

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**  
**MORRISVILLE/MORRISTOWN PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**WARNED PUBLIC HEARING AT 5:00 PM ON 23 FEBRUARY 2021**  
**FOR ADOPTING A NEW MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN, a/k/a TOWN PLAN**

The Morrisville/Morristown Planning Commission hereby provides notice of public hearing being held pursuant to 24 VSA, Chapter 117, §4303, §4381, §4382, §4384, §4385 and §4447 for the purpose of hearing public comments concerning adopting a new Morrisville/ Morrystown Municipal Development Plan, a/k/a the Town Plan. State law requires that the Municipal Development Plan be updated at least every eight years. The Municipal Development Plan was last revised in 2015. This Municipal Development Plan is being adopted in accordance with VSA 24, Chapter 117, §4303, §4381, §4382, §4384, §4385 and §4447.

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

**DATE: Tuesday 23 February 2021**

**TIME: 5:00 PM**

**PLACE: Electronically only, via Zoom, Meeting #810 342 4528, alt dial in #646-558-8656**

**Statement of Purpose:** To provide the Town of Morrystown/Village of Morrisville with a Municipal Development Plan that meets State of Vermont statutory requirements, furthers the planning goals contained in §4302 of 24 VSA, Chapter 117, and provides a sustainable roadmap for the community's future.

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

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

**Location of where full text may be examined:** A copy of the full text of the proposed Town Plan is available at the Morrystown Town Clerk's Office at 43 Portland Street. For further information, and comments please contact Todd Thomas in the Zoning Office at 888-6373.

## Planning Commission Reporting Form for Municipal Plan Amendments

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

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

The Morrisville/Morristown Town Plan 2020-2030 is consistent with the goals of 24 VSA §4302. Engaged citizenry, working chapter by chapter, over the course of two years, resulted in the first complete rewrite of our community’s Town Plan in generations. The plan strives to maintain the town’s compact settlement pattern, with is mostly located in Morrisville, and also protects the rural and agricultural countryside in the town. Residential development (including support for significantly more housing starts), economic enhancements, and public investments, are directed by the plan into the core of the community. The plan strives to help our community grow in a responsible way, especially in terms of conserving and utilizing local energy resources, while still ensuring that our town remains the economic and job center of Lamoille County. Certain transportation improvements are called for in the plan, but it also strives to protect the environment, important natural features, forest and agricultural resources, the town’s water resources, and its rich history and architecturally unique historic structures.

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

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

-The plan does not expect many changes in the overall pattern of land use. The Future Land Use Map shows only a few areas as potentially being subject to a future zoning change, and these changes, save one, are all just density increases. None of the changes shown on the Future Land Use Map, or within the Land Use Chapter, will create increase traffic flows that will become burdensome in any way. The plan looks to potentially link some of the “satellite” Low Density Residential (LDR) zones to other LDR zones. For example, LDR5 may be linked to LDR1, LDR5 may be linked to LDR4, LDR4 may be linked to LDR3, etc. These linkages will be considered by the Planning Council when weighing the local availability and affordability of housing. These linkages do not change the designation, or use, of land areas. They constitute only minor density increases in rural and low density residential areas. The plan also envisions a potential merger of the Mixed Office Residential zone and the High Density Residential zone. Again, this is just a density change, not a designation change, say from residential to commercial. Additionally, multi-family uses that are not tied to the current requirement for mixed use buildings, are forecasted as being allowed in the plan within less trafficked areas of the Commercial Zone. The only true designation of land area that this town plan envisions changing is a possible expansion of the Industrial Zone #5 Zone around the airport. Residential and airport uses are not compatible, especially when the airport is attempting to grow into more of a positive economic force within the town. As such, this plan supports the as-needed conversion of Parcel #12-130, which is directly to the north of the airport, from residential to industrial zoning.

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

(A) *the municipal tax base; and*

All of the aforementioned possible zoning changes, if executed and approved, would expand the municipal tax base. The cost-benefit analysis of these zoning changes, which will only be made if needed, skew towards a net benefit for the town. The additional residential uses that could be added around the town's satellite Low Density Residential zones would not a boon towards the town's tax base, but because these new homes would be done in an in-fill manner, this change would be an incremental benefit to the municipality. Industrial Zone #5, if expanded based on need, will be a clear benefit to the town. The conversion of less desirable residentially zoned land on Parcel #12-130 into industrial zoned land could supply good paying jobs for the community, while not requiring much municipal resources.

(B) *the need for public facilities;*

The plan calls for only one additional town owned building, the construction of a new village highway garage on Old Creamery Road. The land under which this future building will sit was purchased from Demars Properties in 2020 for \$150,000. The sooner the Town can construct this building, the sooner it can stop paying rent for the temporary garage location on the other end of Old Creamery Road. The plan also calls for the construction of a fieldhouse for school and community purposes. Such a building, if approved by the voters, will come at a significant price tag and creative financing will be needed to avoid "spiking the tax rate" to pay for this new facility. Both of these buildings are needed, and will be a net benefit to the community, if they can be built affordably.

3. *The amount of vacant land which is:*

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

There is approximately 275 acres of land already zoned Industrail-5. There is not a specific amount of land adjacent to the airport that would be converted from Rural Residential zoning to Industrial zoning. One of the adjacent lots that could be converted is Parcel #12-130, which is 130 acres in total size. The parcel is vacant, and mostly wooded. Approximately 20 acres of this parcel is open field. The parcel is also bisected by Ryder Brook, which has accompanying wetland and floodzone limitations.

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

At the moment, Richard Buckwheat Lowe owns most of the open and undeveloped land on the east side of Route 100 in the airport's Industrial Zone #5. He about 17 acres of land, most of which would be available depending on the longevity of his landscaping business. Across the other side of route 100, almost 100 acres of land, that is currently planted as corn, lies in the airport's Industrial Zone. As such, there is ample land currently in the zone that can be developed for Industrial purposes. This makes it unlikely that Parcel #12-130, or parts thereof, will need to go through the zoning change process to accommodate the need for additional developable land by the airport. However, the decision was made for the town plan to still mention Parcel #12-130 so the possibility of a future zoning change therefor was not foreclosed on.

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

(A) *appropriate alternative locations;*

Parcel #12-130 is suitable for future industrial uses, especially since residential uses are not desired next to the airport. There are no alternative lands closer to the airport to consider in its place.

(B) *alternative uses for the area under consideration; and*

The alternative, and most likely near-term use of this parcel is the current hayfield use. Again, most of this parcel is forested. The forested parcel would be the least likely part of this parcel to undergo a zoning change.

(C) *the probable impact of the proposed change on other areas similarly designated*

A zoning change for Parcel #12-130 is unlikely, due to the amount of other nearby land that is undeveloped and already zoned industrial. If this parcel is partly or wholly changed to industrial, there should not be any impact to other areas similarly designated.

5. *The appropriateness of the size and boundaries of the area proposed for change, with respect to the area required for the proposed use, land capability and existing development in the area.”*  
The size and boundaries of adding Parcel #12-130 to the adjacent Industrial zone are appropriate, especially considering it is very unlikely that the entire 130 acre parcel would be added to this zone at one time. In reality, the prospect of any portion of Parcel #12-130 being added to the adjacent airport industrial zone during the 2020-2030 life-cycle of this town plan is relatively slim. Again, Parcel #12-130 is largely being included within the town plan simply so the Town Plan does not need to be updated mid-cycle if the decision is made to include some or all of Parcel #12-130 in the adjacent Industrial Zone. If Parcel 12-130 was to be developed, on-site well and septic would be relied upon.

### **Please Note:**

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

2020-2030

# Morrisville/Morristown Town Plan



Photo Credit: Jasmine Farrell

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

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# Chapter 1: Statement of Policies

## Guiding Future Development &

### Environmental Protection

Welcome to Morrisville, and welcome to the Town Plan for this fantastic quintessentially Vermont community. This plan, which is dated from 2020 to 2030, provides both a template, and a wish-list, for the development and growth of our community over the coming decade. This Town Plan includes the elements required by 24 VSA §4382, and is separated into chapters that are ordered to match the requirements found, as enumerated, in this same State Statute. As you read the plan, agreed upon community priorities therein have been **bolded** for emphasis, and objectives of the community (i.e. goals we want to accomplish within the coming decade) are highlighted via *underlined italics*. The priorities and objectives that the reader will find interwoven, but emphasized via bold, or via underlined italics within the Town Plan, shall guide the future growth and development of land, public services, and facilities, and local environmental protection.

As you will find in Chapter 8 of this plan, our community has come a long way over the last decade. And yet, there are many exciting new developments and community improvements still in the pipeline. Interest in developing and redeveloping within the core of the village is no longer just an aspirational goal of previous town plans. It is currently no longer possible to walk around downtown Morrisville without stumbling upon one, if not more, active major construction sites. As Chapter 10 will relate, our community desperately needs the new housing being provided by these new residential townhouse and multi-family developments. Demand to live within our community has never been greater than at the time of this writing (late 2020). The Town Plan, in Chapter 2, therefore designates certain parts of our community for zoning changes, and increases in residential density, to accommodate the need for future residential growth. Meanwhile, this same Land Use Chapter, also looks to preserve the existing rural feel of the undeveloped, or lightly developed, remote sections of the town, while also protecting certain natural features and the ridgelines that give our town its scenic backdrop. In addition to environmental protection, Chapter 9 of this plan expresses strong support for the continued utilization of natural features like the Lamoille and Green Rivers to generate hydro-power, in an effort to power the growth of our community, while maintaining and improving our town's current levels of environmental sustainability. Chapter 9, along with Chapters 3, 4, 6, and 11, speaks to the public services and facilities that are available, or that this plan imagines being expanded, to serve the taxpayers and residents of our community. Chapters 5 and 12 highlight key environmental protections that are essential to balance the ongoing growth currently happening within our community.



