resources be combined wherever legally possible to help minimize costs.[8]
3. Lifelong learning in the community should be an educational priority.[9]
4. The School Board should continue to examine all alternatives such as consolidated supervisory unions or regional negotiations to keep per student costs as low as possible while still providing a quality education.
5. The Town supports the development of a regional technical center that will provide a skilled workforce for Town businesses and future businesses.
6. The Town will continue to work with Saint Michael's College and the University of Vermont to encourage the continued investment of these institutions within the community.
7. This Colchester School District Vision/Strategic Plan 2012-2017 will provide the goals for the school district and the community with regard to K-12 education during the term of this plan.

[7] *Correlates to the Colchester Heritage Project's Community Strategic Plan 2012-2022, Education Goal, recommended action two.*
[8] *Correlates to the Colchester Heritage Project's Community Strategic Plan 2012-2022, Education Goal, strategy one.*
[9] *Correlates to the Colchester Heritage Project's Community Strategic Plan 2012-2022, Education Goal, strategy two.*

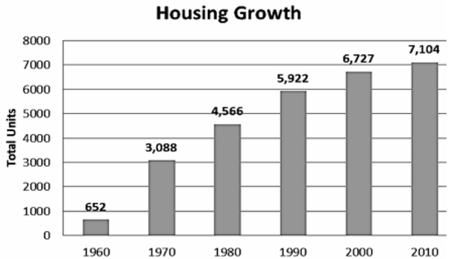
8 HOUSING

VISION: Colchester should continue to provide a wide variety of housing options.[1] A sustainable rate of residential growth of approximately 40 new dwelling units a year should be maintained to meet local housing needs as well as to accommodate regional housing needs. It should be recognized that 40 units is an annual average and over the term of this plan there may be years where the number of units annually is exceeded or not met. Housing growth should occur in conformance with the Town's land use plan. As the community grows, care should be taken to maintain residential affordability and housing quality. Senior housing and starter homes should be a priority housing need for the community over the term of this plan.

OVERVIEW

Colchester is fortunate to have a diverse housing stock that offers a variety of both rental and homeownership opportunities. As of the 2010 U.S. Census, Colchester's housing stock reportedly numbered 7,104 units—an increase of 377 units (5.6%) over the previous ten years. Of the total units reported, 27% were rental units. The Town accounted for 5.5% of the County's total housing growth during this period, and 10.8% of its total housing stock. Town tax records indicate that the number of local housing units is actually higher—7,533 units were identified in the Town's 2011 reappraisal—including 737 mobile homes and approximately 1,800 rental units.

The majority of Colchester's homes were constructed during Colchester's population boom in the 1960s and 1970s, at a time when an average of nearly 200 new dwelling units were being built each year. The rate of housing growth has since slowed significantly —especially since 2000. Over the past decade, Colchester's housing growth stabilized, adding, on average, 38 new dwelling units annually.



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

HOUSING TRENDS

While the number of dwelling units constructed each year has tapered off, the size of dwelling units has increased. Approximately 67% of Colchester's dwelling units are single-family homes. The single-family homes constructed during the 60's and 70's ranged from 1,000 to 2,000 square feet, while current construction now ranges from 2,500 to 3,000 square feet. The number of mobile homes on the Town's grand list has remained fairly constant since 2000. There were 751 mobile homes included on the 2010 grand list. More than 600 of these units are located in the Town's five mobile home parks and represent affordable housing for many Colchester residents. Conversion of seasonal residences also leveled out during the preceding decade. Traditional summer "camps" and other vacation or second homes continued to make up around 7% of the Town's housing stock. According to available census data, in 2010 Colchester had 30% of the County's seasonal residences and 28% or more of the County's mobile homes.

Historically, Colchester's housing stock was scattered throughout the Town, located near waterways, tillable fields and along major roads. During the housing boom of the 1960s and 1970s large housing developments were built in the Bay and by Colchester Village, close to major roads, potable water supplies and services. Development also occurred in areas with potable water and percable soils. The Town's zoning during this time period was fairly basic and frequently revised based upon development pressures. Mobile home parks, apartment complexes, and a range of single-family homes were built during Colchester's housing boom. Development during the 1980s and 1990s focused on increasingly larger single-family homes, duplexes, and townhouse developments. During the past decade more multi- than single-family units were constructed in Town, reflecting a shift in the regional housing market – especially in areas served by municipal water and sewer. The size of single family homes also stabilized.

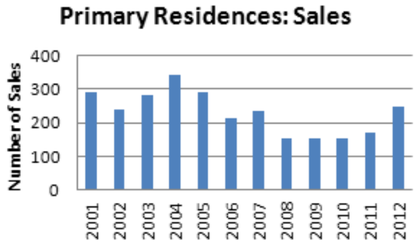
CONDITION OF HOUSING STOCK

Colchester's housing stock is generally in good condition based upon traditional measures including age, occupancy, and whether homes lack full kitchen or plumbing facilities. According to 2010 ACS estimates, as reported by the U.S. Census Bureau, all Colchester housing units have indoor plumbing and kitchen facilities, and less than 1% would be considered overcrowded (having more than one occupant per room). The estimated median year of house construction was 1979 that suggests half of local housing predates the 1978 ban on the use of lead paint, and may therefore be subject to new EPA remodeling and construction requirements. This also means that much of Colchester's housing stock is relatively new with approximately 17% constructed between 1990 and 2000, and another 10% was constructed between 2000 and 2010.

The Town's building code and inspection process also contribute to the good condition of local housing. First adopted in 1960, Colchester's building code has ensured that the majority of the Town's housing stock meets construction standards. Colchester's on-site septic regulations, first adopted in 1967, also have ensured the quality of residential infrastructure. The Town has also taken over the State's Wastewater Program and inspects for local as well as State septic permits. In recent years, the implementation of a Town managed revolving loan fund for septic systems has provided residents with low-interest loans to upgrade systems. These programs will continue to ensure the quality of Colchester's homes as safe and decent places to live.

HOME VALUES

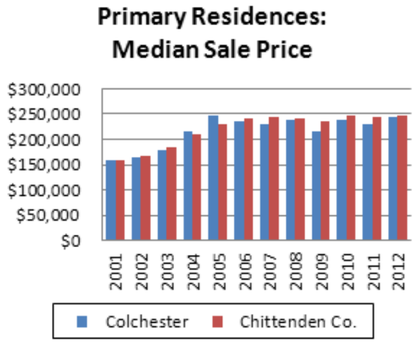
Home values are quantified and tracked through U.S. Census Bureau estimates, sale prices reported for property transfers, and local assessment data. House sales and sale prices perhaps most accurately reflect current market conditions. Local home sales over the past decade have continued to track regional market trends, and reflect both the national 2008 mortgage crisis and subsequent recession that have made it difficult to obtain financing, especially for first-time homebuyers.



Source: Town of Colchester 2012 Assessor's Data

Local sale prices also closely track the regional market. During the first half of the last decade, significant gains were made in home prices, which generally leveled out after peaking around 2005. Despite this volatility, Colchester still saw a 54% increase in the price of primary residences (22% when adjusted for inflation) including a 48% increase in the price of single family homes, and a 61% increase in the price of condos. This suggests that, except for fewer home sales, local and regional housing markets have not been as affected by the recent economic downturn as many other parts of the country.

1 Correlates to the Colchester Heritage Project's Community Strategic Plan 2012-2022, Infrastructure Goal, objective five.



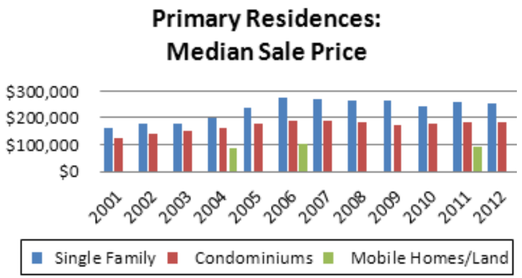
Source: 2012 Colchester Assessor's Office

Nevertheless, there has been a shift in the market, from single family homes to condo units that are typically more affordable for first-time homebuyers, and more attractive for a growing number of empty nesters. Changing demographics, the recession and the recent drop in single family and condo sales, have also made rental housing, especially apartment rentals, more attractive to local developers.

HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

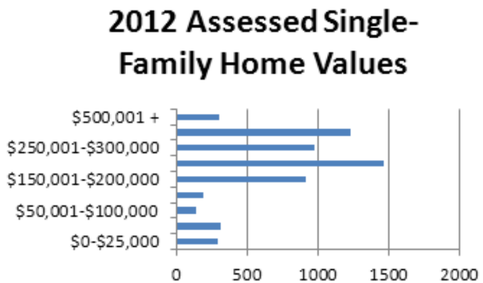
Given the variety of Colchester's housing stock, a significant portion remains affordable for most households. The traditional definition of "affordable" housing is housing for which a household spends no more than 30% of its income on housing-related expenses including mortgage or rent as well as insurance, taxes, and association fees. Under this definition, 2010 American Community Survey estimates for Colchester suggest that housing is currently unaffordable for 34% of local homeowners with mortgages, 23% of homeowners without mortgages, and 56% of renters. New definitions of housing affordability also incorporate estimated commuting costs. Housing under this definition is unaffordable if a household spends more than 45% of its income on housing and commuting expenses. Under this definition, housing is not affordable for more than 50% of Chittenden County households – including Colchester households (H+T Affordability Index, http://htaindex.cnt.org/map/).

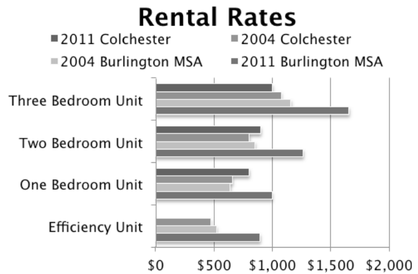
The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) estimated that, in 2011, the median income for a family of four in the Burlington-South Burlington Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), including Colchester, was $77,500. At that income level, a homebuyer could afford to purchase a house valued up to $272,000 (assuming a 5% down payment and 4.45% interest rate). Based on assessed (listed) values, 65% of the Town's existing housing stock, and the majority of primary residences for sale in recent years (including condos and mobile homes) would be considered affordable at this income level although the majority of single family homes sold after 2005 would not.



Source: Vermont Housing Data web site (http://www.housingdata.org/)

Housing affordability, for purposes of planning, land use regulation and many affordable housing programs, is defined more specifically to apply to lower income households as housing that is affordable to households earning 80% of the median income for the Burlington-South Burlington MSA or, in 2013, $62,000. At this income level, a homebuyer could buy a housing unit valued up to $216,500. This is enough to afford more than half of the condo units sold in recent years, but not enough to afford most single family homes on the market. In 2012, only 32% of listed single family homes were valued at less than $200,000. This number of single family homes less than $200,000 is down from 69% in 2003. This suggests that local housing, at least for homebuyers, is becoming less affordable.





Source: Town of Colchester 2012 Assessor's Data

Source: Town of Colchester 2003 & 2011 Reappraisal and 2004 & 2011 HUD estimated Fair Market Rents
Note: Colchester 2003 rates were adjusted upward 20% from 2002 reappraisal data

Local rental rates, however, are generally lower than those reported by HUD for the MSA each year. In 2011 HUD's estimated rent for a 2-bedroom apartment within the MSA was $1,197 as compared to an average of $900 for a 2-bedroom unit in Colchester, as determined during reappraisal.

Influencing local rental rates are 356 affordable apartment and townhouse rental units – including 42 units recently constructed in at Brookside Village in 2009. The Champlain Housing Trust operates a signficant portion of these rentals including Brookside and 166 units at Winchester Place on Route 15. Colchester's affordable rental housing (excluding mobile homes) represents 9% of the County total. Windemere Estates, one of Colchester's five mobile home parks, is also owned and operated by an affiliate of the Vermont State Housing Authority. The Champlain Housing Trust currently has 18 homes in Colchester, each owned under a shared equity arrangement designed to maintain its affordability over time.

It should be noted that housing typically becomes much less affordable for smaller households including households with only one wage earner, seniors on fixed incomes, and those entering the housing market for the first time. As household sizes continue to decline, the affordability of local housing will decline as well. A cruel twist is that decreases in household size increase the number of households thereby creating more demand for housing, and especially affordable housing.

Smaller households, more households, and increases in population have contributed to relatively low vacancy rates in both owned and rental units – according U.S. Census figures, in 2010 the homeowner vacancy rate was 2.1% and the local rental vacancy rate was 6.4% (potentially affected by the construction of Brookside Village that year). A healthy housing market for buyers, sellers and renters has a vacancy rate of three to five percent.

Due to these factors, there is a regional and local need for more affordable housing including workforce housing for both low and moderate income households. Moderately affordable units are those units affordable for households making up to 120% of the median family household income.

HOUSING GROWTH: CURRENT AND FUTURE TRENDS

Both population and housing growth have stabilized in recent years, following regional and statewide trends. These trends will likely continue over the next decade, especially as Colchester makes efforts to grow its commercial base and places less emphasis on residential development. While new residential construction has slowed, the new housing supply (including units in the permitting process, or which have been permitted and are not yet constructed) is expected to be sufficient to meet the anticipated housing demand. According to housing projections prepared for the Town by the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission, the local housing stock will likely increase to around 7,500 units by 2020, an addition of 40 units per year, based on the Town's past and current housing growth rates. This is consistent with other available housing projections, including projections included in the Town's 2012 housing update, which project a total of 7,200 to 7,600 units by 2020.

REGIONAL NEEDS

The Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission is in the process of updating its regional plan, and has not yet produced new housing targets for the Town as necessary to address its "fair share" of regional and affordable housing needs. In the absence of this information, the Town contacted Commission staff to help prepare housing projections specific to Colchester, as noted above.

A 2012 "Chittenden County Housing Needs Assessment" was prepared for the Regional Commission by the Vermont Housing Finance Agency as part of the Commission's ECOS Project. This report identifies the need for an additional 2,000 housing units (50% rental units) in the County between 2010 (base year) and 2015 or an additional 200 units per year. The report also noted that there were already 1,459 units permitted, but not yet constructed, in the region that will help meet this demand although not all permitted units will likely be built. This suggests that if Colchester maintains its current and proposed rate of 40 new units per year, the Town will more than meet its share of estimated regional housing needs in the near future. Under previous targets, at least 10% of the new units constructed in Colchester should be affordable to low income households.

As Colchester continues to grow, it will be challenged with maintaining its share of affordable housing stock, as well as meeting more specialized housing needs for senior housing and starter homes. While the trends toward more multifamily units and smaller single-family dwellings have helped keep new supply affordable, regional trends have made the overall housing market, including the Town's housing supply, less affordable. Recent changes to zoning regulations to allow greater infill development and to lower the minimum acreage necessary for Planned Unit Developments may assist in providing greater residential housing densities and affordable units.

CHALLENGES TO MEETING HOUSING NEEDS

Several challenges exist to meeting existing and anticipated housing needs. These include a lack of building lots, a lack of centralized wastewater treatment capacity, the uncertainty of appeals in the permitting process, public perception of density and affordable housing, and infrastructure and design requirements. These challenges are further detailed in the 2005 Colchester Housing Needs Assessment which also recommends opportunities for overcoming these obstacles to meeting housing needs. A 2012 update of the report's housing data indicates that, though housing and population growth have slowed since 2005, many of the challenges and opportunities outlined in the 2005 assessment remain valid today. The Town cannot significantly affect the regional housing market or overcome all of the challenges to meeting housing needs in and of itself. To this end, the Town will continue to work with regional and state entities and organizations to seek housing solutions. A healthy regional housing market is important to Colchester's future and to the future of economic development within the region.