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

Lastly, throughout the Town Plan, the reader will continually see the desire for more efficient outcomes both within local government and throughout the physical town. In Chapter 3, various road connections are proposed to improve the street network/grid, or to help solve traffic problems caused, as an example, by the singular Copley Avenue access point to Peoples Academy. With regard to Town government, the long history of Morristown and Morrisville operating as independent municipalities, when their residents believe they live in just one town, should come to an end. **This plan strongly supports any process or study committee created with the goal of merging the separate municipal governments of Morrisville and Morristown into a single government.** While some work has previously been done in this regard, with road crews, police, and fire, all now reporting just to the Town government, there is more work to be done. This Town Plan, as an example, will need to be approved by both the Town and Village Legislative Bodies, as does any corresponding zoning change. Such a setup can be precarious, as it gives either municipality veto power over the other in regards to zoning decisions, with the prospect of separate town plans and separate zoning bylaws for each community as the only other, highly undesirable, alternative. A study committee should be jointly formed within the next two years by the Village Trustee and Town Selectboard to ascertain what



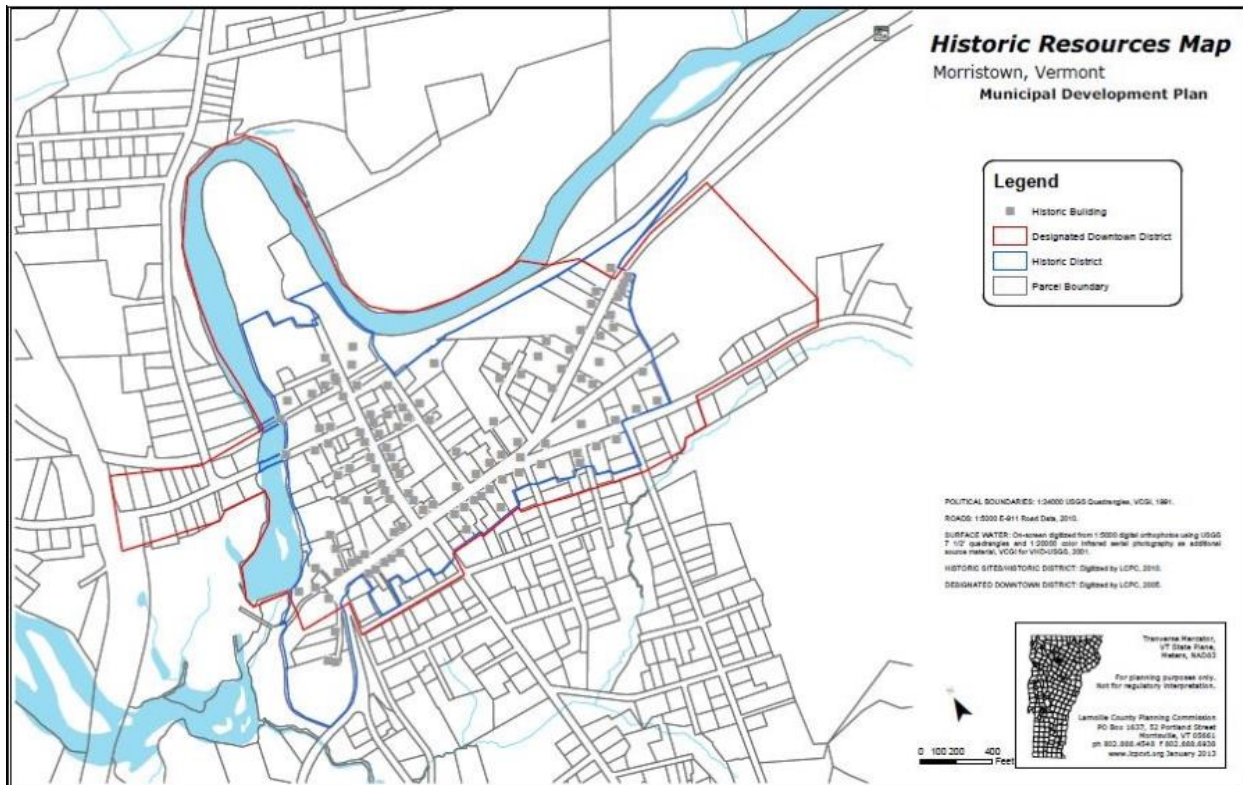
it would entail to update the Village Charter, with the goal of expanding or eliminating the village boundary lines within the large town, or fully merging these municipal governments into one singular town. The goal of such an effort would be to eliminate the inefficiencies and waste created by maintaining separate municipalities for both Morrisville and Morrystown. These inefficiencies include Morrisville, having to pay \$183,355.40 in taxes to Morrystown in 2020 for the village owned properties and utility poles that lie outside the village limits. Given Vermont's education funding system, this means that approximately \$116,541.14 of this sizable tax payment is being shipped out of town, to Montpelier, every year simply due to the continued existence of separate municipalities for Morrystown and Morrisville. Hopefully, highlighting the financial impact of not having a single town name, and a single legal entity, in the Town Plan will create a citizen led effort that results in a stronger, more marketable, and more prosperous singular community.

Thank you in advance for reading the Morrisville/Morrystown Town Plan 2020-2030. We believe this plan, if the Implementation Plan in Chapter 7 is fully enacted, will positively transform our community. These pages of this plan represent approximately a year and a half of the Planning Director's and Morrisville/Morrystown Planning Council's time going chapter-by-chapter to create this aspirational document. If there are any questions about the Town Plan, or the process used to draft it, please contact Planning Director Todd Thomas at 802-888-6373, or via email at [tthomas@morrystownvt.org](mailto:tthomas@morrystownvt.org). Thanks again for reading, and we hope the following pages help you discover and appreciate all the unique things that make our community such an awesome place to live, work, and play.

# Chapter 2: Land Use

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

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



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

While there is much to celebrate regarding the revitalization of downtown Morrisville, there is still work to be done. There is always a need for more parking downtown. Current efforts to expand the Pleasant Street municipal parking lot should be supported and funded by the Selectboard within the next two budget years. The Selectboard should also create a capital fund that, as the balance grows over the years, could eventually be used to create a deck of parking accessed from Hutchins Street, located above, but preferably beneath, the surface of the existing municipal parking lot on Pleasant Street. **The Town’s recent acquisition of land at the intersection of Pleasant and Railroad Streets should also be expanded and developed into additional parking that will support downtown businesses, nearby apartment buildings, and users of the Lamoille Valley Rail-Trail.** These additional parking options, which are also shown on the downtown parking map found on page 25 (Utility & Facility Chapter), could help spur development interest in the nearby Nepvue Building on Portland Street that remains abandoned. The Sunoco gas station at our main downtown intersection is also an extremely underutilized property. The Planning Council should work with the Selectboard to help spur the redevelopment of both of these cornerstone properties. **Widening the sidewalks on the south side of Lower Main Street, to better utilize its 50 feet of pavement width, should be completed within the next five years to encourage the redevelopment of the gas station into a higher and better use.** This work would also help give the existing food businesses on this street, such as Pizza on Main, Black Cap Coffee, and North Country Cakes, badly needed additional area for outside seating. Much can also be gained by helping the downtown reembrace the river that runs through it. The buildings in the downtown largely turn their backs to the Lamoille River. **This plan strongly supports efforts to plan for and construct a boardwalk along the river, paralleling Portland Street, linking Lower Main Street to Bridge Street.** The Planning Council should work with the Copley Trust to see if there is an appetite for funding this boardwalk, lighting, benches, etc. to relink downtown Morrisville to its riverfront. Similarly,

this plan supports an effort to study or locate a path, or even boardwalk, along the portion of the river that backs up to the new apartment houses on recently built on Bridge Street.

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

**Outside of the downtown Central Business Zone, this plan supports adding more multi-family housing in the areas zoned High Density Residential (HDR) and Mixed Office Residential (MOR). This plan also supports evaluating and potentially replacing the small Commercial Zone located in the Lower Village, by Rock Art Brewery, with an expansion of a revised and denser MOR Zone from the west** (see Future Land Use Map located at the end of this chapter). Located concentrically outside the area zoned HDR, **we support the continued developed of duplexes and single family homes in the Medium Density Residential Zone.** Located on the edge of the village and in close-by areas of the town, **we support the continued developed of single-family homes in the Low Density Residential Zone.** Outside of these areas where development is supported by village water and/or sewer, the hope is that there is little change made in the 2020s to the rural parts of the town. We cherish our forested hills, mountain ridgelines, and open agricultural fields. As such, **any major subdivisions in the Rural Residential Agricultural (RRA) Zone shall continue to be done via the conservation subdivision process, which ensures that the town’s rural areas are preserved to some degree, and still maintain a similar appearance and open feel.**