MAINTAINING WHAT WE HAVE

There are challenges for keeping Colchester's housing stock in good condition. Overcrowding in Colchester remains low, but may increase especially for rental units if housing becomes increasingly less affordable. As noted, lead paint may be an issue for roughly half of the town's housing stock, including houses constructed before 1978. Energy efficiency, not addressed in the 2005 housing study, is also an issue for many older housing units especially as the cost of energy for both home heating and air conditioning continue to rise.

HOUSING DEMAND & SUPPLY

Colchester has a more than sufficient supply of residentially zoned land to sustain projected housing growth through 2020.[2] It is anticipated that there will be greater demand for high-density residential zoning and less demand for moderate-density zoning such as R1 and R2 zoning as the need for smaller, more affordable dwellings, including multi-family units, increases. Colchester's land use plan should be looked to for guidance in meeting the community's residential needs.

The land use chapter of this plan denotes areas appropriate for additional residential growth: Growth Center, Suburban Residential, and Village planning areas.[3] High density residential development will be primarily accommodated within the Severance Corners growth center. As mentioned in the land use chapter, this growth center is anticipated to contain the majority of the Town's growth over the 20 year horizon. In order to accommodate this growth, increases in density may be considered within this planning area. Village planning areas may also be suited to provide additional residential opportunities; however not all village areas are currently conducive to additional residential opportunities and additional development should not detract from the character of these areas. Suburban Residential planning areas will continue to be appropriate areas for residential infill.

RISING TO THE NEED

Other local initiatives for addressing housing needs include public education, developing a wastewater allocation ordinance that allocates future reserve capacity for housing, increasing wastewater treatment capacity, density bonuses for affordable housing, streamlining the permitting process, decreasing required public infrastructure for residential developments, and re-evaluating fire prevention, fire protection, and life safety standards and related costs.[4] The Town should also continue to participate in regional housing efforts and form public/private partnerships that promote affordable housing development.

As noted above, two specific housing needs that will warrant further analysis are the need for affordable starter homes and senior housing. These are two sectors that have significant unmet needs in the community; however it is unclear how these two specific areas of the housing sector can be positively affected by the Town. While the Town should continue to promote accessory apartments to help meet this need, over the course of this plan the Town should evaluate other possible initiatives and look implement appropriate measures that will address the community's housing needs.[5]

2 Correlates to the Colchester Heritage Project's Community Strategic Plan 2012-2022, Infrastructure Goal, objective five, recommended actions one and two.

3 Correlates to the Colchester Heritage Project's Community Strategic Plan 2012-2022, Infrastructure Goal, objective five.

4 Correlates to the Colchester Heritage Project's Community Strategic Plan 2012-2022, Infrastructure Goal, objective five, recommended actions three and four. While the recommended actions recommend recruiting specific developers this can not ethically be implemented by the Town nor can the town impose housing diversity standards without additional regulations such as inclusive housing regulations or growth caps that are not warranted at this time.

5 Correlates to the Colchester Heritage Project's Community Strategic Plan 2012-2022, Infrastructure Goal, objective five, strategy one and recommended action five.

POLICIES AND IMPLEMENTATION

1. Colchester's land use plan should continue to guide residential development.
2. Residential density increases within the Severance Corners growth center may be considered.
3. Village planning areas may be suited to additional residential opportunities; however not all village areas are currently conducive to additional residential opportunities and additional development should not detract from the character of these areas.
4. Infill residential development should continue to occur within the Suburban Residential planning area.
5. The Town should consider developing a wastewater allocation ordinance that allocates future reserve capacity for housing.
6. The Town should continue to pursue additional wastewater treatment capacity to assist in meeting residential demands in the designated growth center.
7. Density bonuses and other incentives for affordable housing, particularly starter homes and senior housing, should be considered to assist in meeting the Town's housing needs within medium and high density areas.[6]
8. Owner occupied residential opportunities are encouraged over rental for infill development.
9. Current programs such as the Town's building code program, on-site wastewater program, and on-site wastewater revolving loan program should be continued and enhanced as these programs help to ensure the quality of Colchester's homes as safe and decent places to live.
10. Opportunities for affordable homes and senior housing, such as smaller dwellings on small lots, should be encouraged within the limits of zoning.
11. The Town should continue to work with regional and state entities and organizations to seek solutions for regional housing and affordable housing needs. A healthy regional housing market is important for the future of economic development within the region.
12. The Town should consider forming public/private partnerships, such as revolving loan funds for mobile home replacement, which promote affordable housing.

6 Correlates to the Colchester Heritage Project's Community Strategic Plan 2012-2022, Infrastructure Goal, objective five, recommended action five.

9 ENERGY & TELECOMMUNICATIONS

VISION: The Town shall take the initiative to interact and collaborate regionally for improved critical infrastructure to ensure that adequate, safe, and affordable energy systems and services are available to all residents and businesses and encourage the efficient use of energy.[1] The Town shall also work to ensure a reliable, fast, and efficient telecommunications system. The community needs to have an adequate supply of energy and a reliable telecommunications system to ensure long-term sustained economic vitality.

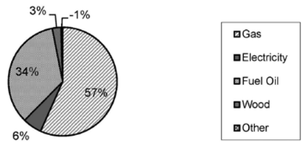
OVERVIEW

The Town of Colchester's geography has historically limited its ability to produce power and provide telecommunications infrastructure. The low lands of Colchester at the mouths of the Lamoille and Winooski Rivers have not historically allowed for local power production beyond that of individual, residential-scale wind turbines. The historical settlement patterns, rural character, and somewhat hilly terrain have made the efficient installation of telecommunications infrastructure challenging. As Colchester looks to the future, energy and telecommunications are increasingly important resources that must be considered in comprehensive land use planning.

ENERGY UTILITIES

The Town of Colchester's energy history and outlook is very much tied to that of the State of Vermont. In 2012 the State of Vermont received one third of its power from Hydro Quebec, one third of its power from Vermont Yankee, one sixth of its power from local power generation such as dams, one twelfth from Vermont renewables and one twelfth from other market sources. With the recent closing of Vermont Yankee, the power supply has been replaced through the northeastern grid including the nuclear power facility at Seabrook, NH. These sources dictate pricing throughout the state with little variation. While Vermont historically has had high energy prices in the last two decades, recently prices have slightly increased to $.15 per kWh for

Housing Units by Heating Source as of 2009



Source: U.S. Census Bureau's 2009 Census

residential and commercial/industrial rates ranging from $.069 to $.09 kWh in Colchester for peak use hours. Colchester is served by Green Mountain Power (GMP) with 9,112 customers. GMP recently merged with Central Vermont Public Service that provided electricity to the northern parts of Colchester.

THE GRID

Power is brought into Colchester via three transmission lines. A GMP transmission line runs from the Burlington border across the Winooski River to a substation on Bay Road. Vermont Electric Power Company (VELCO) maintains two transmission lines in the northern half of Colchester: the first line running from the Essex station to Sandbar at 22KV and the second line running from the Essex station to Georgia at 21KV. Recently several residential scale wind turbines and solar panels have been installed by individual property owners to serve residential or agricultural needs on-site. Some of these facilities feed back into the grid, however, do not at this time significantly contribute to the Town's overall need.

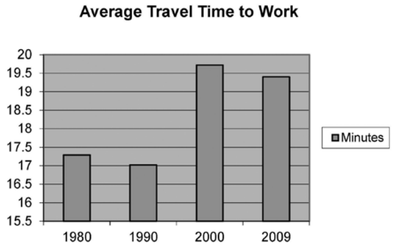
[1] Correlates to the Colchester Heritage Project's Community Strategic Plan 2012-2022, Infrastructure Goal, objective four.

ENERGY SOURCES

A variety of other energy sources are also utilized in the community from gasoline to natural gas to wood pellets. While an increasing number of residences are heated with biomass such as wood pellets (14% of homes in Vermont), the major home heating source in Colchester is natural gas and liquid propane. There are currently thirteen gasoline service stations and two fuel distributors within the community. Vermont Gas Systems serves the majority of the Bay, Severance Corners, the Village, Exit 16, the Fort, Severance Road, and Malletts Bay Avenue by the Winooski Town Line. The main transmission line for Chittenden County runs through Colchester north to south originating at the Canadian Border from the TransCanadian System which brings natural gas from Alberta. This is one of three transmission lines in the community: 1) the first line originating in Burlington across the Winooski River and terminating at Exit 16, 2) the second line originating in Winooski in the Exit 16 area and running north along the Routes 2 & 7 corridor to the Milton Town Line at Exit 17, and 3) the third line running from Winooski along Route 15 into Essex. A peak shaving facility at Exit 16 serves to boost supply using storage tanks during hours of peak natural gas use.

TELECOM SERVICES

Telecommunications facilities in Colchester include NYNEX phone lines, Fairpoint Digital Subscriber Loop (DSL), Comcast Cable TV and internet, satellite television and radio, various cellular phone service antennas, and shortwave radio frequencies that are operated by amateur operators and emergency services. There are also radio and television broadcasting facilities within Colchester that broadcast in both AM and FM frequencies and use microwave communications as well as larger broadcast towers. Historically, telecommunication growth in Colchester has been fragmented which is perhaps most evident in the fact that Colchester does not have its own phone exchange but shares the exchanges of Burlington, Essex, and Milton. As with energy pricing, Colchester is subject to larger market forces in the pricing of telecommunications services and suffers from a lack of sufficient mass to create a competitive market for services such as cellular providers.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau's 2009 Census

FUTURE ENERGY PRICES

Recently, Vermont renewed its contract with Hyrdo Quebec that expires in 2016. Under this new contract Vermont will have 218 MW of capacity. According to the State's Comprehensive Energy plan, while a gap between contract supply and expected demand still exists, there is still excess supply in the regional market and no adverse conditions are expected for power users.

At this time, the transportation sector accounts for over 33% of Vermont's overall energy use according to the Vermont Comprehensive Energy Plan published by the Vermont Department of Public Service. The transportation sector continues to be Vermont's fastest growing end-use energy sector however recent trends in Colchester show positive reductions in average time to work and carpooling that will hopefully help to defray this trend locally long-term. While power reliability has been an issue of late in northern Vermont with transmission line projects occurring in southern Chittenden County to serve growth in peak loading as well as required redundancies, VELCO has no plans to substantially upgrade transmission lines in Colchester or create new ones within the next 20 years.

Other sources of energy continue to diversify with natural gas, bio-diesel and hydrogen now available within northwest Vermont. It is likely that gasoline will continue to be in high demand with higher pricing during the course of this plan, albeit with some recent positive alternatives such as the mass production of electric hybrid vehicles. Small scale wind turbines within Colchester will continue to be viable; however, at this time it is generally thought that Colchester's low level elevations will make larger scale wind operations not economically viable. Alternative and renewable energy sources will continue to grow in importance as traditional energy sources become more limited and more expensive. To this end, the Colchester Zoning Regulations should continue to encourage the use of solar collectors and wind turbines as well as other alternative energy sources such as geothermal. Colchester has several wood harvesting operations that serve residences. There is also an opportunity for a methane facility at the closed landfill at Exit 16. It is important to note that Vermont Gas Systems may need to loop off of its main transmission line to provide necessary redundancies in the future. During the term of this plan, Vermont Gas will continue to explore improving the transmission system serving Chittenden and Addison Counties that may include yet another transmission line either through the Roosevelt Highway corridor or the Circumferential Highway right of way. New transmission lines should be located so as to not conflict or impair the Town's development plans. The peak shaving facility will also continue to be of importance in helping the main transmission line function at over 100% capacity during peak winter usage.

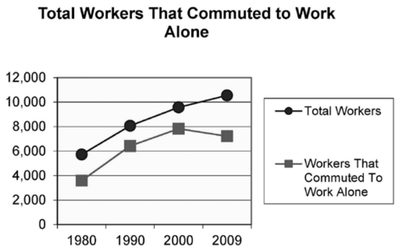
ENERGY CONSERVATION

Energy conservation efforts can help offset increasing pricing and usage. Energy conservation efforts are also seen as environmentally friendly as increasing concerns about global warming have sparked dialogues about reducing carbon dioxide emissions. Land use planning can generate sustainable development patterns that are inherently efficient. Most new construction in Colchester is required to meet or exceed the Vermont Residential Energy Standards through the use of insulation, heating systems, and weatherproof windows and doors. Current building codes provide basic energy efficiency requirements for buildings; however, technology advancements have generated higher standards such as zero energy construction standards in which buildings generate as much energy as they consume. Green construction and LEED Construction (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) standards promote the use of natural, recycled, and durable building materials as well as energy efficiency. These efficiency standards are also applied to landscaping, advocating for native plantings that are low maintenance. Alternative transportation initiatives are also viewed as energy conservation measures, especially within a State where the transportation sector is the major consumer of energy. As energy prices continue to escalate, higher levels of energy efficiency will become increasingly advantageous in order to maintain affordability.

IMPROVING TELECOM SERVICES

As telecommunications continue to become a vital part of everyday functions both at home and at work, pressures to increase the speed, reliability, and affordability of these networks will continue to escalate. Northwest Vermont is currently served by one internet transmission line originating to the south. While there is discussion of bringing a second transmission line to Vermont via the Albany, New York area for redundancy requirements it is unlikely to occur in the near term. On a local level, there are several isolated pockets of Colchester that are currently not served by high speed internet or cellular service. The Town has become increasingly involved in advocating for service for the entire community through services such as Wireless Broadband. The Town should continue to support improvements to the communication infrastructure so that all residents, government services, businesses, and the like can take advantage of existing and developing technologies.[2] The City of Burlington has recently begun a local telecommunications company, but benefits from a larger population in a smaller geographic area. In several more metropolitan areas, all–in-one lines have become prevalent with internet, phone, and television provided through one provider such as a phone service. The Town is exploring partnerships, both public and private, to expand wired and wireless broadband delivery options for economic development, security, and educational purposes. Currently the State of Vermont is working on a broadband initiative, Connect Vermont, to increase accessibility to broadband and mobile phone service throughout Vermont as well. As cellular and microwave broadcasting devices become smaller it has become

2 *Correlates to the Colchester Heritage Project's Community Strategic Plan 2012-2022, Infrastructure Goal, objective three.*



Source: U.S. Census Bureau's 2009 Census

more feasible to site these facilities with greater frequency. Due to the existing industry in Colchester, cutting edge telecommunications will continue to be a priority for the community. Reliable high speed Internet access is a priority for Colchester to be a leader in the emerging global creative economy. Verizon, a telecommunications provider of wireless phone service, has steadily been increasing its services within Colchester specifically focusing on areas of growth such as Malletts Bay. Future growth should be coordinated with telecommunications providers to ensure that areas of expansion are adequately served.

POLICIES

1. The Town will promote sustainable development patterns that minimize energy use through internal and external connectivity and the promotion of alternative transportation options.
2. The Town will continue to require, through its Building Codes and inspection program that construction meets or exceeds accepted energy conservation standards. To this end, efficient building operation, maintenance and landscaping should be encouraged in design.
3. The Town should adopt a comprehensive energy plan that addresses energy conservation in the construction, operation, and maintenance of its facilities and equipment. The Town should be a leader in demonstrating energy conservation with the community.[3]
4. The Town should partner with energy conservation organizations and programs such as the 10% Challenge, LEED, the Champlain Valley Weatherization Service, and Shareheat to ensure the continued availability of adequate, safe, and affordable energy resources for the community.
5. The Town will continue to encourage the development of renewable energy resources in Colchester such as wind turbines, solar panels, biomass fuels, methane, silvicultural operations, and geothermal cooling.
6. Utility infrastructure should be upgraded and expanded as necessary; however, care shall be taken to appropriately site and screen this infrastructure. Wherever possible, new or relocated electric cables, communication cables, transmission lines, switches and similar equipment shall be located underground and so as not to interfere with or impair Colchester's development plans.
7. The extension of natural gas service to areas not currently served is encouraged by the Town.
8. The Town will continue to foster a variety of telecommunications infrastructure. To this end, the Town will encourage solutions that minimize possible conflicts that might arise from these varied sources. Emergency broadcasting capabilities should be preserved first and foremost.
9. The Town shall continue to work toward a comprehensive, fast, and reliable telecommunications network for the community. To this end, partnering with public and/or private companies may be appropriate.[4]
10. The Town will continue to promote co-location of telecommunication facilities and appropriate siting and screening of these facilities from larger towers to smaller residential dishes.
11. As Colchester has a substantial telecommunications industry presence, it should continue to foster the growth and development of these businesses and, as appropriate, participate in regional, State, and Federal dialogues regarding telecommunications.
12. The Town should, to the greatest extent possible, utilize its telecommunications infrastructure and networking technology to increase community outreach efforts. Current examples are the broadcasting of Town meetings and forums on local access television. Possible future examples include emerging Internet news syndication protocols, access to Public Information stored digitally on Town servers.
13. Future growth should be coordinated with telecommunications providers to ensure that areas of expansion are adequately served.
14. The Town will leverage its investment in digital technology and access to high-speed networks to expand the concept of "e-government" in Colchester. This on-line technology could make Town services and information available 24/7, 365 days a year.

[3] *Correlates to the Colchester Heritage Project's Community Strategic Plan 2012-2022, Infrastructure Goal, objective four.*
[4] *Correlates to the Colchester Heritage Project's Community Strategic Plan 2012-2022, Infrastructure Goal, objective one.*

10 TRANSPORTATION

VISION: The Town shall plan for, provide, and maintain a safe and efficient transportation network that implements its land use planning goals.

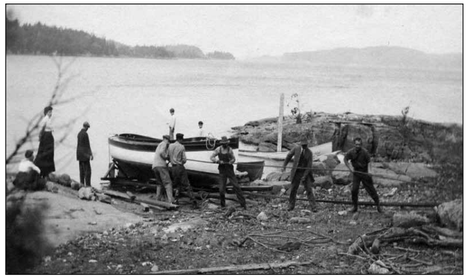
OVERVIEW

Transportation systems are among the most important considerations as the Town works to manage its future. Over the past decade, vast improvements have been made in Colchester's transportation system that further the Town's Land Use Planning goals with projects such as retrofitting existing roadways with pedestrian facilities and new bike paths. In the future, as the Town looks to create and serve sustainable development, this link between planning and infrastructure will become of increasing importance.

HISTORY OF THE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

The Town of Colchester was historically served by boat along its waterfront and foot or horse transportation throughout the rest of Town. There is train service in the northeastern and southeastern corners of Colchester. A small airport existed in the mid-twentieth century at Airport Park. While there is no formal airstrip in Colchester now, the Bay is often used by planes fitted with water landing equipment. The Town has, over the past fifty years, transitioned from a rural community to a suburb with heavy automobile use of its roads. With the introduction of Interstate 89 in the 1960s and improvements to Route 2 in the 1970s, Colchester has also become a through route for travel, especially for freight trucking and commuters.

Many of Colchester's existing roads were developed without pedestrian or bicycle facilities and often followed historic routes such as Roosevelt Highway. Bringing these existing roads up to current standards that include sidewalks, stormwater permitting, and acceptable geometries and grades can be challenging.



Boat Launching on Mallets Bay

The Campus Connector Road was recently completed that addresses several of these concerns along the Route 15 corridor.

MAINTAINING THE SYSTEM

Current deficiencies need to be dealt with as the projected rate of growth and development will increase the demand placed on transportation systems. Maintenance and improvement of transportation infrastructure is one of the more costly services provided by the Town and has a tremendous effect on public health and safety. To this end, the Town developed a five year Capital Plan in 1993 to maintain and improve transportation infrastructure as well as various maintenance programs. One of the biggest challenges facing the Town is to maintain a safe and efficient transportation network as cost effectively as possible.

The automobile will continue to be the primary means of transportation in Colchester for the foreseeable future; however, Colchester has also begun to provide for alternate transportation modes such as park and rides, bicycle routes, and bus pull-offs. Modes of transportation other than the private automobile include walking, bicycling, ride-sharing, buses, and other public transportation. There are benefits associated with alternative transportation modes including reduced traffic, reduced air and water pollution, less land required for parking, energy conservation and promoting healthy lifestyles. The community is served by two through bus routes, one at Exit 17 and one at the Fort, intercommunity public transportation is limited to special-needs services such as Special Services Transportation Authority (SSTA) with a service along the Routes 2 & 7 corridor set to begin in July 2014. Safe and efficient transportation alternatives are of limited extent at this time and face several barriers such as a lack of sufficient density to provide low-cost diversified solutions.

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE OF THE SYSTEM

In recent years, the Town has taken a much more active role in planning for its infrastructure. In 1993 a comprehensive alternative transportation path plan was developed for the community by the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC). In 2002 the Town developed an Official Map that shows proposed multi-modal paths, roads, and other public facilities. Future roads

include the Lakeshore Bypass and other road connections. Governor Shumlin announced in 2011 that planned Circumferential Highway will not be built. A Circ Alternative Task Force was formed that included all of the Circ communities, interested parties, and the CCRPC to develop and forward for funding a list of projects that, if built, would replicate the Circ's effects. This Task Force developed prioritized lists for three years and advanced them to the Legislature for funding thus concluding its work with the 2014 legistlative session. The Exit 16 area was identified and funded in the first year with the Severance Corners intersection in the second. The 2014 legislative session will see the consideration of funding improvements to the intersection of Prim Road and West Lakeshore Drive, the intersection of Blakely Road and Laker Lane, the Severance Road corridor, the Rotue 2A corridor, and a signciant rebuild of Exit 17. These improvements funded thus far are required to further commercial development of the Exit 16 area and Severance Corners growth center and are a priority for the Town.

The Official Map draws from the Alternative Transportation Path Plan, but is more specific and creates an opportunity to preserve rights-of-way. It should be noted that generally all roads are planned to have sidewalks, although the Capital Plan provides a specific list of Town sidewalk implementation projects planned in the short term. There are also several other important planning connections within the Town's various Departments and Town standards that directly influence the transportation network and how it relates to land use. The Public Works Specifications and Standards require sidewalks and/or multi-use paths along new roads. The Town's Traffic Calming Manual potentially impacts improvements to existing roads. The Town has a variety of policies, regulations, and departments that affect land use planning and infrastructure and care must be taken to achieve coordination among these various regulations and policies.

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

In its planning efforts for transportation infrastructure, the Town is a member of the Regional Planning Commission. The CCRPC maintains a 20-year Metropolitan Transportation Plan for the County that provides goals and objectives, analysis of regional trends and planned improvement projects throughout the county in all modes of transportation. The CCRPC assists municipalities with transportation planning and provides a forum for interagency cooperation and public input into funding decisions. The CCRPC

[1] *Correlates to the Colchester Heritage Project's Community Strategic Plan 2012-2022, Economic Development Goal, recommended action four.*

maintains a three year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) that prioritizes funding to various transportation projects throughout the County. Several Colchester projects are included in the TIP: the reconstruction of Route 2A, including the intersection with Route 2, implementation of the Route 127 Corridor Plan, Fort Ethan Allen Sidewalk, West Lakeshore Drive Bikepath, Route 15 Bikepath, and the Mill Pond Bridge. Colchester has several projects listed within the TIP that currently expires in 2017. This is one of the primary sources of funding transportation projects that often exceed local funding capacity and have regional impacts. There has been a shift at the State level to prioritize maintenance, rehabilitation, and repair of existing transportation infrastructure. Colchester will continue to work with the CCRPC to ensure that these projects, as well as important new construction projects such as the Exit 16 reconstruction project, are completed to provide critically needed capacity to the Town's infrastructure. It is thought that the funding of new projects will become increasingly dependent upon local, state, and federal funding sources.

FUTURE OF COLCHESTER'S TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

The following subsections focus on the various aspects of the current transportation infrastructure. Colchester's transportation infrastructure will continue to become more diversified and more sophisticated and it is anticipated that there will be additional components to the infrastructure not listed herein at this time. This should not preclude consideration of inclusion of new components within the community in the future. Through transportation planning and protocols, Colchester should continue to strive to reduce congestions, improve roadway safety, and reduce energy consumption to enhance access to business and recreation areas. To this end, both conventional and alternative transportation modalities should be considered.[2]

PUBLIC ROADS

The existing highway network is shown on the transportation map (map one). The Town has 110.95 miles of public roads, 22.9 miles of which are State Highways. There are also approximately eight miles of Federal Highway: Interstate 89.

The Town has adopted a Capital Transportation Plan partially in an effort to preserve the Town's public transportation system with an estimated replacement value of approximately $200 million. The Town's sustained effort of rehabilitation has been effective at avoiding more costly complete reconstruction costs and preserving the community's investment within the transportation system. While the Town authorizes funding of the Capital Transportation Plan every five years, local tax dollars are used to leverage State and Federal funding.

The Capital Transportation Plan includes, but is not limited to, various paving, drainage, bike/pedestrian, and intersection projects and several road projects including the Exit 16 sidewalks, East Road/Depot Road Intersection, Severance Corners Intersection, West Lakeshore Drive Bikepath, and River Road sidewalks. Stormwater and pedestrian improvements are also included in the Plan.

The Town's Public Works Standards and Specifications provide specific requirements for transportation infrastructure design and construction. These standards provide different designs for road widths based upon a variety of factors including function, average traffic, and land uses served. Pedestrian, street lighting, and stormwater options are also included in these standards. These regulations provide standards for traffic studies that are often required as part of the Zoning or Subdivision Regulations review. Sometimes, as a result of these processes, a development may be required to help implement improvements to the transportation infrastructure in order to offset adverse impacts caused by the development or facilitate full build out of the project. While the Town does not presently have formal road impact fees, payment in lieu of construction of improvements has precedent within the Town and may continue to be utilized by the Town at the Town's discretion.

2 *Correlates to the Colchester Heritage Project's Community Strategic Plan 2012-2022, Infrastructure Goal, objective three.*

The Town has limited curb cuts for new developments through Chapter Fourteen of the Colchester Code of Ordinances and requires the connection of roads wherever possible. While the Town does not have a formal regulation limiting curb cuts as long as sight distances are met, limiting curb cuts is part of good access management practice. Roadway connectivity eliminates redundancies in maintenance and integrates neighborhoods. Roads should be connected wherever possible, however, and rights-of-way for new roads should extend fully to the outbound property line of a project to facilitate future road connections.

ARTERIAL ROADS

Arterial roadways carry traffic through an area to destinations outside the immediate neighborhood or community. Direct access to property should not be a function of arterial roadways, although in Colchester these roadways also carry local traffic and provide the only means of access to large areas of developed and undeveloped land.

The conflict between arterial and local road functions is especially pronounced for Route 127 which serves as a regional arterial highway although it is not designed or constructed to meet the standards of such a highway. This route also serves as the local road for very densely developed residential and commercial areas. An increase in local road functions will accompany the development of Severance Corners. The Route 127 Corridor Study provides direction for improving this corridor's design including bicycles and pedestrian improvements; however, this plan has not been implemented due to a lack of funding (although a portion of the Route 127 Corridor project has been listed in the current TIP). The Town recently completed a sidewalk installation along Prim and Heineberg Road Corridor to address immediate pedestrian needs within the Route 127 Corridor. The improvements of the Route 127 Corridor Study would result in improving the safety of the corridor, however, do not address capacity. It is the Town's desire to decrease traffic and the need for capacity on this local road. The Town has, since at least 1964, recognized the need for a new east-west arterial route and West Lakeshore Drive Bypass is recommended to meet that need.

COLLECTOR ROADS

Collector roads provide land access, movement within neighborhoods, and a link between local and arterial roads.

LOCAL ROADS

Local roads serve primarily for land access, with links to collector and arterial roadways, including streets within subdivisions as well as roads in more remote areas. Design speeds are typically 25 mph. The existing local streets have been largely developed in conjunction with residential subdivisions. The local road system is not well interconnected, creating problems with maintenance, efficient traffic flow and public safety. Designs of local roads vary from less than 22 feet to 30 feet to accommodate the Town's various planning needs. A number of local roads are unpaved. While unpaved roads help areas retain their rural character maintenance expenses for unpaved roads are much greater than those for paved roads.

Recently, State requirements for permitting existing stormwater facilities for local streets has identified a host of maintenance and responsibility issues for the Town and homeowners throughout the community. The Town is working to resolve these permitting and stormwater issues and to develop long term maintenance and

responsibility plans for existing stormwater facilities. Stormwater treatment for all impervious surfaces, including parking lots, is a good practice to preserve and enhance water quality.

PRIVATE ROADS

Private roads are common in several areas, especially the points of land into the Lake. These roads are typically unpaved, of substandard width and have poor drainage. Some private roads serve a significant number of residences. The Town often receives applications to develop existing lots on private roads. The majority of older private roads are plowed by the Town per a 1970 Town-wide non-binding referendum.

Problems associated with private roads include substandard design, unreliable maintenance, lack of emergency access, poor traffic safety, and property disputes among owners. Private owners are often unable or unwilling to fund improvements or maintenance. Current Subdivision Regulations require minimum frontage on a Public Road to subdivide. Current Public Works Specifications and Standards require access to be a public road if it serves more than five dwelling units. Chapter Seven of the Colchester Code of Ordinance (Fire Regulations) specifies necessary improvements to private roads for year-round access on proposed camp conversions. The current policies combine to ensure that existing situations are not made worse or repeated.

While new private roads should generally be discouraged, the Town should be afforded the opportunity to consider the use of private transportation infrastructure to facilitate sustainable development patterns or innovative development such as high density new urbanism development.

INTERSECTIONS

Road intersections must be properly designed and controlled in order to ensure safe and efficient traffic flow and pedestrian crossing. Improvements are needed at a number of intersections however many of these are State intersections and therefore dependent upon State approval and funding for upgrades. Intersection improvements in the current TIP include Route 2A and Routes 2/7 The Circ Alternative Process has identified and funded the intersection improvements for the Exit 16 area as the County's highest priority project. Similiarly the Severance Corners intersection is the second highest ranked project and will also be funded by this process. Other intersections identified and forwarded for funding by the Circ Alternative Process include improvements to the Blakely Road and Laker Lane intersection as well as the Prim Road and West Lakeshore Drive intersection.

As background traffic in Colchester continues to grow and development continues to occur it is certain that additional intersections, will need to be addressed. The Town should continue to work with the CCRPC and the State to develop solutions for these intersections prior to large problems developing. While traffic circles and round-abouts are eligible for higher levels of funding, these designs may not be appropriate for all intersections and care should be taken to examine all strengths and weaknesses of an intersection design besides cost as part of the design process.

The Town should continue working to implement Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) Architecture whenever feasible. ITS is the application of advanced technology to address transportation needs and includes everything from timing of lights to pre-emption of lights for emergency vehicles. As intersections are improved and roads upgraded, the Town should utilize ITS to the greatest degree possible to promote local and regional efficiencies. The Town should continue to work with the State and agencies providing mutual aid to ensure standardization of pre-emption devices.

BRIDGES

The Town has several bridges, such as Lime Kiln Bridge, that are an integral part of its transportation infrastructure. The Town participates in Vermont's Highway Bridge Program to assist in funding projects. It is anticipated that the Mill Pond Road Bridge will be replaced in FY2014.

New Lime Kiln Bridge

SIDEWALKS

Sidewalks provide for safe pedestrian circulation and are especially important in a residential community like Colchester. A sidewalk network is useful for transportation purposes only when it connects between residential, public, and commercial destinations. Sidewalks are important even in remote areas considering the School policy that children may be expected to walk up to 1/2 mile to a bus stop.