After reconstructing the zoning map in 2018, additional zone changes, other than those cited in this chapter, or shown on the below Future Land Use map, should not be needed during the coming decade. With that being said, **this plan supports any density changes the Planning Council deems appropriate over the coming decade, provided such density change is located within the Sewer Service Management Area.** At the time of this writing, **there is already agreement between the Planning Council and the neighbors of the “Fairwood” neighborhood, that this area, along with some directly adjacent lands, should be zoned Low Density Residential.** The majority of the Fairwood Neighborhood and surrounding lands that

will be zoned Low Density Residential in the coming years are, at the time of this writing, zoned Medium Density Residential. The Fairway neighborhood consists of largely single-family homes on generous lots and this zoning change will help preserve the character of this neighborhood. Conversely, the Council should evaluate if allowing more density on the short section of Brooklyn Street between the Central Business Zone and the Commercial Zone makes sense for a developed area already served by Village water and sewer that is walkable to both downtown and uptown. Up-zoning this relatively small area to High Density Residential would likely incentivize developer investment in this neighborhood, but said investment may come at a quality of life cost to the existing single-family homes that are presently intermixed with the non-conforming multi-family residential uses in this small area. **The consensus elsewhere is to encourage infill housing (new single-family homes on smaller lots) to satisfy demand for housing and population growth.** When this strategy becomes limiting, or when the relatively affordability of the town can be seen as clearly eroding, **the Council should only focus on converting land zoned Rural Residential Agricultural Zone to Low or Medium Density Residential in areas where municipal services already exist or can be extended to, such as Cadys Falls, Morristown Corners, Pinewood Estate, and along Needles Eye Road** (which all are served by municipal water). **The areas, which are called out on the Future Land Use Map included at the end of this chapter, should be relied upon to house much of the new single family home growth outside the village of Morrisville for the next decade.** These zone expansions would link (and merge) the LDR #3 Zone (Sunset) and the LDR #4 Zone (Cadys Falls), as well as the LDR #5 Zone (Morristown Corners) to LDR #1 Zone (Jersey Way).

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

Further south on Route 100, the land surrounding the Morrisville-Stowe airport was rezoned industrial to help support the continued growth and viability of this important community facility. **Residential uses shall continue to be discouraged in the immediate area around the airport because they pose a threat to the airport's long-term viability.** As such, **the Planning Council can consider adding directly adjacent residentially zoned parcels to the airport's Industrial Zone during the coming decade.** While the development of the airport and industry on the surrounding lands will continue to be supported, **the visual appeal of**



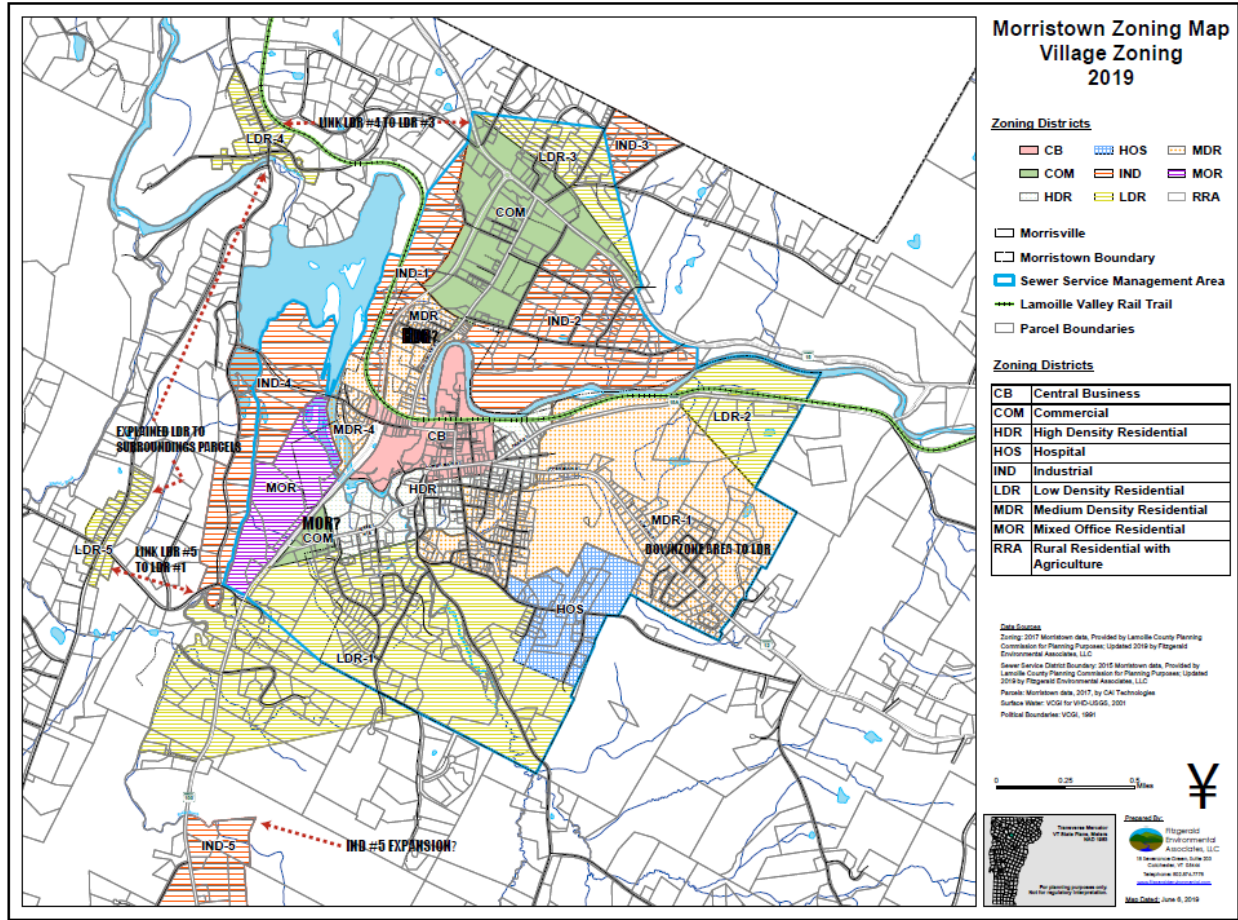
**the open land south of the airport, and down to the Stowe town-line should be preserved as much as possible. The conservation of sensitive lands in this area, including around Joe's Pond and Molly's Bog, should be supported, but right-to-farm language in this plan, or in permit conditions, is discouraged. In more remote areas, development on Class 4 roads that put a strain on municipal services located in the village should be discouraged. However, said policy shall not be used to stop developers from upgrading Class 4 Roads to Class 3 Roads when said roads can serve as important connector roads** (ex. Darling Road: which could connect Rte. 12 & Rte. 15A, Rooney Road: which could connect Mud City Loop to Walton Rd, and Gallup Road: which could connect Stagecoach to Cole Hill Road). Back within the village, the Selectboard should work with the road crew to prioritize connecting Best Street to Foss Street while the Town still has property owner permission to do so.

As the industrial park located adjacent to Harrel Street and Munson Avenue has been largely built out, there remains a future need for additional land zoned for industrial growth in our community. **It is of paramount importance to our town's ability to retain locally owned companies that, as these companies grow, industrial zoned land is available for purchase, allowing these companies, and the good jobs they offer, to remain local.**

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

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

# Morrisville/Morristown Future Land Use Map





# Chapter 3: Transportation

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

[https://maps.vtrans.vermont.gov/Maps/TownMapSeries/LAMOILLE\\_Co/MORRISTOWN/MORRISTOWN\\_MILEAGE\\_2020.pdf](https://maps.vtrans.vermont.gov/Maps/TownMapSeries/LAMOILLE_Co/MORRISTOWN/MORRISTOWN_MILEAGE_2020.pdf)). This 106.7 mile length measurement includes 15 miles of

State Highway. The Village has a total road network of 14.1 miles, including 2 miles of State Highway. The 2020 Village highway map can be found at the following web address

[https://maps.vtrans.vermont.gov/Maps/TownMapSeries/LAMOILLE\\_Co/MORRISTOWN/MORRISTOWN\\_MILEAGE\\_2020.pdf](https://maps.vtrans.vermont.gov/Maps/TownMapSeries/LAMOILLE_Co/MORRISTOWN/MORRISTOWN_MILEAGE_2020.pdf)). This decade-to-decade comparison shows that our road