With few exceptions, sidewalks are currently located mostly on local residential streets, having been installed by developers when subdivisions were built. Sidewalks continue to be built along our collector and arterial roadways. Over the past decade the Capital Transportation Plan has substantially expanded the Town's network of sidewalks with new sidewalks being added to West Lakeshore Drive, Blakely Road, and Malletts Bay Avenue as well as others. Additionally, new developments are required to include sidewalks and/or multiuse paths as well as provide easements for future pedestrian connections. These requirements are found in the Zoning Regulations, Subdivision Regulations, and Public Works Standards and Specifications. Several of the projects planned for the current Capital Transportation Plan include River Road sidewalks and a sidewalk on Malletts Bay Avenue to the Winooski line.

MULTIUSE PATHS

Multiuse paths support alternative modes of transportation, which are encouraged. The Town has envisioned an east-to-west trunk-line multiuse path from Colchester Pond to Airport Park and similarly, a north-to-south route from Milton to Winooski. These routes, as well as various other feeder multiuse paths, are designated on the Town's Official Map.

There are several classes of multiuse paths; Class I are fully separated from roads, Class II paths are striped lanes along roads, Class III paths are roadways that are signed but otherwise not improved for bicycle travel. Roadway improvements that accommodate bicycle use are important for public safety as many long-distance-bicyclists, touring bicyclists, and bike-commuters will utilize roads to avoid slower moving recreational users on multiuse paths. The Town of Colchester is part of the Lake Champlain Bikeways network that uses a majority of on-road routes to link with adjacent communities throughout the Lake Champlain Basin.

Class I and II multiuse paths exist along Porters Point Road, between Bayside Park and Creek Road, from Delta Park to the Causeway, along Colchester Point Road, along Holy Cross Road, and along Creek Farm Road. The extent of Class II paths has been significantly increased through the Capital Transportation Plan. Sections of Lakeshore Drive and Blakely Road are signed as Class III multiuse paths but are generally unsuitable for bicycle travel due to the heavy volume of traffic and turning movements. Many arterial and collector roads, including Route 15, Route 2A, Lakeshore Drive, and Routes 2 & 7 at Exit 16 are not uniformly constructed to accommodate bicycle travel. To the greatest extent possible, all areas of Colchester should connect its multiuse paths and tie into the paths of adjacent Towns.

Shadow Cross Pedestrian Bridge Dedication

Planned Multiuse paths include those shown on the Official Map linking Severance Corners to the Bay and Exit 16. The Town has undertaken several sections of the trunk-line from Colchester Pond to Airport Park and plans to construct more components of this route through the Capital Transportation Plan and the TIP. Another project likely to be completed within the near term is the first phase of the Exit 16 Pedestrian and Landscape Project along Roosevelt Highway.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Existing public transit consists of bus service provided by the Chittenden County Transportation Authority (CCTA) along the Route 15 corridor and a Chittenden County to Franklin County transit line stop at the park and ride at Exit 17. In 2013 the Town of Colchester entered into an agreement with CCTA to provide service along the Roosevelt Highway Corridor (Routes 2 and 7). This service will begin in July 2014 and will fufill one of the requirements of the Severance Corners Growth Center Designation. The most major areas of growth in Colchester will be served and linked including the growth center at Severance Corners and commercial development at Exit 16.

The Special Services Transportation Agency provides accessible and affordable door-to-door transportation for senior citizens and persons with disabilities. The demand for this service will continue to increase as the community's population ages and distances to services from residences increase. The Town partially funds this service.

RIDESHARING

There is a park and ride lot at Exit 17 as well as others identified by the recent RPC Park & Ride Plan. CCTA administers a regional ridesharing program which includes Colchester. Demand exists for additional rideshare opportunities. The Town, working with the CCRPC and a consultant, has incorporated future park and ride facilities into the Town's Official Map.

RAIL

The Town of Colchester has two sections of rail with one in the Northeast Quadrant and one along Route 15. Both of these sections are designed to support heavy rail. Although light rail could function on the existing tracks, current design does not allow for faster speeds usually associated with commuter rail.

The section of rail along Route 15 leads from Essex though Winooski to Burlington. In the past, this section has been studied for commuter rail with the possibility of a multi-modal facility in Colchester along Route 15. Preliminary analysis of the corridor has indicated that current densities would not support a commuter rail line in this vicinity; however, as traffic continues to increase on Route 15, commuter rail may become economically viable.

The northern section of rail travels from Milton into Essex Junction where there is a rail station. Within Colchester the tracks pass through a relatively removed and rural portion of the Town. As the rail track approaches Route 2A there are a few industrial properties which front on Route 2A that have the benefit of spurs or the potential for rail spurs. These properties are adjacent to residences and care has been taken to ensure that these uses are well-screened and unobtrusive to the residential uses as much as practical. While there has been discussion in the past about relocating Burlington's rail yard to this area of Colchester, this concept is no longer feasible due to the encroachment of suburban residential use and the establishment of substantial horse farming operations. The northeast quadrant and village neighborhood areas are ill-suited to further expansion of industrial uses or rail tracks.

POLICIES

1. Roadway construction and reconstruction projects must address stormwater treatment and required stormwater permitting. Stormwater treatment for all impervious surfaces, including parking lots, is a good practice to preserve and enhance water quality.
2. The Official Map delineates future transportation network improvements and other facilities. Developments, road projects, and all other plans shall take into consideration the Official Map and should implement the proposed improvements to the greatest extent possible.
3. The Town planning process shall address the expansion of utilities and provide guidance for the reconstruction of roadways, including the Route 127 corridor.
4. Traffic studies that address both capacity and safety issues shall continue to be required as part of the development review process. Where necessary, improvement to the transportation infrastructure will be required as part of development projects.[3]
5. The capital transportation program is a significant benefit to the community which should be sustained.
6. The Town may impose development impact assessments where private projects are anticipated to necessitate transportation improvements. The Town should evaluate methods for fairly distributing the cost of road improvements and maintenance associated with new development or redevelopment.
7. New curb-cuts to arterial roadways should be avoided, with shared curb-cuts and side streets utilized for access wherever possible. The Town should maintain its regulations on access management.
8. The Town should implement bus service along the Roosevelt Highway corridor in coordination with CCTA to serve the Severance Corners growth center and commercial development at Exit 16.
9. Light-rail solutions should be explored where feasible. If light-rail mass transit solutions are proposed through Colchester, stations or stops within the Town should be encouraged. Expansion of freight rail should be limited to existing rail corridors with the creation of rail yards being prohibited.
10. The development of alternative transportation infrastructure such as commuter lots will be encouraged by the Town.[4]
11. New subdivisions and other developments should provide for and encourage bicycle access, circulation and parking. Bicycle paths may be required to be built as part of subdivisions. Easements may be required to be dedicated to the Town for future bicycle paths.[5]
12. The Town will consider bicycle path improvements in designing, scheduling and constructing roadway improvement projects. Where possible and practical, the Town will strive to provide Class I paths along arterial and collector roadways as well as on-road facilities.
13. Sidewalks should be implemented as land use plans require. The need for sidewalks is particularly important on roads carrying heavy traffic volumes through developed areas including Exit 16.[6]
14. While new private roads should generally be discouraged, the Town should be afforded the opportunity to consider the use of private transportation infrastructure to facilitate sustainable development patterns or innovative development such as high-density new urbanism.

[3] *Correlates to the Colchester Heritage Project's Community Strategic Plan 2012-2022, Infrastructure Goal, objective three.*
[4] *Correlates to the Colchester Heritage Project's Community Strategic Plan 2012-2022, Infrastructure Goal, objective three.*
[5] *Correlates to the Colchester Heritage Project's Community Strategic Plan 2012-2022, Infrastructure Goal, objective two.*
[6] *Correlates to the Colchester Heritage Project's Community Strategic Plan 2012-2022, Infrastructure Goal, objective three.*

15. The CCRPC's Transportation Improvement Plan as well as other State and Federal funds are important sources of funding for transportation infrastructure and Colchester should continue to take advantage of these opportunities to bolster local funding for improvements to the transportation network. As non-local funding sources diminish or shift priorities, it will become increasingly important for the Town to develop creative solutions for funding projects that are more self-reliant.
16. The Town shall work to implement the recommendations of the Route 127 Corridor Study.
17. The Exit 16 improvements and Severance Corners Intersection improvements are top priorities for the community in looking to replicate the goals of the Circ Highway through alternative forms of delivery now that the highway project has been terminated.[7] As these projects have been funded and listed as high priorities in this process, construction should progress as expediently as feasible.
18. Interconnectivity between developments shall be required to the greatest extent feasible. The creation of cul de sacs should be discouraged. New cul de sacs should be designed to be temporary and to provide future connections whenever possible. Future connections between neighborhoods shall be addressed by all development projects.
19. A new arterial roadway connecting Hercules Drive and Rte. 15 would decrease travel time, increase efficiency, and reduce traffic volumes in the Exit 16 area and in Winooski's central business district. This is a project with regional significance and should be pursued in conjunction with the Regional Planning Commission and the U.S. Army Administration.
20. The Public Works Standards and Specifications provide diversified standards based in part on land use. These Standards shall be updated as needed to reflect changes in land use planning and evolving technologies.[8]
21. Current Zoning Regulations promote Transportation Demand Management principles through the use of parking standards for large parking facilities, the requirement of bicycle parking, and enabling shared parking concepts. These efforts should be sustained and strengthened.
22. The efforts of the SSTA to provide transportation services for the disabled and the elderly should be sustained; however, efficiencies should be looked to as demand continues to escalate.
23. A bicycle path between Colchester Pond and Airport Park shall be the priority bicycle path for Colchester to complete. This route shall act as a trunk line that all other bicycle routes shall strive to tie into. The Town shall strive to integrate this trunk-line and other bicycle paths with bicycle routes of adjacent communities.
24. While the maintenance and repair of the existing transportation network will remain a priority, the construction of new projects that build capacity shall also be of importance to the community.[9]
25. The Lake Champlain Byways program should continue to be supported for its importance in promoting alternative transportation and tourism.
26. The Town shall continue to partner with the Vermont Highway Bridge Program to maintain its infrastructure.
27. Intelligent Transportation Systems Architecture shall be utilized to the greatest degree possible to promote local and regional efficiencies. The Town should continue to work with the State and agencies providing mutual aid to ensure standardization of pre-emption devices.

[7] *Correlates to the Colchester Heritage Project's Community Strategic Plan 2012-2022, Economic Development Goal, recommended action four.*
[8] *Correlates to the Colchester Heritage Project's Community Strategic Plan 2012-2022, Infrastructure Goal, objective three.*
[9] *Correlates to the Colchester Heritage Project's Community Strategic Plan 2012-2022, Infrastructure Goal, objective three.*

11 UTILITIES & SERVICES

VISION: The Town should endeavor to create and implement structural, operational, and regional options to optimize the transparency, accountability, effectiveness, and cost of Colchester's government and public services. The Town should foster communications, citizens' trust, active participation, and cooperation in an efficient and effective form of government that addresses needs as they pertain to economic vitality, social and environmental responsibility, and prosperity in a dynamic future.[1] The community should continue to be provided with the utilities and services necessary to sustain and implement its land use plan. The land use plan should guide infrastructure investments.

The following chapter details the various utilities and services provided within the Town of Colchester. Utilities discussed in this section include sewage disposal, water supply, solid waste disposal, and stormwater treatment. Services discussed herein include Town Government, Fire Protection, and Regional Government. Telecommunications, electric utilities, natural gas utilities, and other power sources are detailed in the Energy and Telecommunications Chapter. It should be noted that not all of the utilities and services discussed herein are provided by the Town of Colchester.

TOWN GOVERNMENT

The Town of Colchester is governed by an elected Select Board of five members. The Select Board oversees the Town's annual budget, over $20,000,000 in assets, and the general functions of the Town's government. The Board has appointed a Town Manager to oversee the day-to-day operations of the Town government including its staff of approximately 100. The majority of the staff are full-time although several positions are shared or part-time. It should be noted that this number does not include the many seasonal positions within the Town or its wealth of volunteers, including over 30 volunteers of the Rescue Squad.

Colchester Police Station

The staff of the Town is divided into 11 departments each operating under the supervision of a department head. These departments include the Manager, Finance, Assessor, Planning and Zoning, Clerk/Treasurer, Rescue, Public Works/Building and Grounds, Parks/Recreation, Economic Development, Human Resources, Library, and Police Departments. Of these departments, 10 department heads report to the Town Manager. The Clerk/Treasurer is the only elected department head within Town government. Two of the 11 departments that report to the Town Manager are also governed by individual elected Boards: the Library's Board of Trustees and the Rescue Squad's Board.

These departments provide a variety of functions for the community including: police and rescue services; the maintenance and construction of infrastructure such as roads and sidewalks the issuing of licenses such as marriage, liquor and pet licenses; comprehensive planning; record keeping such as property deeds, birth, and death certificates; the administration of local building codes; the administration of state and local wastewater permits; development review; the administration and enforcement of health and zoning regulations; regulation of elections; issuance of passports; assessment and tax collection; and the administration of parks and recreation programs as is further detailed in the Parks and

[1] *Correlates to the Colchester Heritage Project's Community Strategic Plan 2012-2022, Governance Goal.*

Recreation Chapter. These services are housed primarily within the municipal offices located at 781 Blakely Road as well as the adjacent Public Works Garage and Rescue Building. The Burnham Memorial Library is located in the Village adjacent to the Town Meeting House at which most Boards and Commissions meet. In 2008 a new Town Hall was constructed adjacent to the existing Town Offices following the completion of an upgrade and expansion of the Town Garage facility. The former Town Office building will be rehabilitated into a Police Station in 2012.

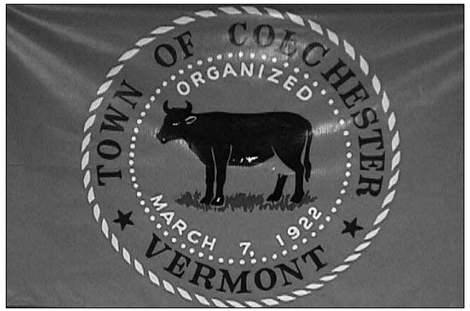
It is important for the Town to find ways to increase the contribution and participation of people who live and work in Colchester, including but not limited to recruitment of candidates for elective office, volunteer boards, committees and commissions; youth participation and learning about town affairs; and valuing Town of Colchester employees and their contributions. These efforts will increase the cohesion, confidence, and communications of Colchester people with local government.[2] Town government currently relies upon the functions of several volunteer boards and commissions. The majority of these boards and commissions are appointed by the Select Board and serve for little if any compensation. These volunteers assist the Town with everything from long-term planning, development review, planning community events, overseeing public facilities, to interment of the dead. While the community has been fortunate to have had the service of many citizens over the years, it has become increasingly difficult to find volunteers to fill vacancies on these boards in recent years. Without the service of volunteers, the Town may be faced with delaying project reviews for lack of quorums at meetings, decreasing levels of service, or fulfilling these roles with paid assistance increasing the costs of services to the Town. The following Boards and Commissions currently serve the Town:

- Planning Commission
- Development Review Board
- Recreation Advisory Board
- Cemetery Commission
- Board of Trustees, Burnham Memorial Library
- Board of Listers
- Conservation Commission

SEWAGE

Historically, Colchester has relied upon on-site wastewater disposal systems to serve development. The majority of Colchester continues to be served by on-site wastewater with municipal sewer only available within the Exit 16, Severance Corners, and Fort Ethan Allen (Route 15) neighborhoods. Over 5,000 individual onsite wastewater systems exist within the Town. A functioning onsite system provides excellent sewage treatment. Municipal infrastructure to provide treatment for 5,000 sites would be exorbitant to construct and operate. Onsite systems represent an enormous deferred cost for the Town. The Town, therefore, has an interest in ensuring that these onsite systems are kept in good shape.

In 2005 the Town of Colchester became the first community in the State of Vermont to take over the administration of State wastewater permits, providing the Town with additional authority over wastewater systems and providing the community with one-stop-shopping for State and local wastewater permits. It should be duly noted though, that the design and construction standards for onsite wastewater are dictated by the State of Vermont and the Town has limited ability to specify additional requirements. The concept of an onsite wastewater management program has yet to be explored by the Town. An onsite wastewater utility would require a due cost benefit analysis by the Town. Such a program could ensure public health and safety as well as provide for the continued viability of individual onsite systems which are often the most cost effective means of sewage disposal. The expansion of innovative onsite wastewater technologies and community systems will expand the opportunities to serve higher volumes of effluent within areas removed from municipal sewage infrastructure.[3] With increased volumes and technology will come increased maintenance requirements of onsite systems that may necessitate a utility or other management form. The Town's 2002 Exit 17 Wastewater Study evaluated the feasibility of serving this future growth center with onsite technologies. While the costs of implementing this study rival those of municipal sewer options, this study should be taken into account as development is proposed for this area and the costs associated with each option fluctuate. For these reasons, the Exit 17 area is included in the Town's approved sewer service area, although not currently constructed. Community systems, as they increase in frequency, may become more cost effective solutions to serving Colchester's decentralized developments than municipal sewerage.



Town Seal

Historically, a sewage treatment plant within Colchester was operated on the Winooski River until the 1980s when it was converted into a pump station. At the time, an agreement was reached with the City of South Burlington to provide 650,000 gallons per day (g.p.d.) of wastewater treatment capacity for Colchester with 340,000 gallons of this allocation controlled by the Town and the remaining 310,000 being controlled by Fire District One. The historic plant provided limited capacity and the South Burlington agreement was seen as providing the most cost effective solution to providing the Town with additional wastewater capacity. In the 1990's several properties within the Exit 16 area that flowed to the Winooski sewage treatment plant were converted to flow into the Town's system.

Municipal sewers are currently available in the Exit 16, Severance Corners, and Fort Ethan Allen (Route 15) neighborhoods. These areas are the Town's priority areas for growth as stated in the land use chapter as well as historic village areas that required sewer to rectify pre-existing problems.

A small portion of the Colchester Village neighborhood is also served by municipal sewer: the Breezy Acres and Hillcrest mobile home parks on Roosevelt and the Creek Farm Plaza. The collection system is owned and maintained by the Town of Colchester with the exception of the historic portion of Fort Ethan Allen that flows to the tri-town sewage treatment plant in Essex. Fire District One has approximately 130,000 g.p.d. surplus capacity however this capacity is restricted to the geographic area of the District which encompasses the Winooski Park area of Colchester (Route 15 area minus the historic Fort Ethan Allen area). The Town obtained 350,000 additional g.p.d. allocation from South Burlington in 2012 and began work on developing priorities for this additional allocation in 2013. An update of the Town's wastewater management plan and allocation ordiance are subsequently anticipated in 2014. The Town's Sewage Ordinance should prioritize wastewater allocation based on land use goals instead of a first-come first-served method of distributing allocation. This will allow infrastructure to be directed toward accomplishing land use priorities for the Town first and foremost.

[2] *Correlates to the Colchester Heritage Project's Community Strategic Plan 2012-2022, Governance Goal, Objective two.*

[3] *Correlates to the Colchester Heritage Project's Community Strategic Plan 2012-2022, Environment and Agriculture Goal, strategy two.*

It should be noted that there are three individual Fire Districts within Colchester. Fire Districts are authorized sewer service providers. While these Districts currently only provide water, the Districts are within their authority to establish sewer service independent of the Town. Fire District Two will continue to evaluate becoming a sewer provider during the term of this plan as it analyzes the results of Colchester's Integrated Water Resources Management Plan and its users' needs. The Town has a strong interest in being involved in any consideration of sewer service expansion. Sewer service areas are designated by the Town as part of its planning process. Any expansion of these areas impacts the Town's land use planning and will significantly impact land use patterns. The Fire Districts would need to work with the Town to designate sewer service areas. Designation of sewer service areas are subject to review and approval by the Town and should only be granted if such designation reinforces the Town's land use and environmental goals as stated within this plan and the Town's bylaws.

As the Town continues to develop and evaluate its options for providing a cost-efficient and environmentally sound method of treating wastewater, it should promote regional discussions regarding wastewater.[4] The challenges Colchester faces are not unique and are shared by other growing communities, such as Williston, that also lack a wastewater treatment facility. While Colchester should consider constructing its own wastewater treatment facility if the need and opportunity arise, the Town should evaluate if this is the most cost-effective solution for the community. Phosphorus caps on wastewater plant discharges severely limit the potential for new wastewater treatment facilities, thereby necessitating a regional dialogue on how best to make use of current wastewater resources. Regionalization of wastewater treatment may prove to be the most environmentally sound and cost effective long-term solution for the majority of communities within the greater Burlington area. To this end, Colchester should advocate within organizations such as Chittenden County Regional Planning to analyze the feasibility of regional utilities. During the term of this plan, the town should work to develop a comprehensive, long term plan for wastewater disposal.[5]

Historic Water Tank at Fort Ethan Allen

POTABLE WATER

The Town of Colchester has a variety of potable water sources that range from private dug wells to municipal water distribution systems. These diverse solutions are a result of the Town's geographically diverse areas and scattered development. While many properties are located within a fire district that provides municipal water, these districts have many areas that are not served by water infrastructure and are reliant upon wells. It should be noted that the Town Government does not currently provide potable water, but relies upon independently-operated fire districts to provide this service.

While the largest concentration of properties served by private potable water systems are within the Town's rural areas, there are also a variety of properties scattered throughout Colchester that rely upon pumping water from Lake Champlain or other means of private water service. Complicating the integrity of these systems are often the presence of inadequate or aging onsite septic systems, seasonal fluctuations in water supply, and in some areas, the presence of naturally occurring radioactive properties in bedrock. As the Town continues to grow, it should ensure that property owners have access to municipal water supply systems in an effort to provide safe, efficient, and affordable potable water for the community.

Municipal water is distributed by five water systems: Colchester Fire District #1, Colchester Fire District # 2, Colchester Fire District #3, Malletts Bay Fire District, and the Colchester Fire District. The latter two water systems are currently owned and operated by the Champlain Water District (CWD), a regional water utility based out of South Burlington. All of the systems own their distribution systems and purchase water from other companies. Champlain Water District provides water to all of the water systems except Fire District #2 which purchases water from the City of Burlington. The fire districts are each independent, self-governing, municipal organizations. While the Town of Colchester does not currently manage water utilities, it does have authority over water supply and design through its administration of local building and zoning codes as well as the State water and wastewater permits and its Public Works Standards and Specifications.

Due to the diversity of water systems, it has also been difficult to undertake comprehensive water needs planning for the community. This has come to light in recent years with the need for sufficient water storage for the community. While a twin water tank was placed on Water Tower Hill during the term of the previous plan, a new 500,000 gallon water tank will be necessary within the same geographic area as the twin tank during the term of this plan. As the Town continues to grow and looks to expand municipal water infrastructure and opportunities, the efficiency of scale of municipal fire districts should be examined. The Town should take appropriate actions to ensure adequate water supply for the implementation of its land use goals.

SOLID WASTE

Colchester is a member community of the Chittenden Solid Waste District which disposes of the county's trash and oversees recycling, waste reduction, and recently instituted composting program. While Colchester once had an active landfill within the Exit 16 vicinity, Colchester now exports its waste and recycling via the District.

Recycling is mandatory for all communities within the Solid Waste District. Waste and recycling curb-side pickup is provided within Colchester by private companies which contract with the District. District drop-off centers are available to those wishing to self-haul waste and recycling. While a drop-off center recently existed within the Colchester municipal complex on Blakely Road, this facility needed to be upgraded and relocated to accommodate the approved Town Hall and Town Garage projects. The Town began a "fast trash" collection site in 2013 in lieu of a drop-off vicinity to provide residents a more local collection option. While the collection site wais limited to certain hours and locations, it is was hoped that this service would help fill the void left by the removal of the drop-off center. Drop-off facilities are located in the adjacent communities of Essex, Milton, South Burlington, and Burlington. Rover pick-ups for specialized waste, such as household hazardous waste, are available from time to time in Colchester; however, permanent hazardous waste drop-off services are available at the Burlington facility. Each May, Colchester participates in Green Up Day and holds a collection at the Town Offices. This event helps to stem the tide of illegal dumping in Colchester and should continue to be supported by the Town and the District.

STORMWATER

The Town of Colchester has many great assets with the more prominent features being Malletts Bay, the lake and its many streams. Protection of the water's quality has become a prominent goal community wide. Stormwater has been identified as posing a threat to water quality as various community land uses can result in erosion, flooding, and a reduction of the time available for adequate treatment of stormwater runoff and can cause periods of unacceptable levels of contamination of surface waters. Stormwater is a serious problem that should be examined under all planning and development activities.

[4] *Correlates to the Colchester Heritage Project's Community Strategic Plan 2012-2022, Environment and Agriculture Goal, strategy four and action item three.*
[5] *Correlates to the Colchester Heritage Project's Community Strategic Plan 2012-2022, Environment and Agriculture Goal and action item three.*

Colchester is a MS4 community with stormwater impaired watersheds. The Town has collaborated with several other communities to form the Chittenden County Regional Stormwater Education program in an effort to educate the greater community about stormwater runoff. The Town has developed several action plans regarding stormwater including an integrated water resources plan, a stormwater management plan, an illicit discharge detection plan, and a stormwater outfall assessment plan. Some of the various on-going actions the Town has taken to ensure against stormwater becoming a threat to public health, the environment, and the economy of the community include water quality monitoring, maintenance plans for public infrastructure, storm drain stenciling, the implementation of various ordinances, and capital plans such as the Belwood Drainage Project and the Fort Ethan Allen Stormwater Improvements Plan.

The Town has adopted Chapter 18 of the Colchester Code of Ordinance regulating stormwater. This regulation ensures that projects which can impact water quality but do not trigger State review are reviewed at the local level for stormwater management and erosion control. New stormwater treatment facilities that treat runoff from public infrastructure constructed as a part of developments are required to enter into co-applicancy agreements with the Town to define responsibilities, ownership, and permitting obligations. The Town is continually seeking methods to effectively and efficiently treat stormwater. In 2013 the Town's Integrated Water Resources Management Plan, funded through an Environmental Protection Agency Demonstration Grant, provided a comprehensive evaluation of town-wide water quality issues and holistic solutions. Included in the project's final recommendations, were the recommendations to pursue a stormwater utility as well as additional oversight of wastewater systems within high-risk areas. During the term of this plan, the Town will explore implementing these solutions.

Recently, the Colchester Heritage Project also recommended that the Town adopt a policy of using environmentally friendly, least harmful alternatives to pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers wherever practical in maintenance of town-owned properties and roadways.[6]

East Lakeshore Drive Stormwater Repair

[6] *Correlates to the Colchester Heritage Project's Community Strategic Plan 2012-2022, Environment and Agriculture Goal, action item four.*

While these initiatives are already in place, it is recommended that these efforts be sustained and employees have training in environmentally friendly uses of pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers.[7]

FIRE FIGHTING AND PREVENTION

The community is served by volunteer fire fighting and prevention services consisting primarily of the Colchester Center Volunteer Fire Company and the Malletts Bay Fire Department. These organizations are independent from the Town and are contracted to provide fire fighting and prevention services for the community. A portion of the Town budget funds these organizations in exchange for their services. Colchester Center maintains a station in the Colchester Village as well as the Clay Point neighborhood while Malletts Bay maintains a station on Church Road in the Porters Point neighborhood.

Saint Michael's College (SMC) operates a Fire Department that is a brigade to the Colchester Center Volunteer Fire Company. While this Department is primarily responsible for calls within the vicinity of the college campus on Route 15, the Company and the Department operate within a contiguous area. Saint Michael's also has a Rescue Department that operates in conjunction with the Colchester Rescue Squad for operations within Colchester. SMC Rescue also serves the greater Burlington area and is one of the busiest volunteer rescue services in Vermont, answering over 2000 calls per year.

The Colchester Technical Rescue Team operates in cooperation with the Colchester Rescue Squad and provides swift-water rescues and dive recoveries for the greater region. This volunteer team often participates in lost or missing person searches and operates a Mobile Support Unit for the State Department of Public Safety. The Team utilizes the Colchester Rescue Squad's facilities and stores its equipment at this location. Additional space may be required to adequately and appropriately store the Team's equipment out of the elements during the term of this plan.

Colchester is fortunate to have a high level of service from these volunteer organizations that have resulted in Colchester obtaining an Insurance Services Organization Rating of Class Four in 2012 (Class 1 being the safest and Class 10 lacking fire protection). This rating results in low fire insurance premiums for community members, homeowners, and business owners. Colchester also benefits from mutual aid agreements with adjacent municipalities that result in additional fire support from neighboring towns in times of need.

These fire protection organizations rely upon volunteers to perform critical, demanding and potentially dangerous services. As noted in the Town Government section, volunteers are becoming tougher to come by for service to the Town. As training requirements become more demanding and the percentage of daytime calls increases, it will continue to become more difficult to staff these emergency services with volunteers. The Town may, in its long range planning, need to evaluate the implementation of paid staff similar to what has been done with the Rescue Squad to help meet emergency service needs. In 2010 Colchester Center responded to over 650 calls while Malletts Bay responded to over 400 calls.

As the Town continues to develop, fire protection measures should continue to be evaluated to minimize threats to life and property. Colchester has adopted within Chapter Seven of the Colchester Code of Ordinance fire protection standards that often exceed State code requirements. Sprinklers are recommended and often required for construction within Colchester. The Town will continue to work with the Regional Planning Commission and the State to

[7] *Correlates to the Colchester Heritage Project's Community Strategic Plan 2012-2022, Environment and Agriculture Goal, action item five.*

ensure that pre-emption devices are installed on all new and retrofitted traffic lights. The effect of land use goals and fire protection services on one another should be recognized and a balance sought. Scattered development patterns often strain fire protection services and delay response time while dense develop-

ment, such as anticipated within a growth center, can offer new challenges to fire protection. As Colchester strives to implement its land use goals, the Town should continue the dialogue with fire protection agencies to minimize adverse impacts to fire services while fulfilling its land use goals.

REGIONAL GOVERNMENT

The Town of Colchester participates in or provides funding for a number of regional agencies including:

- Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission
- Winooski Valley Park District
- Chittenden Solid Waste District
- Chittenden County Court System
- Greater Burlington Industrial Corporation
- Lake Champlain Chamber of Commerce
- Howard Center for Human Services
- Local Motion
- Special Services Transportation Agency

These agencies provide a variety of services for the community including transportation services for the physically impaired and elderly, mental health services, tourism promotion, stewardship of natural areas, and regional traffic planning. A variety of other community service organizations provide services within the community including the United Way of Chittenden County, the Women's Rape Crisis Center, and the Chittenden Emergency Food Shelf and Colchester Food Shelf. These agencies and organizations assist the Town in maintaining the fabric of the community, providing services for individuals with special needs, and planning for the future of the Town within its greater regional community. For these reasons, the Town will continue to work cooperatively with various agencies and organizations to the best of its ability.