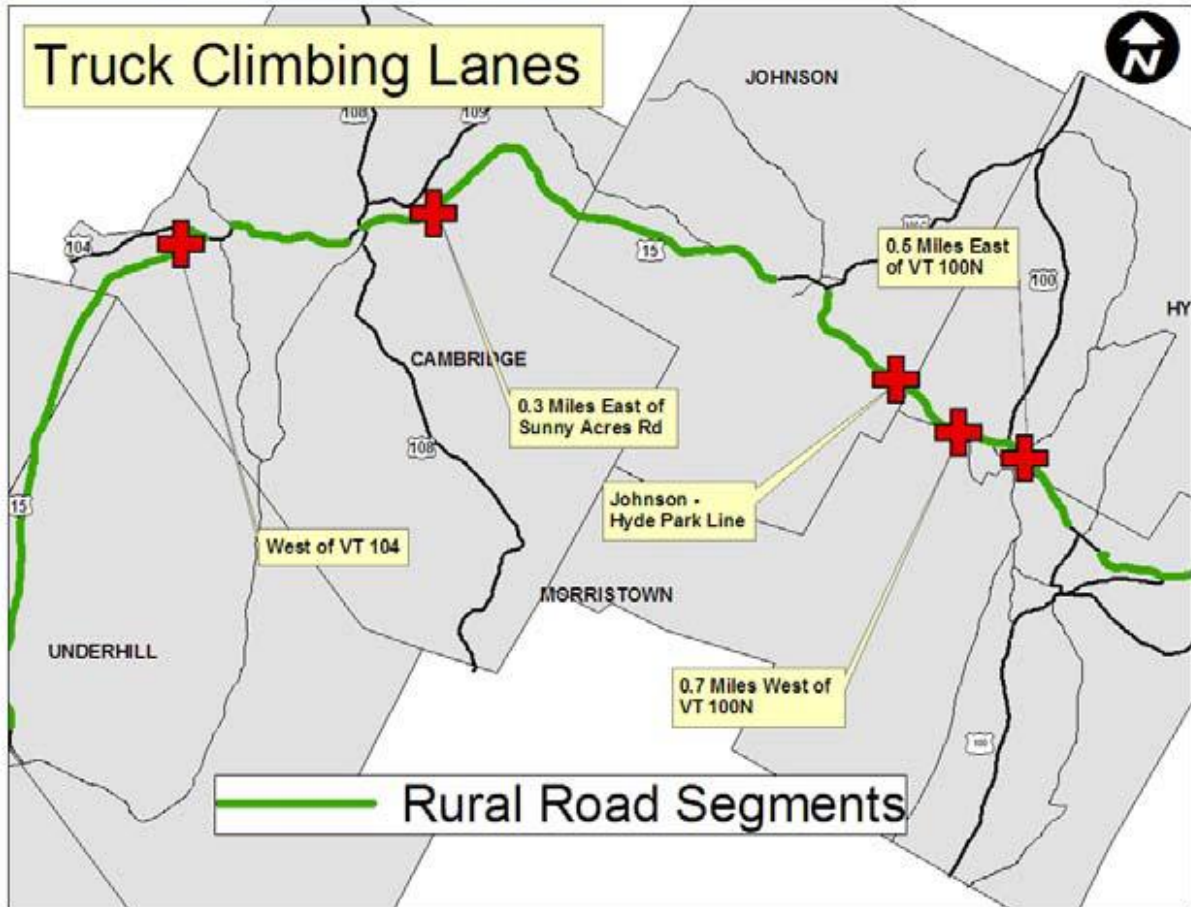
network is growing slowly. Growth aside, the approximately 90 miles of total local roads is a sizeable burden for a relatively small town to maintain.

Even though the Town Government has no control over State roads located in our town, these roads still play a very important part of day-to-day life here. Commuters coming to and leaving our region use these State roads, which are the property of the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans), daily. Access to the Essex area via Route 15, and the access Route 100 provides to the interstate highway and Burlington, are incredibly important to this community and the many residents who commute to these areas. With rush-hour commute times to Burlington already at an hour plus for a distance of only 45 miles, the Selectboard and Planning Council must use all the influence available to ensure that these commute times do not become even longer. Our town is hurt economically the further it gets in terms of travel time by car to and from Burlington and Chittenden County as a whole. **Therefore, attempts by neighboring municipalities to lower speed limits between our community and the interstate on Route 100 shall be opposed when reducing the speed limit is not supported by the findings of a VTrans speed study. Similarly, attempts by neighboring municipalities to lower speed limits between our town and Essex on Route 15 shall be opposed when reducing the speed limit is not supported by the findings of a VTrans speed study. Attempts by neighboring municipalities to install traffic signals and roundabouts that are not shown to not be warranted by a VTrans traffic study on the same sections of Route 100 and Route 15 shall also be opposed.**

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

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

### Supported Locations for Truck Climbing Lanes



Truck climbing lanes and passing lanes are also important features that should be encouraged between our community and the interstate highway in Waterbury. An example of a location where a truck climbing lane is needed is Route 100 southbound at the Stowe Waterbury Line (often called Shutesville Hill). **This plan is opposed to the speed limit reduction that happened through this area in recent years due to wildlife corridor concerns.** *With the new pavement on Route 100, and likely increase in resultant travel speeds, efforts should be made to see if the Agency of Transportation will study and potentially restore the longstanding 50 mph speed limit in Stowe's Moscow Road / Shutesville Hill area (while examining other efforts to ensure wildlife can better navigate this corridor).* This plan also believes the widening of Route 100 between Morrisville and Stowe, and Stowe to the interstate in Waterbury will eventually be warranted. **As such, efforts to add more road width, lanes, or other measures to improve or protect existing commute times on Route 100, will be supported by this plan.**

In addition to commuters, State roads also help us drive around town efficiently, getting us to our favorite shopping areas uptown. With the advent of the Truck Route, it is time to re-envision the State portion of Brooklyn Street. Given the generous road width and reduced traffic demand (thanks to the Truck Route) on the State owned section of the road, Brooklyn Street must be more than just a (poorly paved) highway featuring strip commercial retail. **Planning should begin immediately with State partners to remake Brooklyn Street into a tree-lined boulevard, possibly also with street trees in a planted median.** This would help to soften the appearance of the street and make it into more of a destination. We believe such an improvement would be a net positive to the retailers on Brooklyn Street, while also possibly encouraging pad-site developments like restaurants alongside the more visually appealing roadway.

In 2011 RSG Inc. of Burlington worked with Town staff to publish a plan entitled Morrystown North End Business District Circulation Study (referred to hereafter as “the Circulation Study”). The Circulation Study was particularly helpful in guiding new development uptown over the course of the last decade. Relying on the recommendations in this plan, the Development Review Board required new developments like Maplefields, CVS, Tractor Supply, and North Country Federal Credit Union to include the construction of new sidewalks along their frontage that greatly enhanced the ability of pedestrians to get from business to business in the area. Presently, Upper Munson Avenue, first envisioned during the Circulation Study’s planning process, is currently only partially constructed. As traffic counts grow, this road, once completed, will become an important cut-through route that alleviates pressure on the already busy intersection of Center Road and VT Route 15. When warranted, and as shown on the attached plan, **this plan supports VTrans scoping and developing a traffic light where Route 15 and Upper and Lower Munson Ave meet. This plan also supports adding a crosswalk across Route 15 at this new traffic light, or as shown on the below map, at the top of Brooklyn Street, a location approved via an approval letter sent to the Town by VTrans dated 2 February 2018).** *This plan also recommends that the Selectboard allocate funding to update the Circulation Study so it contains post Truck Route traffic data.* The Circulation Study has proven valuable enough to warrant an update, especially in light of how variable the post Truck Route traffic count projections have proven to be. It would be a loss for the Town’s planning process if the Circulation Study were to become obsolete due to the traffic data therein becoming too old.





## Uptown: Truck Route Roundabout to Upper Munson Ave

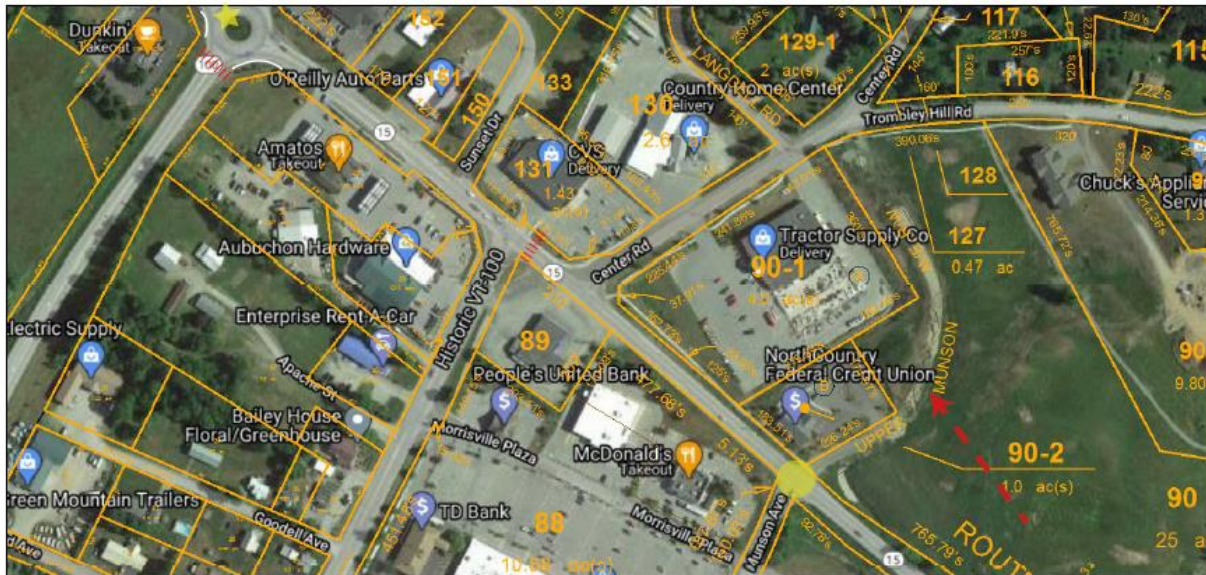
Morristown, VT



1 inch = 250 Feet

0 250 500 750

December 29, 2020



Property Line	Property TIC	TaxmapText_Leaders	New Crosswalk
Public Road	RoadNotPar	TaxmapText_Arrowheads	New Intersection w/ Potential Traffic Light
Right of Way	ParcelText_Leaders		Incomplete Section of Upper Munson Ave.
Private Road ROW	ParcelText_Arrowheads		Desire for Pedestrian Accommodation Along at Roundabout

Data shown on this map is provided for planning and informational purposes only. The municipality and CAI Technologies are not responsible for any use for other purposes or misuse or misrepresentation of this map.