POLICIES

1. The Town should continue to work with the State to successfully administer the State's water and wastewater permitting program. To this end, the State should be encouraged to create efficiencies and improvements to this program that better facilitate permitting efficiencies at the local level.
2. The Town should investigate the feasibility of a local onsite wastewater management program.
3. On-site septic systems will continue to be cost-effective solutions for providing wastewater disposal outside of Colchester's sewer service areas during the term of this plan. The Town should continue to encourage upgrades and new technologies that improve the environmental soundness of onsite systems.
4. The 2002 Exit 17 Wastewater Study should be a reference for development within this area until such time as plans may be considered to establish municipal sewer service within this area.
5. Care should be taken to develop priorities for wastewater allocation and update the Town's wastewater management plan accordingly during the term of this plan. The Town's Sewage Ordinance should prioritize wastewater allocation based on land use goals instead of a first-come first-served method of distributing allocation.
6. Sewer service areas shall be planned to implement the community's land use planning goals as provided within this plan and to maximize the cost-effectiveness of investments.
7. The Town shall participate in any consideration of sewer service expansion by other organizations, such as Fire Districts, as any expansion of sewer service areas impacts the Town's land use planning and has the potential to reprioritize priority areas for growth.
8. The Town shall participate in and encourage regional discussions regarding wastewater and regional wastewater utilities.
9. As the Town continues to grow, it should ensure that property owners have access to municipal water supply systems in an effort to provide safe, efficient, and affordable potable water for the community where possible.
10. Water lines should be looped wherever feasible to ensure continuity of water pressure.
11. The Town should take appropriate actions to ensure adequate water supply for the implementation of its land use goals. During the term of this plan, the Town should work to implement, in conjunction with the Fire Districts, the recommendations of the current 20-year water needs analysis project.
12. As the Town continues to grow and looks to expand municipal water infrastructure and opportunities, the efficiency of scale of municipal fire districts should be examined.
13. The Town should continue to work with the Chittenden Solid Waste District to evaluate the community's needs.
14. The Town should continue its current efforts regarding stormwater and, where feasible, expand these efforts.
15. The Town should evaluate implementing a stormwater utility.
16. The Town will continue to work to ensure that pre-emption devices are installed on all new and retrofitted traffic lights.
17. The effect of land use goals and fire protection services on one another should be recognized and a balance sought. As Colchester strives to implement its land use goals, the Town should continue the dialogue with fire protection agencies to minimize adverse impacts to fire services while fulfilling its land use goals.
18. The Town will continue to work cooperatively with the various agencies and organizations that assist the Town in maintaining the fabric of the community, providing services for individuals with special needs, and planning for the future of the Town within its greater regional community.
19. Protecting surface water from stormwater impacts is a high priority in review of proposed developments.
20. The Town should maintain and enhance the overall high quality of services delivered to Colchester residents and businesses and constrain costs to tax and ratepayers.[8]
21. The Town should increase the contribution and participation of people who live and work in Colchester.[9]

[8] *Correlates to the Colchester Heritage Project's Community Strategic Plan 2012-2022, Governance Goal, objective one.*
[9] *Correlates to the Colchester Heritage Project's Community Strategic Plan 2012-2022, Governance Goal, objective two.*

12 REGIONAL COOPERATION

VISION: The Town of Colchester seeks to work together with other municipalities and the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission in order to achieve the vision and policies called for in this plan and assist other municipalities and the Regional Planning Commission in meeting their goals.

The Town of Colchester is a member community of the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission and actively participates in policy making within this organization that affects the land use of Colchester as well as other municipalities. This plan has been developed so as to be in accordance with the 2013 ECOS Plan although there are instances noted in this plan, where the Town's plan varies slightly from the Regional Plan. The Town also recognizes that implementation of its land use goals impacts adjacent communities and it strives to maintain open dialogues with these communities. The following details the communities abutting Colchester and anticipated impact of this plan upon these communities.

SOUTH HERO

The 2009 Town Plan for South Hero notes the areas adjacent to Colchester as Shoreland and Residential with two pockets of conservation areas. Colchester abuts South Hero along the Colchester Causeway which originates within the Suburban Residential Future Land Use area of Colchester. The designations are compatible as they both encourage residential development. South Hero's Shoreland designation is similar to Colchester's Shoreland District that also lines the shoreline of Lake Champlain. These districts both encourage a protective buffer around the Lake. Colchester will continue to work with surrounding municipalities to link multi-use paths such as the Causeway. Page 39 of South Hero's Town Plan states: "The South Hero Town Plan supports the creation and maintenance of town trails and coordinating with regional trail projects." This point is emphasized four times in the plan- as part of the Special Environment, Transportation Plans, Community Assets, and Regional Cooperation.

MILTON

The Milton border stretches along the Town of Colchester's northern edge from the Lamoille River to the eastern boundary of the Town with Westford. This area includes a range of Future Land Use areas within Colchester but predominantly consists of Agricultural/ Rural Residential Future Land Use areas. The Northeast Quadrant of Colchester borders Milton from the Westford line to the Exit 17 vicinity. This Quadrant is designated as Rural. "Agricultural uses and low density residential uses are compatible land uses within these areas that often include significant natural resources, prime agricultural soils, and other characteristics that generally make these areas unsuitable for development." The 2013 Comprehensive Plan for the Town of Milton designates the adjacent land in Milton as Agricultural/ Rural Residential and Flood Hazard. These areas are described in the East Milton and Cobble Hill Planning Areas. The Cobble Hill Planning Area "encourages a diversity of agricultural uses" and "encourages low density well, planned residential development which enhances the character of the area" as detailed on page 123 of the plan. The East Milton area also states the same intended goals on page 130 of the plan. Colchester's Rural Future Land Use designation is compatible with the proposed future land use areas of Milton within this vicinity.

The Exit 17 vicinity of Colchester is designated as Village Mixed Use in Colchester's Future Land Use plans. The future land use areas in Milton which abut the Village Mixed Use area include General Industrial and Low Density Residential. These areas are detailed in the Catamount Area Planning Area on pages 122-123 of Milton's Plan. The goals for this area are to: "encourage high quality industrial development in a subregional growth center, which will provide greater employment opportunities and broaden tax base" and to "ensure an aesthetically pleasing approach into Milton." The Exit 17 neighborhood planning area within Colchester is classified as Village Mixed Use although it will need additional infrastructure to support its development which provides for a range of uses including light industrial and residential. In this manner, the proposed uses in Colchester and Milton are in keeping with one another. The current zoning employed at Exit 17, which will be maintained for the duration of this plan, includes design review elements that also seek to ensure high quality designs and site development within this area.

West of Interstate 89 to the Lamoille River, the lands bordering Milton are designated as Rural and Suburban Residential within Colchester's Future Land Use plans. These areas abut future land use areas that the Town of Milton designates as Agricultural/ Rural Residential and Flood Hazard within the Lamoille Planning Area. This area "encourages innovative neighborhood planning concepts" including "medium and low density planned residential developments" as detailed on page 101 of Milton's plan. This is in keeping with Colchester's intended low residential densities of the Rural Future Land Use area and the medium residential densities of the Suburban Residential Area.

Along the Lamoille River, Colchester has designated the area abutting Milton as Rural. These areas are designated as Agricultural/Rural Residential and Flood Hazard in Milton and are located within the West Milton Planning Area. The goals for this area in Milton include "encourages a diversity of agricultural uses" and "encourages low density well-planned residential development which enhances the character of the area" as detailed on pages 128-129 of Milton's plan. This is in keeping with the intent of Colchester's Rural Future Land Use area.

The 2013 Comprehensive Plan for the Town of Milton recognizes the need for multi-use paths and connections within Milton and it is hoped that the on-going efforts of the Long Range Access and Mobility Committee will eventually look to linkages with adjacent municipalities. Colchester has designated path corridors in accordance with the Alternative Transportation Plan developed by the Chittenden County Metropolitan Planning Organization which include linkages to Milton within the Exit 17 vicinity. Colchester will continue to participate in regional dialogues to link its proposed pedestrian and bicycle corridors to adjacent communities.

WESTFORD

Westford abuts Colchester at its most northeastern corner. The area which abuts Colchester is designated as Agricultural, Forestry, and Residential I in Westford's 2010 Town Plan. This area is very similar to Colchester's Rural Future Land Use area which it abuts. Both districts promote agricultural uses and are appropriate for low density residential development. The area of Colchester that abuts Westford lacks public infrastructure including roads and trails.

ESSEX TOWN (2011 PLAN)

Colchester is bounded on the east by the Town of Essex. The area ranges from the Rural areas of Colchester's Northeast Quadrant to Village designated areas along Routes 2A and 15 to Suburban Residential along Severance Road and a small portion of Commercial Industrial along the rail corridor. The majority of the lands bordering Colchester are designated as Conservation, Agricultural / Residential, Industrial, and Open Recreation in Essex. This area, north of Route 2A and south of the Westford border includes the natural area of Indian Brook Reservoir. On the Colchester side of the boundary, this area is designated as Rural and includes the Colchester Pond Natural Area. The designations are compatible as both seek to maintain low densities that are appropriate for the stewardship of the natural areas within this vicinity. The presence of the Open Recreation and Conservation areas in Essex and the Colchester Pond area provide an opportunity to facilitate primitive path connections and environmental stewardship within the greater area. A dialogue on this possibility was begun between the Planning Commissions of the two towns as part of updating the respective communities' plans. This dialogue should be built upon as each town looks to implement these plans.

Within the vicinity of Route 2A south to the Fort, Essex has designated land as medium density residential and industrial. The medium density residential abuts Rural designated lands within Colchester. The medium density residential area is a small pocket of land area that is not likely to have an adverse impact on the Rural lands of Colchester. The majority of the land from Route 2A to the Fort is categorized in Essex as industrial. In Colchester

some of this land is categorized as Commercial/Industrial, which is compatible with Essex's industrial classification. The remainder of the land is either Village or Rural in previous plans. Colchester's Village designation includes light commercial and residential which may conflict with more heavy industrial uses. The lands south of the Village and north of the proposed Circumferential Highway right-of-way are classified as Rural which conflicts with Essex's industrial classification. South of the Circ, Colchester has designated the land abutting Essex as Suburban Residential along Severance Road as in previous plans. As this road transitions to Kellogg Road in Essex, it is designated as industrial. The residential and industrial within this area are mostly preexisting and do not generate substantial conflict at this time. As Essex looks to build out its industrial area, Colchester should continue its dialogue with the Town to minimize potential impacts to its Rural, Village, and Suburban Residential areas.

In the vicinity of Fort Ethan Allen, Essex has designated the area a combination of Retail Business, Industrial, Open Recreation, and Historic Preservation. Colchester's designation of this area as Village Mixed Use includes all of these various uses from residential to commercial to light industrial. The current zoning for this area, GD2, which is not expected to change during the duration of this plan, includes design control elements for the historic fort area. During discussions between the Towns' Planning Commissions, there was generally support for a multi-use path in the Fort between Colchester and Essex. The Parade Grounds, split between the two communities, is an important recreation area for the vicinity and should be tied into existing development. Concerns exist regarding the development of vehicular connections within this area. The Town of Colchester will continue to work with the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission as well as the Town of Essex to address needed improvements to the Route 15 corridor which bridges this area. During the term of this plan, the Town should continue dialogues with Essex and the RPC on improvements to Route 15 as well as stewardship of the Fort Ethan Allen area.

The Town of Colchester should continue to work with the Town of Essex as well as other Circumferential Highway communities to ensure viable alternatives to the highway are developed and implemented to reduce the unintended consequences of a partially completed highway that increases traffic volumes on Route 2A as well as Severance Road and Route 15.

It should also be noted that the southernmost area of Essex abutting Colchester is designated as Flood Plain. The abutting area of Colchester is designated as Village Mixed Use. Future plans for Essex also include expanded bike and pedestrian paths and trails along roads shared with Colchester. Some of these roads include Route 15, Kellogg Road, Colchester Road, the Circumferential Highway, and Lost Nation Road.

SOUTH BURLINGTON

The City of South Burlington abuts Colchester along the Fort Ethan Allen neighborhood in the very southeastern tip of Colchester. The Fort neighborhood area is designated as the Future Land Use designation Village Mixed Use. The 2011 South Burlington Comprehensive Plan designated the area abutting Colchester, which South Burlington refers to as the 'Northeast Quadrant', as primarily Mixed Industrial and Commercial. Page 3 through 14 of the South Burlington Plan states: "Future use of land in developed areas should continue to focus on employers and development that is compatible with operations of the nearby airport. It should also continue to emphasize uses that are less compatible with the core of the city. In addition, future re-development should make use of improved transit services where available."

While the Fort neighborhood includes light Commercial, the area directly abutting South Burlington is predominantly institutional in character. The natural ravine of the Winooski River which separates Colchester from South Burlington, the South Burlington side being zoned for parks and recreation uses, provides a significant natural buffer between these somewhat differing land uses.

WINOOSKI

The City of Winooski borders Colchester at its southern tip. The 2009 Winooski Municipal Development Plan notes the majority of the lands bordering Colchester as being designated residential and open space. These lands abut the Suburban Residential area of Malletts Bay Avenue and are compatible uses. Within the Exit 16 area of Colchester, Winooski abuts Colchester's Business Future Land Use area. The Winooski Town Plan notes the area abutting Exit 16 as a combination of industrial, public, and park. A small portion of residentially designated land abuts the Commercial / Industrial lands of the pre-existing quarry operation. This is an existing situation that will not be made worse by the proposed plan. The industrial area of Winooski is compatible with the Commercial / Industrial area of Colchester and shares the same types of uses. Through its zoning, Colchester has sought to mitigate any negative impacts to the public lands in Winooski by prohibiting new drive-up businesses within 300 feet of a school, library, or hospital. Should the public use in Winooski be altered, Colchester will likely consider lifting these conditions from current zoning. The City and the Town should work together to ensure that any changes within this area are compatible and conflicts are minimized.

Along the eastern edge of Winooski, Saint Michael's College Campus consumes most of the border area in Colchester within the Village Mixed Use area at Fort Ethan Allen. A combination of park and residential future land use areas, including a small portion of industrial, exist in Winooski as it abuts this Village Mixed Use area. These future land use areas are compatible with Village Mixed Use as it includes all of these land uses. Saint Michael's College is an existing presence as it abuts Winooski's residential area. There are no plans to expand the campus westward and care has been taken to mitigate the impact of the existing campus on adjacent residential areas. For these reasons, Colchester's proposed future land use plans are compatible with Winooski's.

It should be noted that Winooski has a proposed cycleway network that will implement a city-wide system of bicycle ways that will connect to bike routes in Burlington and Colchester. Colchester should continue to work with the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission and the City of Winooski to ensure that its planned pedestrian ways and multi-use paths tie into Winooski's plans and the larger regional network.

BURLINGTON

The City of Burlington lies across the Winooski River and its floodplain from Colchester. Within Colchester, two future land use areas border Burlington: Agricultural Mixed Use and Suburban Residential. Agricultural Mixed Use runs from the Winooski border to the end of Macrae Road. This area borders farm land and a park in Burlington that are within the greenspaces designation of its 2011 Muncipal Development Plan's future land use plan and are compatible with Colchester's Agricultural Mixed Use designation that seeks to balance continued agricultural practices with commercial and low density residential opportunities.