**In the uptown commercial core that the Circulation Study focuses on, as well as in downtown Morrisville, Level of Service F & E is an acceptable wait time at traffic lights.** Allowing longer wait times will help encourage denser development patterns in our commercial core and improve pedestrian and bicycle access therein. Especially in downtown Morrisville, the need to efficiently move cars from Point A to Point B must take a backseat to the needs of pedestrians. A Walk & Bike Safety Action Plan was recently developed with the help of Local Motion for downtown Morrisville. **Some of the ideas in the Walk & Bike Safety Action Plan should be explored and implemented, such as sidewalk bump-outs where parking in the downtown is striped-off, and other similar pedestrian-friendly traffic calming solutions.** It is important to remember that the Truck Route was built to remove heavy truck traffic from downtown Morrisville and **the Selectboard and Planning Council should continue to try to recreate a more pedestrian-friendly version of downtown now that large trucks have another way around.** Outside of downtown, **this plan supports the continued efforts to upgrade the Town's existing sidewalk infrastructure.** It is anticipated that land development will be the main driver of sidewalk extensions over the next decade. **All sidewalk extensions shall meet the construction requirements contained in the Morristown Sidewalk Policy. Sidewalk infrastructure is also highly desired at and across the Truck Route roundabout.**

Outside the village, the Town's roads are mainly Class 3 gravel roads. **New roads, unless covenanted to be private, shall meet the construction requirements of the Morristown Road Policy.** Class 4 Roads located in the Town should not see the development that is considered acceptable on Class 3 Roads. **In more remote areas, development on Class 4 roads that put a strain on municipal services located in the village should be discouraged. However, said policy shall not be used to stop developers from upgrading Class 4 Roads to Class 3 Roads when said roads can serve as important connector roads** (ex. Darling Road: which could connect Rte. 12 & Rte. 15A, Rooney Road: which could connect Mud City Loop to Walton Rd, and Gallup Road: which could connect Stagecoach to Cole Hill Road). Back within the village, the Selectboard should work with the road crew to prioritize connecting Best Street to Foss Street while the Town still has property owner permission to do so. The Selectboard, with assistance with the Planning Council, should also work with the School Board and nearby property owners to open up a new access driveway to the school that obviates the need for all the traffic that comes down Elmore and Upper Main Streets from cycling around the fire station to turn up Copley Avenue.

Contrary to popular belief, there is a way to get around town other than by car. **This plan supports the continued operation of the Route 100 Commuter Bus Route that runs between Morrisville and Waterbury.** This bus, with stops in downtown Stowe, connects residents, via the park and ride in Waterbury, to the larger bus service that runs frequently on the interstate between Montpelier and Burlington. This plan supports the continuation of the shopping loop bus route that is predominantly used by seniors that no can longer drive to access Uptown grocery shopping.

Area residents also now have the ability to fly out of town to the New York City area thanks to the air passenger service that Stowe Aviation recently brought to the airport. The Morrisville-Stowe airport, which is owned by VTrans, is the region's only airport. Its location less than 2 miles south of the Village on LaPorte Road ties the economic well-being of the airport to the economic well-being of the community. **This plan supports continued investment into the airport.** In the early 1980s, the airport's runway was paved and lengthened. A grass runway was completed in 1997 alongside the paved runway. The safety areas were paved in 2018. However, the length of the current runway remains problematic for landing purposes during inclement weather and, almost as significantly, for private aircraft insurance purposes in relatively good weather. **This plan supports lengthening the runway of the Morrisville-Stowe Airport to 4,000 linear feet in length to obviate these insurance issues, and to ensure the continued viability of the airport. Furthermore, this plan supports the approved masterplan improvements to the airport, as more activity thereat helps our economy.**



# Uncompleted section of Lamoille Valley Rail Trail

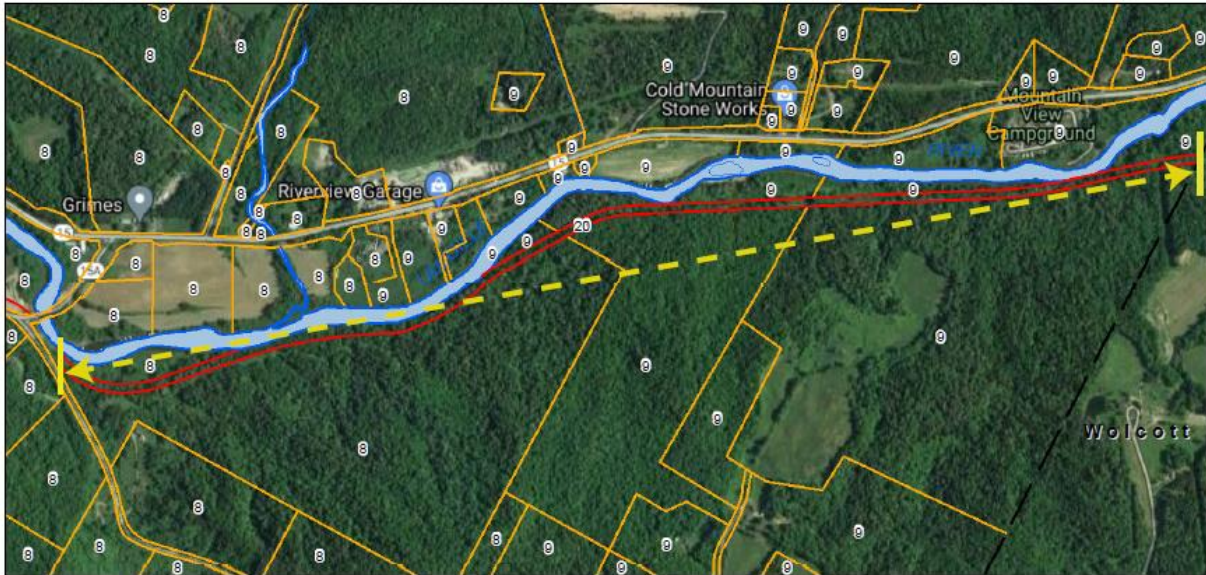
Morrilltown, VT



1 inch = 1000 Feet



December 29, 2020



Large Scale	Public Road	PropNotPar
CAI Town Line	Railroad	Property Hook
PWater	Right of Way	WaterLines
Property Line	Private Road ROW	Water-poly



This is the remaining incomplete section of the rail trail in town (from route 15A bridge to the Wolcott town line)

Data shown on this map is provided for planning and informational purposes only. The municipality and CAI Technologies are not responsible for any use for other purposes or misuse or misrepresentation of this map.



# Chapter 4: Utility & Facility

## Water Supply

There are three public water drinking systems in Morristown. Each of these public water sources is required to develop a Source Protection Area (SPA) plan. The plan identifies the Wellhead Protection Area (WHPA), and any potential sources of contamination within the area. The plan should also establish some mechanism for protecting the WHPA, whether that is through adoption of WHPA zoning, or through purchase of easements or property. The water system owned by Morrisville Water & Light has such a plan, which helps protect land in the Park Street / Route 15A area from the adverse impacts of development. Provided this plan and the protections currently included in the zoning bylaw are heeded, MW&L has more than ample water capacity to satisfy existing and future development demands. Morristown Corners Water Corporation, which serves approximately 50 homes in Morristown Corner, has also adopted a plan. Its WHPA district exists near the top of Magoon Road, and local zoning protections help to ensure that land uses above the well do not have a negative impact on water quality. The Pine Crest Mobile Home Park water supply also has a WHPA. **The Town's zoning must ensure that all future development does not have a negative impact on any WHPA in both Morrisville and Morristown.**

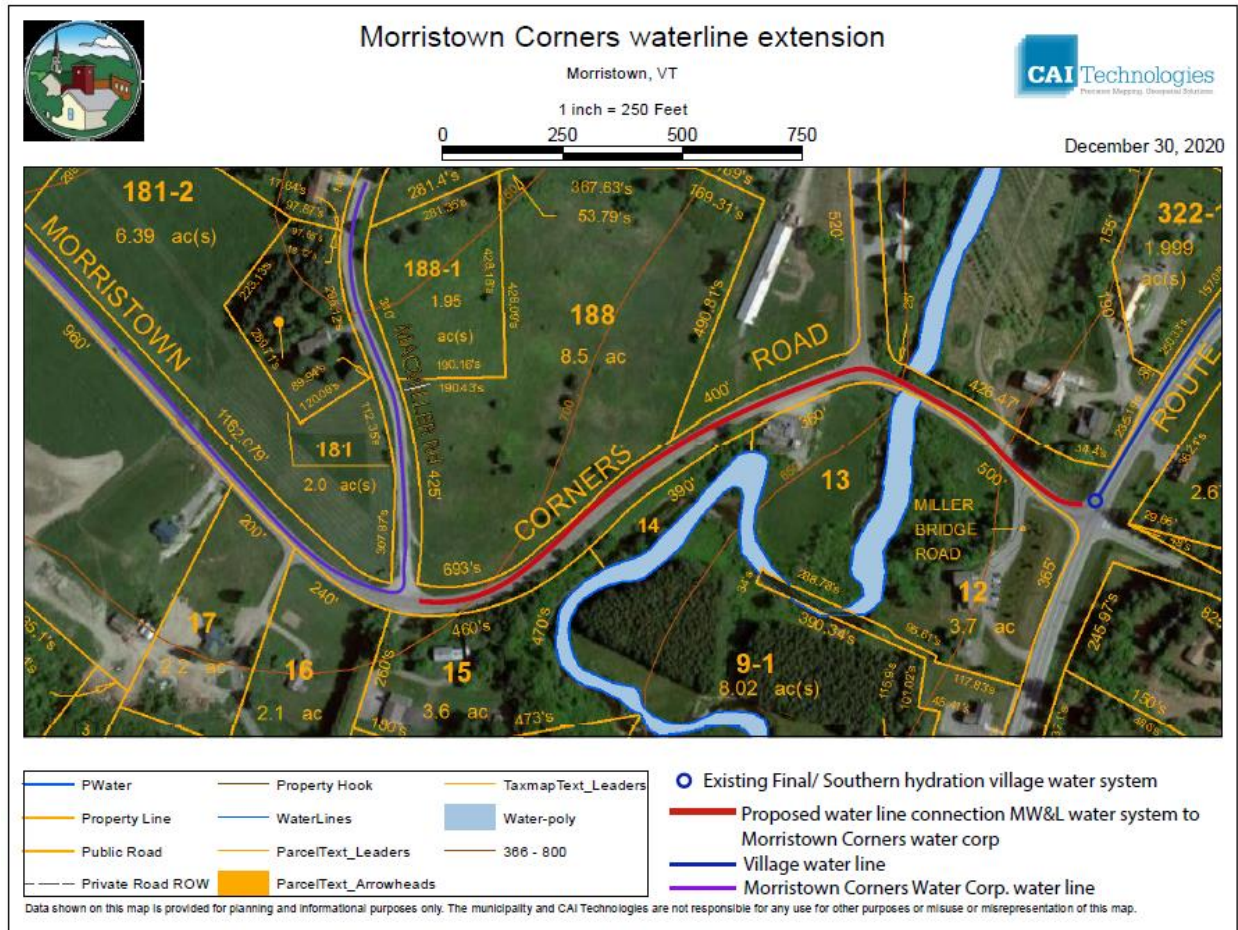
The Morrisville Water and Light (MW&L) water system is by far the largest public drinking water system in our town. The water system currently has approximately 1,000 total accounts, and serves the majority of village residents, as well as a limited amount of households and businesses in the town, located mostly along Vermont Routes 100, 15 & 12. The system's primary well provides 1,500 gallons per minute (GPM), and a backup well provides 380 GPM. There are two reservoirs on the system with a total capacity of 2,002,600 gallons. **This plan believes that the following priorities must be kept in the forefront of all decision making to preserve MW&L's excellent water system, and to ensure there is ample high quality drinking water for future population growth:**

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

The Morristown Corners Water Corporation, which serves the Morristown Corners area, provides drinking water for approximately 160 residents. The corporation's water system, originally constructed in 1948, has a 35,000-gallon reservoir. Consumption on the system is now metered. While the system has some capacity remaining for expected future population growth in Morristown Corners, the system's three hydrants cannot be used for fire suppression. *Building on the success of the recent connection of the former Cadys Falls water system to the MW&L water system, the Town or Village should begin a dialogue with the Morristown Corners Water Corporation regarding a future water line extension and connection to the water system in Morristown Corners.* Bringing the homes and businesses in Morristown Corners onto the MW&L water system will give this area the water pressure and volume needed for fire suppression, which will lower homeowner insurance costs. Such a connection, while primarily providing reliable and excellent drinking water to the residents of



Morristown Corners, will also relieve the Water Corp.’s volunteers of the arduous task of running a public water system.



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

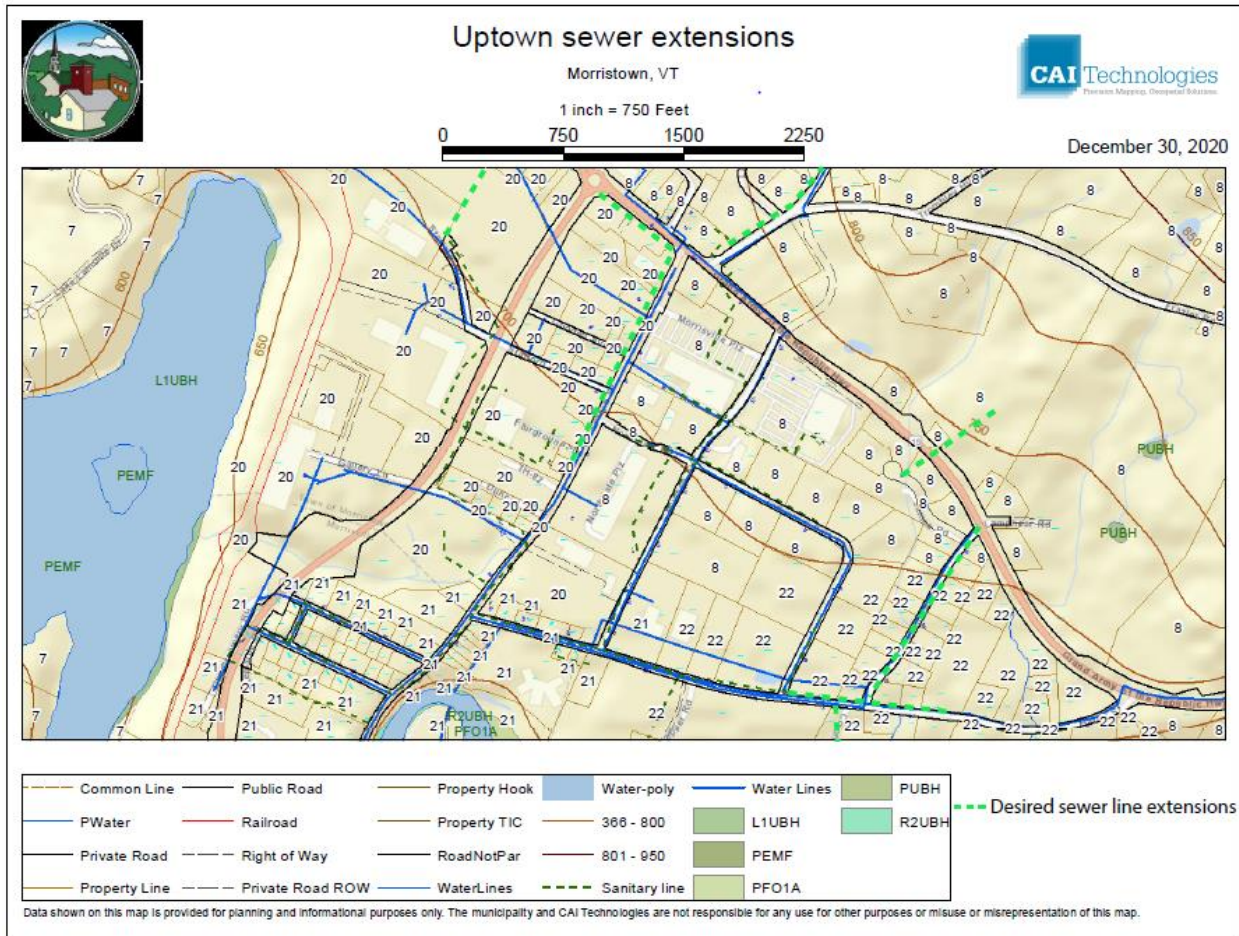
### Sewer Service

The Morrisville Wastewater Treatment Plant is operated under the jurisdiction of the Village Trustees. Sewage treatment in the Sewer Service Management Area is performed at an activated sludge, extended air wastewater treatment plant located on South River Street. There are currently two pumping stations, on River Street, and on Jersey Heights (at the bottom of water-trough hill). Wastewater capacity is critically essential to support existing and new economic development activities through the year 2030. **This plan supports a municipal sewer system with a transparent and competitive rate structure, and management of the plant asset that is adoptable and flexible enough to work with existing businesses, and any new business wishing to locate in our town. It is an unassailable goal of this plan that sewer capacity, or the cost thereof, should never be a limiting factor for locating new residential or commercial development in our community.** While conservation of

a resource should always be the first priority, should flow, phosphorous, or BOD levels become problematic at the sewer plant, **this plan supports funding and constructing any needed additional capacity. This plan also supports alternative treatment strategies, such as the local siting of a methane digester, which would divert high strength waste away from the sewer plant and generate electricity locally.**

It is important to note that this plan also views the existence of sewer service as a common good. Morrisville Water & Light can only spread the cost of sewer plant operation and upgrades amongst its roughly 800 user accounts. Town residents, even those using well and septic to support their homes, benefit from the existence of a municipal sewer system. Essential parts of our community, such as Copley Hospital, our grocery stores, and even downtown Morrisville, could not exist without municipal sewer service. Because the sewer plant benefits all Town residents, and not solely the users of the system, **this plan therefore supports any effort to spread some of the cost of the sewer plant's operations to these additional non-user beneficiaries. If an effort to share these costs includes the Town acquiring the responsibility for water and sewer service, this plan supports such a transition.**

The Sewer Service Management Area (SSMA) for the wastewater treatment plant corresponds to the area depicted as SSMA on the Future Land Use Map located at the end of that chapter. The SSMA designates the areas in Morristown (outside Village limits) where sewer expansion can and should take place. **The Town has been successful creating local Tax Increment Financing (TIF) districts to pay back the taxpayers' investment in new sewer lines, and this plan supports the utilization of TIF financing when infrastructure expansion is warranted.** A map of supported future sewer expansions supported by this plan in Uptown is as follows (see green dashed lines):



### Storm Drainage Facilities

There are existing stormwater issues in both the town and the Village. **The Town should continue to partner with the Conservation District to retrofit areas where stormwater is an issue, or where significant water quality results can be achieved without burdening the current taxpayers (who, on the whole, did not create these stormwater issues).** The Copley Municipal Parking lot located off Pleasant Street is a great example of an impervious area that could easily be retrofitted to treat stormwater that currently point-source pollutes the Lamoille River. **This plan supports any and all efforts to fund and construct a stormwater system for the Copley Municipal Parking lot, and even the smaller municipal parking lot at the terminus of Brigham Street. Stormwater infrastructure installed alongside Northgate Ave could attenuate runoff from a vast adjacent paved parking area. This plan also supports the immediate need to construct catch basins, treatment, and an outlet for stormwater at the intersection of Harrel Street and Munson Avenue.** Large storm events and spring melt-off inundate this intersection and damage private property immediately south of this intersection.