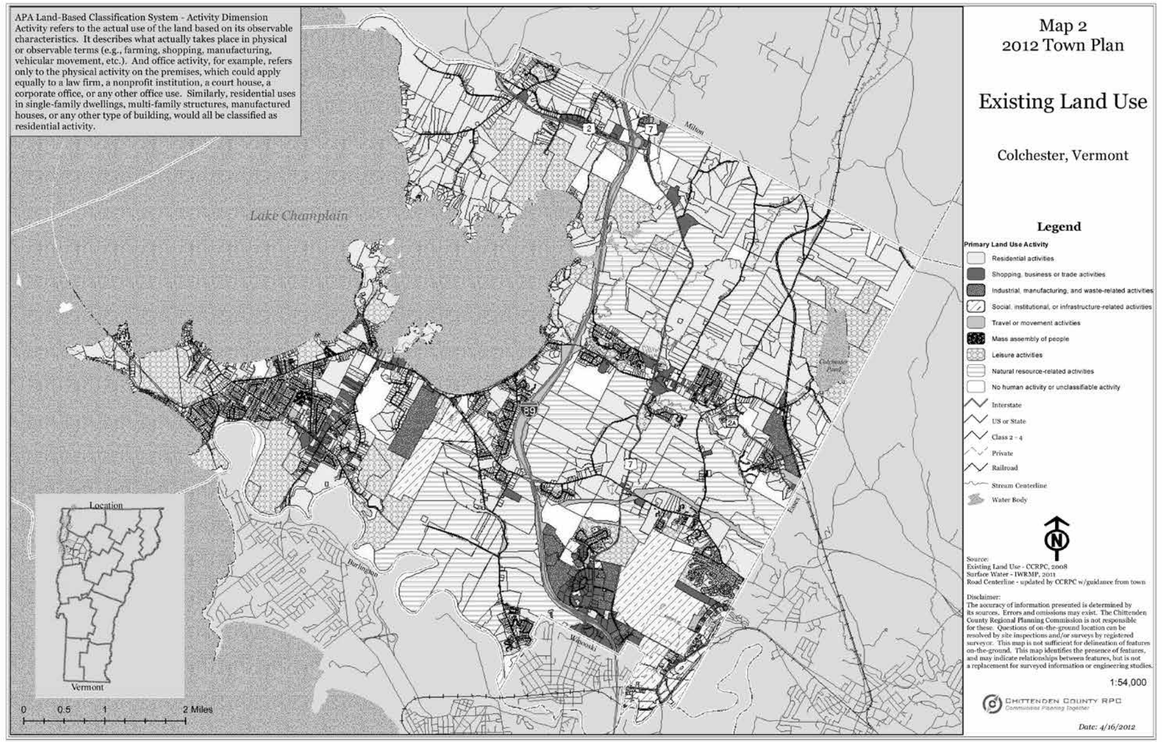
Macrae Road to the mouth of the Winooski River is designated as Suburban Residential on the Colchester side of the river. Burlington has designated the abutting area as a combination of greenspaces and residential. The greenspaces area is in proximity to the Winooski River and follows the floodplain on the Colchester side. Beyond the floodplain on the Burlington side is the New North End and on the Colchester side is the Porters Point and Bean/Macrae neighborhoods. These areas are already significantly developed, compatible, residential neighborhoods where little change is expected during the term of this plan.

Colchester will continue to work with Burlington to ensure that issues such as traffic congestion, connectivity of multi-use paths, and water quality are adequately addressed. While Colchester's Village Mixed Use area designated along the Route 127 corridor has the potential to impact traffic in Burlington, background traffic from commuters from the north end of Burlington heading north has drastically increased in recent years and will continue to be a problem until such time as the Circ Alternatives are completed. The bike bridge over the Winooski River linking Colchester's Causeway to the Burlington Bike Path has become a popular route for cyclists and more opportunities such as this should be looked to in order to provide alternative transportation routes and recreational opportunities for persons from both communities.

Appendix A : ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The 2013 Colchester Economic Development Action Plan is herein included as Appendix A of the 2014 Colchester Town Plan and available for purchase under separate cover.

MAPS:


APA Land-Based Classification System - Activity Dimension
Activity refers to the actual use of the land based on its observable characteristics. It describes what actually takes place in physical or observable terms (e.g., farming, shopping, manufacturing, vehicular movement, etc.). And office activity, for example, refers only to the physical activity on the premises, which could apply equally to a law firm, a nonprofit institution, a court house, a corporate office, or any other office use. Similarly, residential uses in single-family dwellings, multi-family structures, manufactured houses, or any other type of building, would all be classified as residential activity.
Map 2
2012 Town Plan
Existing Land Use
Colchester, Vermont
Legend
Primary Land Use Activity
Residential activities
Shopping, business or trade activities
Industrial, manufacturing, and waste-related activities
Social, institutional, or infrastructure-related activities
Travel or movement activities
Mass assembly of people
Leisure activities
Natural resource-related activities
No human activity or unclassifiable activity
Interstate
US or State
Class 2 - 4
Private
Railroad
Stream Centerline
Water Body
Source:
Existing Land Use - CCRPC, 2008
Surface Water - IWRMP, 2011
Road Centerline - updated by CCRPC w/guidance from town
Disclaimer:
The accuracy of information presented is determined by its sources. Errors and omissions may exist. The Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission is not responsible for these. Questions of on-the-ground location can be resolved by site inspections and/or surveys by registered surveyor. This map is not sufficient for delineation of features on-the-ground. This map identifies the presence of features, and may indicate relationships between features, but is not a replacement for surveyed information or engineering studies.
1:54,000
CHITTENDEN COUNTY RPC
Date: 4/16/2012
Lake Champlain
Milton
Colchester Pond
Winooski
Location
Vermont
0 0.5 1 2 Miles

Map 3
2012 Town Plan
Future Land Use
Colchester, Vermont
Legend
Land Use Category
Growth Center
Village Mixed Use
Suburban Residential
Agricultural Mixed Use
Rural
Business
Interstate
US or State Route
Class 2 - 4 Road
Private Road
Railroad
Stream Centerline
Water Body
Source:
Future Land Use - Updated 2012, CCRPC
Surface Water - IWRMP, 2011
Road Centerline - updated by CCRPC w/guidance from town
Disclaimer:
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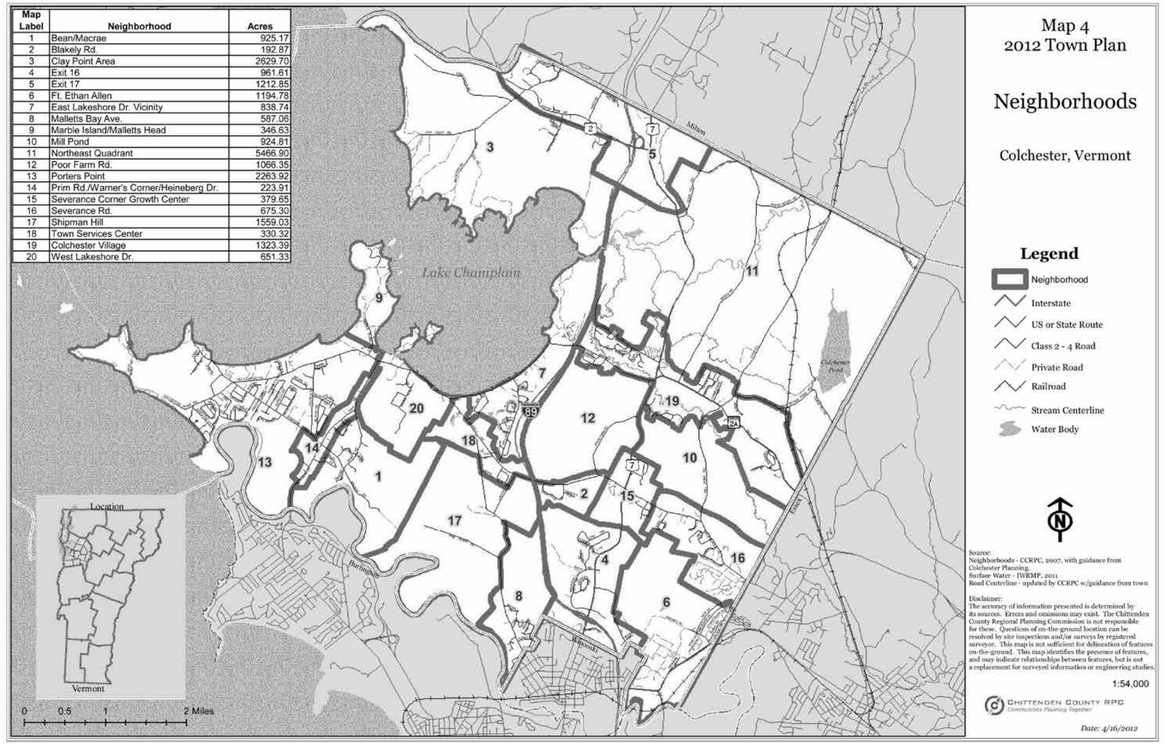
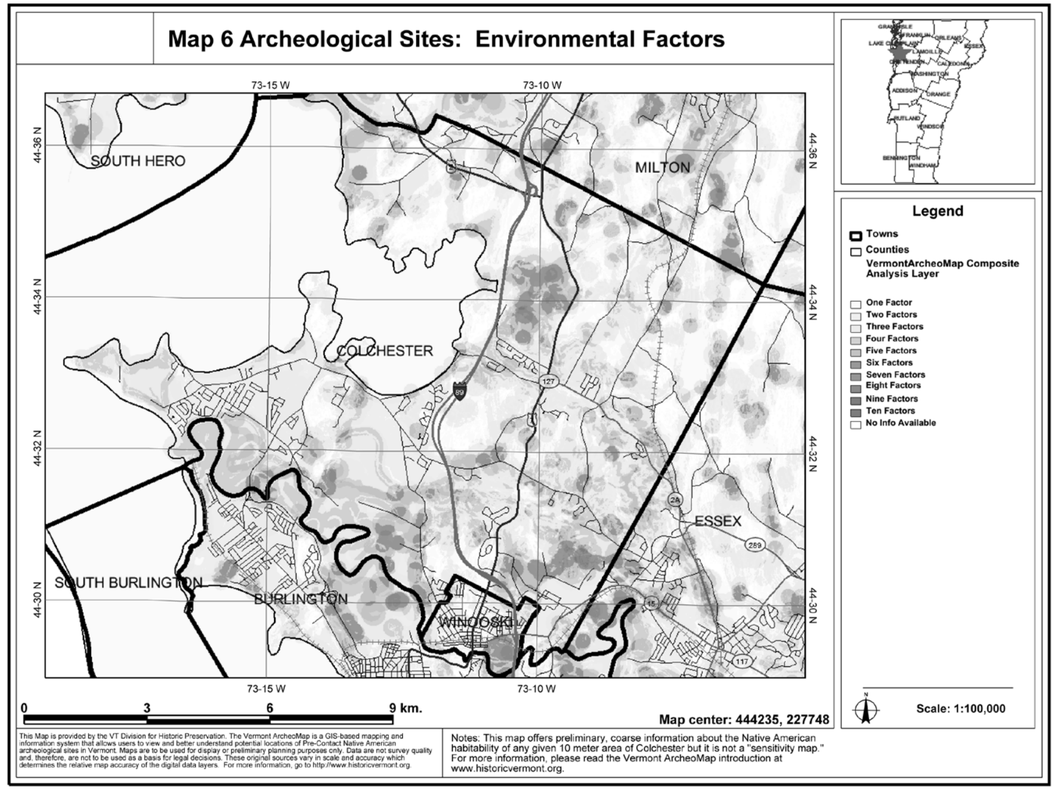
1:54,000
CHITTENDEN COUNTY RPC
Date: 4/16/2012
Lake Champlain
Milton
Colchester Pond
Winooski
Location
Vermont
0 0.5 1 2 Miles

Map Label	Neighborhood	Acres
1	Bean/Macrae	925.17
2	Blakely Rd.	192.87
3	Clay Point Area	2629.70
4	Exit 16	961.61
5	Exit 17	1212.85
6	Ft. Ethan Allen	1194.78
7	East Lakeshore Dr. Vicinity	838.74
8	Malletts Bay Ave.	587.06
9	Marble Island/Malletts Head	346.63
10	Mill Pond	924.81
11	Northeast Quadrant	5466.90
12	Poor Farm Rd.	1066.35
13	Porters Point	2263.92
14	Prim Rd./Warner's Corner/Heineberg Dr.	223.91
15	Severance Corner Growth Center	379.85
16	Severance Rd.	675.30
17	Shipman Hill	1559.03
18	Town Services Center	330.32
19	Colchester Village	1323.39
20	West Lakeshore Dr.	651.33




Map 6 Archeological Sites: Environmental Factors
73-15 W
73-10 W
44-36 N
44-34 N
44-32 N
44-30 N
SOUTH HERO
MILTON
COLCHESTER
ESSEX
SOUTH BURLINGTON
BURLINGTON
WINOOSKI
0 3 6 9 km.
Map center: 444235, 227748
Legend
Towns
Counties
VermontArcheoMap Composite Analysis Layer
One Factor
Two Factors
Three Factors
Four Factors
Five Factors
Six Factors
Seven Factors
Eight Factors
Nine Factors
Ten Factors
No Info Available
Scale: 1:100,000
This Map is provided by the VT Division for Historic Preservation. The Vermont ArcheoMap is a GIS-based mapping and information system that allows users to view and better understand potential locations of Pre-Contact Native American archeological sites in Vermont. Maps are to be used for display or preliminary planning purposes only. Data are not survey quality and, therefore, are not to be used as a basis for legal decisions. These original sources vary in scale and accuracy which determines the relative map accuracy of the digital data layers. For more information, go to http://www.historicvermont.org
Notes: This map offers preliminary, coarse information about the Native American habitability of any given 10 meter area of Colchester but it is not a "sensitivity map." For more information, please read the Vermont ArcheoMap introduction at www.historicvermont.org.

Map 7
2012 Town Plan
Water System Service Area
Colchester, Vermont
Legend
Fire District Boundary
Water District Service Area
Fire District #1
Fire District #2
Fire District #3
Champlain Water District
Essex
Interstate
US or State Route
Class 2 - 4 Road
Private Road
Railroad
Stream Centerline
Water Body
Lake Champlain
Fire District 3
Fire District 2
Fire District 1
Milton
Jericho
Winooski
Colchester Pond
Location
Vermont
0 0.5 1 2 Miles
Source:
Fire District Boundary - updated by CCRPC, 2012
Water District Service Area - updated by CCRPC, 2012
Surface Water - IWRMP, 2011
Road Centerline - updated by CCRPC w/guidance from town
Disclaimer:
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1:54,000
Chittenden County RPC
Date: 4/18/2012

Map 8
2012 Town Plan
Sewer
Service Area
Colchester, Vermont
Legend
Sewer Service Area
Town of Colchester - Constructed
Town of Essex
Not Served
Interstate
US or State Route
Class 2 - 4 Road
Private Road
Railroad
Stream Centerline
Water Body
Lake Champlain
Milton
Colchester Pond
Burlington
Winooski
Essex
Location
Vermont
0 0.5 1 2 Miles
Source:
Sewer Service Area - CCRPC, 2007
Surface Water - IWRMP, 2011
Road Centerline - updated by CCRPC w/guidance from town
Disclaimer:
The accuracy of information presented is determined by its sources. Errors and omissions may exist. The Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission is not responsible for these. Questions of on-the-ground location can be resolved by site inspections and/or surveys by registered surveyor. This map is not sufficient for delineation of features on-the-ground. This map identifies the presence of features, and may indicate relationships between features, but is not a replacement for surveyed information or engineering studies.
1:54,000
Chittenden County RPC
Communities Planning Together
Date: 4/18/2012

Map 9
2012 Town Plan
Utilities
Colchester, Vermont
Legend
Telecommunication
Antenna
Tower
Broadband - Cable
DSL Service Area
Vermont Gas Service Area
Electric Company Coverage Area
Interstate
US or State Route
Class 2 - 4 Road
Private Road
Railroad
Stream Centerline
Water Body
Central Vermont Public Service Corp.
Green Mountain Power
Lake Champlain
Milton
Colchester Pond
Burlington
Winooski
Essex
Location
Vermont
0 0.5 1 2 Miles
Source:
Telecommunications - VT Environmental Board, 2011
Broadband - Cable - Dept. of Public Service, 2007
DSL - Dept. of Public Service, 2007
Electric Company Coverage - 2011
Vermont Gas Service Area - CCRPC, 2011
Surface Water - IWRMP, 2011
Road Centerline - updated by CCRPC w/guidance from town
Disclaimer:
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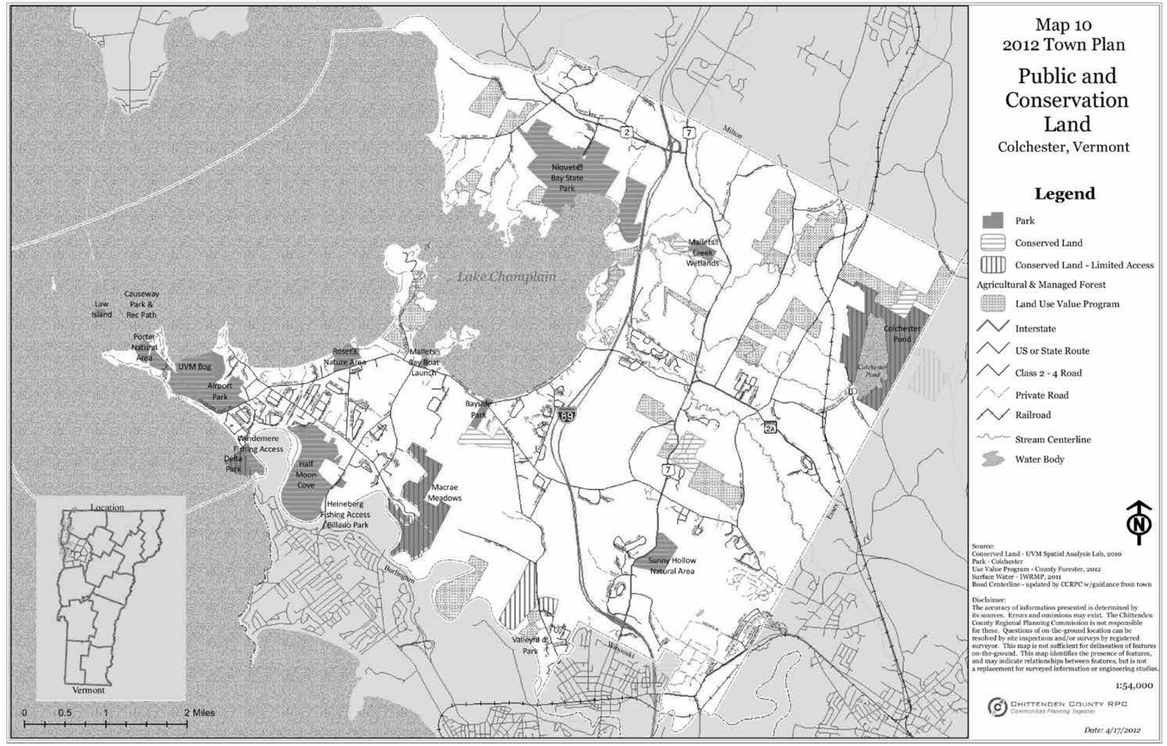
Chittenden County RPC
Communities Planning Together
Date: 4/16/2012



Map 10
2012 Town Plan
Public and Conservation Land
Colchester, Vermont

Legend

- Park
- Conserved Land
- Conserved Land - Limited Access

Agricultural & Managed Forest

- Land Use Value Program
- Interstate
- US or State Route
- Class 2 - 4 Road
- Private Road
- Railroad
- Stream Centerline
- Water Body

Source:
Conserved Land - UVM Spatial Analysis Lab, 2010
Park - Colchester
Use Value Program - County Forester, 2012
Surface Water - IWRMP, 2011
Road Centerline - updated by CCRPC w/guidance from town

Disclaimer:
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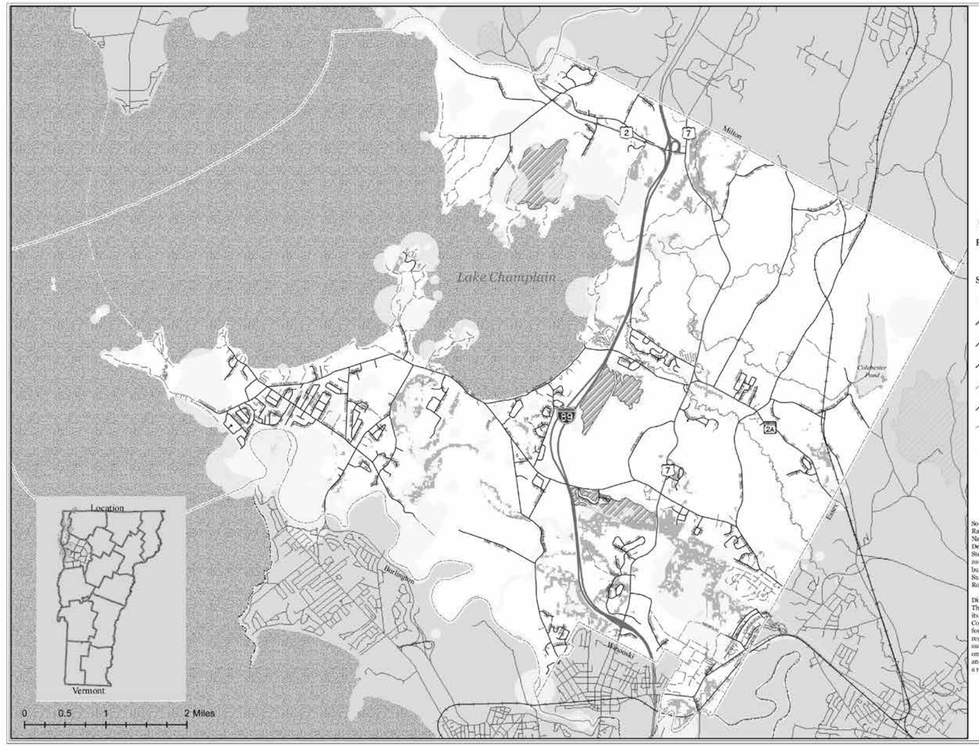
CHITTENDEN COUNTY RPC
Communities Planning Together

Date: 4/17/2012



Map 11
2012 Town Plan
Natural Features
Colchester, Vermont

Legend

- Deer Wintering Area

Rare, Threatened, &/or Endangered Species

Significant Natural Community

Steep Slope in Non-Residential

- Zoning District
- Interstate
- US or State Route
- Class 2 - 4 Road
- Private Road
- Railroad
- Stream Centerline
- Water Body

Source:
Rare, Threatened, & Endangered Species - VT Nongame & Natural Heritage Program, 2011
Deer Wintering Areas - VT Fish & Wildlife, 2011
Steep Slope - steep slope for non-residential and mixed use zoning districts was defined as 8% or greater in the Colchester build-out, CCRPC 2006
Surface Water - IWRMP, 2011
Road Centerline - updated by CCRPC w/guidance from town

Disclaimer:
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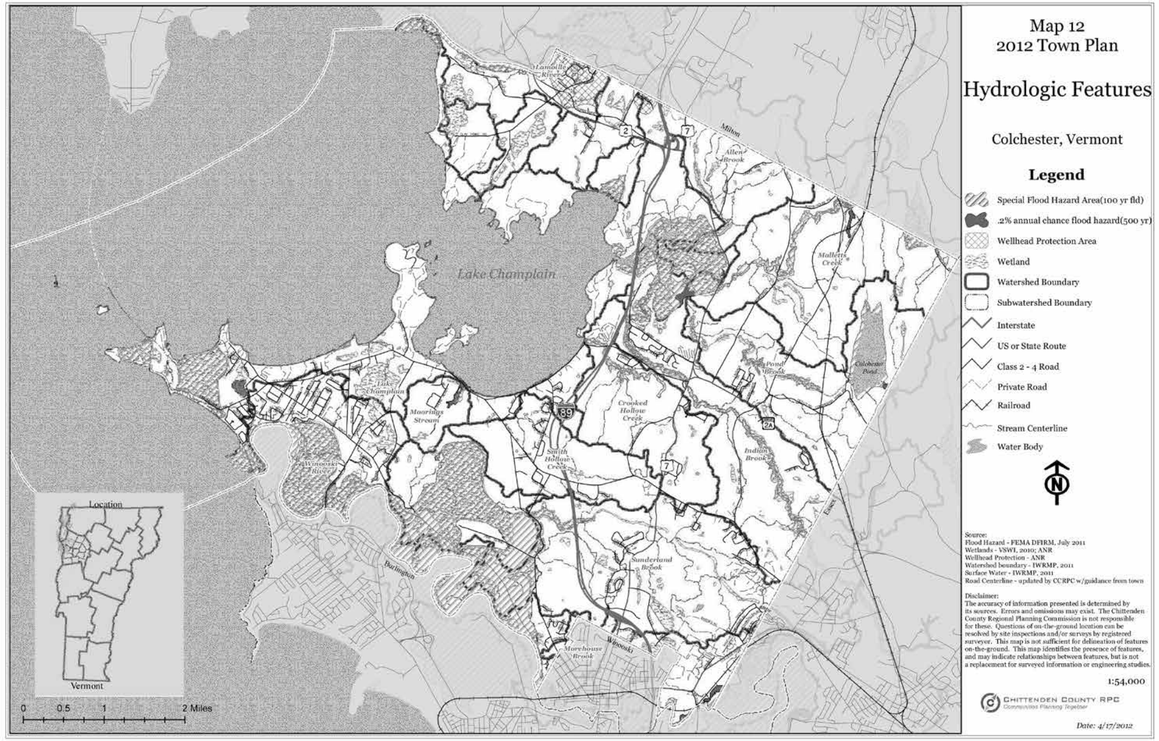
CHITTENDEN COUNTY RPC
Communities Planning Together

Date: 4/17/2012


Map 12
2012 Town Plan
Hydrologic Features
Colchester, Vermont
Legend
Special Flood Hazard Area(100 yr fld)
.2% annual chance flood hazard(500 yr)
Wellhead Protection Area
Wetland
Watershed Boundary
Subwatershed Boundary
Interstate
US or State Route
Class 2 - 4 Road
Private Road
Railroad
Stream Centerline
Water Body
Lake Champlain
Milton
Allen Brook
Mallets Creek
Colchester Pond
Pond Brook
Crooked Hollow Creek
Indian Brook
Sunderland Brook
Morehouse Brook
Mountain Stream
Burlington
Location
Vermont
0 0.5 1 2 Miles
Source:
Flood Hazard - FEMA DFIRM, July 2011
Wetlands - VSWI, 2010; ANR
Wellhead Protection - ANR
Watershed boundary - IWRMP, 2011
Surface Water - IWRMP, 2011
Road Centerline - updated by CCRPC w/guidance from town
Disclaimer:
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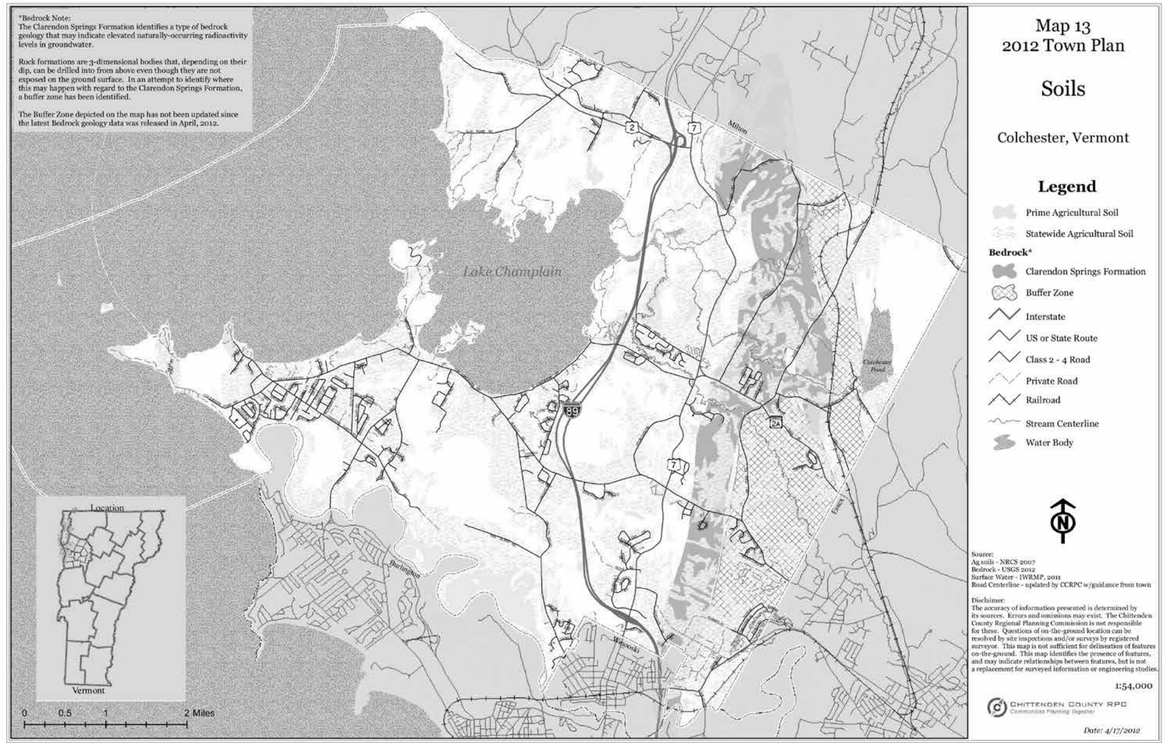
1:54,000
Chittenden County RPC
Date: 4/17/2012


*Bedrock Note:
The Clarendon Springs Formation identifies a type of bedrock geology that may indicate elevated naturally-occurring radioactivity levels in groundwater.
Rock formations are 3-dimensional bodies that, depending on their dip, can be drilled into from above even though they are not exposed on the ground surface. In an attempt to identify where this may happen with regard to the Clarendon Springs Formation, a buffer zone has been identified.
The Buffer Zone depicted on the map has not been updated since the latest Bedrock geology data was released in April, 2012.
Map 13
2012 Town Plan
Soils
Colchester, Vermont
Legend
Prime Agricultural Soil
Statewide Agricultural Soil
Bedrock*
Clarendon Springs Formation
Buffer Zone
Interstate
US or State Route
Class 2 - 4 Road
Private Road
Railroad
Stream Centerline
Water Body
Lake Champlain
Milton
Colchester Pond
Burlington
Location
Vermont
0 0.5 1 2 Miles
Source:
Ag soils - NRCS 2007
Bedrock - USGS 2012
Surface Water - IWRMP, 2011
Road Centerline - updated by CCRPC w/guidance from town
Disclaimer:
The accuracy of information presented is determined by its sources. Errors and omissions may exist. The Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission is not responsible for these. Questions of on-the-ground location can be resolved by site inspections and/or surveys by registered surveyor. This map is not sufficient for delineation of features on-the-ground. This map identifies the presence of features, and may indicate relationships between features, but is not a replacement for surveyed information or engineering studies.
1:54,000
Chittenden County RPC
Date: 4/17/2012

Map 14
2012 Town Plan
Community Facilities and Transportation Infrastructure
Colchester, Vermont
Legend
Existing Park & Ride
Proposed Park & Ride
Town Offices/Police Station
Town Building
Fire Station
Rescue Squad
Town Garage
Hospital
School
St. Michael's College
Library
Post Office
Cemetery
Child Care Facility
CCTA Bus Route
Existing Sidewalk
Existing Multi-use Path
Proposed Sidewalk
Proposed Multi-use
Colchester Center Volunteer Fire Company
Malletts Bay Fire Department
Source:
Facilities - updated w/guidance from town
Child Care - updated by CCRPC, 2012
Fire Department - updated by CCRPC, 2012
Surface Water - IWRMP, 2011
Road Centerline - updated by CCRPC w/guidance from town
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1:54,000
CHITTENDEN COUNTY RPC
Communities Planning Together
Date: 4/20/2012
Lake Champlain
Milton
Burlington
Winooski
See Inset
Location
Vermont
0 0.5 1 2 Miles
S BAY CIR
BLACKBERRY CIR
FOX RUN
JEFFREY DR
JULIE DR
WILLIAMS RD
BLAKELY RD
THOMAS DR
LAKER LN
JASON DR