Wilkins Ravine, which is a small deep ravine that hydrologically connects Lake Lamoille to Brooklyn Street at the village and town boundary line, is a positive example of the Town working with the Conservation District to solve a stormwater issue. Before the Wilkins Ravine restoration project, sediment, nutrients, and trash from Uptown's commercial core were washing



into the ravine and ending up in the Lamoille River. Today, Brooklyn Street includes drainage swales, culverts, and catch basins to convey stormwater runoff from approximately 200 acres of developed and undeveloped land area that is relatively heavily commercialized and approximately 1/3 paved or impervious. The small stormwater system on Brooklyn Street has both capacity issues and a cost to the taxpayers (especially to maintain the swirl separator). As such, the Selectboard should develop a permit process for all future point connections to this stormwater system, with said permit process designed to protect the capacity of the system by slowing the rate that stormwater arrives at the swirl separator.

### Solid Waste Disposal

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

### Gravel Resources

Our forefathers were extremely wise to purchase the Duhamel property in Cadys Falls in 1991 at a cost of \$850,000 in an effort to provide the town, and its roads, with a multigenerational source of high quality gravel. The Selectboard has smartly not adopted the State's road and bridge standards in recent years to the extent that doing so may obviate the use of this important gravel resource. **Incidental uses of the Duhamel property, such as hiking, biking, or disc-golf shall only be allowed on the Duhamel property in so far as they do not interfere with the town's current or future gravel needs. This parcel was purchased by the taxpayers for its gravel resource, and this plan prioritizes the taking of gravel from said property above any and all other uses.** Other gravel pits, or gravel resources in town, shall be supported by this plan only while they remain active. Gravel pits that become inactive for more than one year shall not have the support of the town or this plan to recommence operation when they are located in residentially zoned areas.

### Dispatch / Emergency Communication

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

road, and odd numbered structures on the left hand side of the road (for example, if the structure number is 3500 Randolph Road, it is located 3.5 miles from the beginning of Randolph Road and on the right hand side thereof). *The Town's zoning Bylaws should be amended to codify that current informal practice that requires all structures to have an E911 address prior to the receipt of a zoning permit, and that permitted structures clearly display said address prior to occupancy.*

#### Law Enforcement

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

#### Fire Protection

The Morrisville Fire Department is located in the William Towne Memorial Fire Station at 162 Upper Main Street. The Fire Department is run by the Fire Chief, his two assistant chiefs, and a volunteer crew. The Morristown Fire Department provides three types of services to the community: 1) immediate response to fires in the village and town; 2) fire prevention and education services; and 3) rescue services, equipment and vehicles for other emergency situations. The Fire Chief's main concerns for the department in the near future are inadequate water pressure at hydrants in parts of the village, and a dearth of fire ponds with dry hydrants in remote areas of the town. **This plan supports the new zoning bylaw requirement that all Major Subdivisions that are not connected to a public water system be equipped with a dry hydrant located in a water source located within a ½ mile of the development road.** The Fire Station is only adequate for now in terms of size. As fire trucks continue to get bigger over the years, *the Selectboard should look to acquire any adjacent properties that come on the market to ensure that there is ample room to expand the fire station, if needed, at a later date.*

#### Morristown EMS

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

#### Health Facilities & Services

The primary health facility serving the Lamoille Valley Region is Copley Hospital, which is located at 528 Washington Highway in Morrisville. Copley operates as the emergency care center and critical care access for local emergency services, and provides in-patient, out-patient, long-term care and birthing center services. The hospital is also designated as a "Critical Access Hospital" by the federal government. As stated in the Economic Development Chapter of this plan, the continued operation of Copley Hospital is critically important to the well-being of this community. **Any**

**efforts from the State, such as the Green Mountain Care Board, to limit the services or financial well-being of the hospital shall be vehemently opposed.**

### Library

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

### Cemeteries

The ultimate responsibility for the Town's cemeteries lies with the Selectboard. The Town maintains the cemetery grounds and elected cemetery commissions or local cemetery associations handle lot layout and sales. The availability of new plots varies depending on the cemetery in question. The cemetery associations with space needs should consider obtaining options on adjacent properties to accommodate future expansion.

### Cultural Facilities

Morrisville has the only freestanding facility in Lamoille County dedicated to the development of an understanding of local history, and one of only four historical societies in the county. The Noyes House Museum is operated by the Morristown Historical Society, through its Board of Trustees (since 1953). The museum and the grounds are owned by the Town. The Historical Society maintains the collection housed in the museum. The Noyes House is located in the heart of the Village at 122 Lower Main Street. In recent years, via funding allocated by Town Meeting, meaningful repairs have been made to the Noyes House building, including repointing the exterior brick, and rewiring the original home and barn. More repair work to the museum building is still needed, including supporting structurally failing chimneys. *This plan supports continuing the current ½ penny on the Grandlist of annual funding from Town Meeting, and the sourcing of any grant funds that can be procured, to ensure the preservation of what is believed to be the second oldest house built in Morrisville.* **Within one year from the date of the approval of this plan, the Selectboard should also examine if current practice of letting a stone foundation building freeze and thaw due to a lack of a heating system is sustainable and a recommended practice for an historic building.**

### Recreation

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

addition to the aforementioned recreational opportunities found on school property, Oxbow Riverfront Park is utilized for soccer fields, a community garden, a seasonal ice-skating rink, and a small playground area that will be built in 2021. **This plan supports the continuing efforts meant to enhance the enjoyment and the vitality of Oxbow Riverfront Park.**

The Recreation Committee should also work collaboratively with MACC, and other like-minded organizations, to investigating the re-development of Clark Park. **This plan strongly supports developing this underutilized community asset, which can easily be home to nature trails, a picnic area, and a kayak launch.** The Committee and the Selectboard should work with the Village Trustees to obtain a lease for the park that would allow the Town's Parks & Recreation Committee to maintain and make improvements to Clark Park. **This plan also supports efforts to create a small parking facility, for parking and trail access, on the Truck Route construction trailer parcel, located at the corner of Bridge Street and the Truck Route.**

As stated in the Education Chapter, this plan also supports the construction of a fieldhouse on the school campus, or close by within the Village, to alleviate the high demand on the existing gymnasium for student recreation and sports. This fieldhouse, in order to get the support of the community for such a large capital expense, should also have a community access component. The community badly needs recreation space for the winter months that can accommodate the following indoor uses: pickle ball and basketball courts, soccer, and a track, which will be well utilized by seniors during the winter months. This plan supports efforts to study if such a recreation facility could be located atop the existing Copley Municipal Parking Lot located off Pleasant Street. Any such location will require the construction of an underground parking deck beneath the facility. The steep drop-off of Hutchins Street when heading west towards Portland Street could provide an ideal spot for at grade access to this subterranean parking.

#### Downtown parking facilities

As this chapter was being written, the Selectboard and a developer of a large housing project on Hutchins Street came to a mutual agreement to add more parking spots to the Copley Municipal Parking Lot, which is located between Portland and Pleasant Street. 31 total parking spots will be added to the municipal parking lot as part of this development, with 17 of those spaces being designated for overnight parking. This important capacity was added to the parking lot without even a minor expansion of the parking surface. These additional parking spaces were added simply by using the existing parking surface more efficiently. **This plan supports a similar effort to restripe the Brigham Street municipal parking lot more efficiently, which will also create more parking spots in this location** In an effort to create more parking downtown, the Planning Council should also work with the Mt. Vernon Lodge at 65 Portland Street on a plan to turn the south facing side lawn of that building into angled parked. **This plan also supports returning angled parking to the north side of Lower Main Street as another way to create more parking downtown without the need to expand the existing pavement.** The Planning Commission should also plan for the future when a level of parking might need to be created above or preferably beneath the Copley Municipal Parking lot on Pleasant Street (with an entrance to the lower parking level behind the Nepveu Building off Hutchins Street, with the

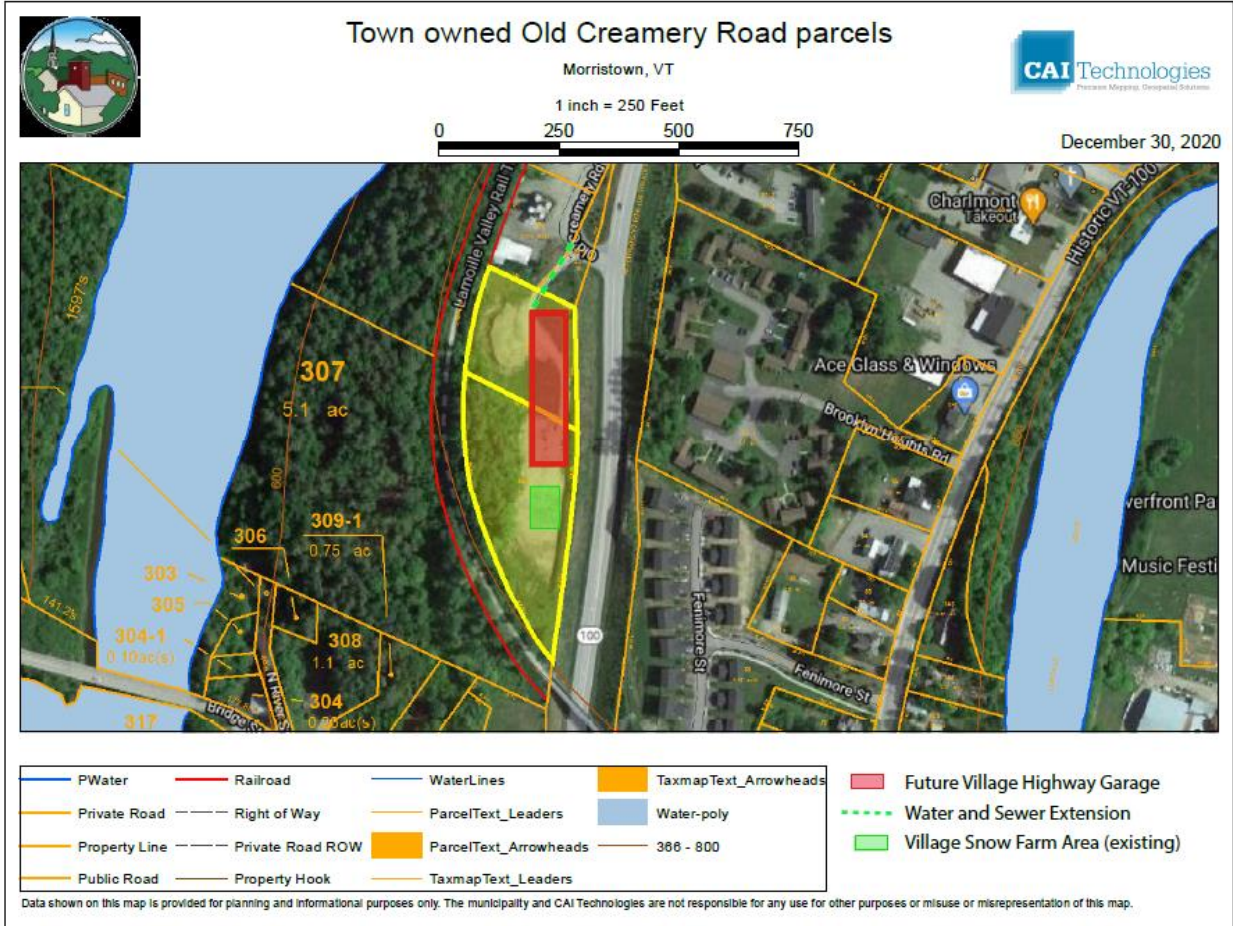


*existing parking surface becoming the top deck parking elevation or the site of a community building). The Selectboard should also secure the old rail car loading area lease from VTrans when it expires in 2031 so a proper parking lot can be built that services the downtown and the rail trail at the kiosk located on the bottom of Pleasant Street. The Selectboard should reach out to the current leaseholder and VTrans in the interim in hopes of taking over the lease prior to expiration. See the below map for these various parking locations.*



**Miscellaneous government properties**

This plan supports the relocation of the Village highway garage from Maple Street to the Town’s newly acquired snow farm property, which is located at the south end of Old Creamery Road. The Village Road Crew has outgrown the existing Maple Street garage location, and the Old Creamery location offers much more room to construct garage facilities that are appropriately sized for today’s larger equipment. The Old Creamery location is also centrally located with excellent access off the State’s Truck Route. Relocating the Village highway garage also has the added benefit of returning residential uses to Maple Street, which will be more conducive to the peace and quiet of this thickly settled neighborhood. A map showing the location of the future village garage location off Old Creamery Road is as follows:



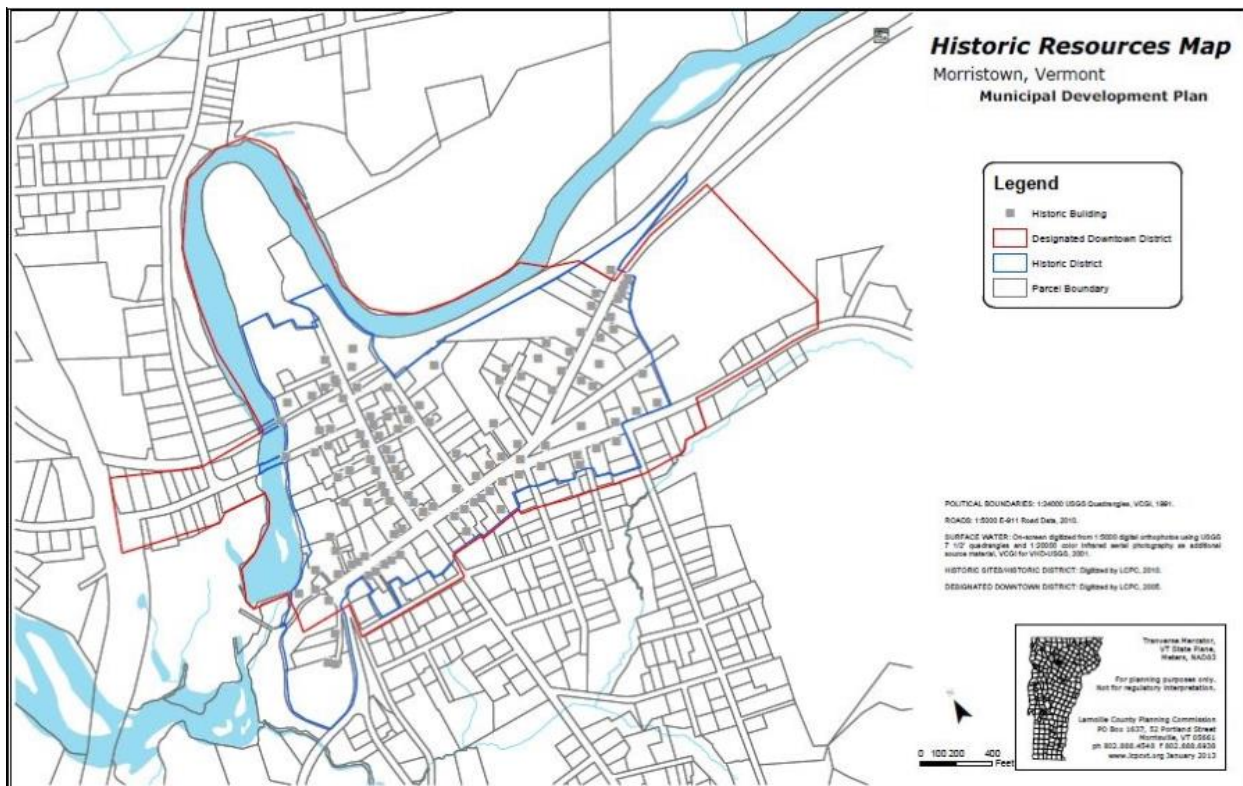
This plan also recommends that the Village Trustees actively look to sell non-revenue producing properties that are taxable because they are physically located in the Town, outside the Village limits. While the town and village boundary line is largely non-existent to community members, this otherwise relatively arbitrary line matters very much in Montpelier. The Village owning assets outside of the Village limits results in sending more than \$100,000 per year in local funds to Montpelier for the education tax. **As such, this plan strongly supports the sale of any taxable Village owned properties that are located outside the Village limits, and are non-revenue producing for MW&L. Conversely, this plan also supports the creation of a committee to study expanding the Village limits further out into the Town as an alternate way to avoid the Village paying taxes to the Town, where the vast majority of said tax money get sent to Montpelier for State education tax.** The Bugby Springs property located on VT Route 15 East in Morristown is a perfect example of such a property. The Village had to pay \$3,659.28 in taxes to the Town in Fiscal Year 2019/2020 just because this 82 acre parcel, which produces no revenue for the Village, is located in the Town, and outside the Village limits. Whether this parcel is sold to a developer or to a conservation land trust will be the Trustee's decision. *However, the current status with the Village paying property taxes to the Town (with most of those dollars being sent to Montpelier for education funding) for non-revenue producing properties should come to an end, either via the sale of the subject properties, or the possible expansion of the Village line, so most of these properties can be located inside the Village limits, and therefore become tax exempt.*



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

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

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



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

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

Morrisville’s Historic District was expanded in 2007 to include Pleasant Street, Richmond Street, Copley Avenue, and sections of Upper Main Street and Park Street. This expansion added 114 commercial, residential, industrial, educational, transportation, and religious resources to the historic district. The Planning Council, with an assist from the Historical Society, should evaluate if the historic district should be enlarged again to the south down E. High Street, Congress Street, Summer Street, Court Street, and Maple Street, as there are many largely intact historic homes in this primary residential section of the village that will be nearing 200 years in age by the time the 2020-2030 Town Plan expires. The Planning Council should also examine if the town should adopt zoning for at least its initial historic district designation per 24 VSA, §4414(f).

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

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

walk past remains of historic cellar holes of homes in the failed town of Sterling. However, the Town Forest area is actually better known for its recreational and scenic resources than its historic resources. The Town Forest offers access to Sterling (aka Whiteface) Mountain, the tallest peak in our town, measuring in at 3,715 feet in height. Sterling Mountain, which is bisected by Vermont's Long Trail, and also hosts a leg of the V.A.S.T snowmobile trail, is a valuable scenic and irreplaceable natural area.

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

The two mountain ranges in our community, besides providing beautiful scenery, natural unspoiled areas, recreational opportunities, and places for rural home-sites, also provide for wildlife habitat, and habitat connections within the town's existing forested areas. **It is important that the development of new homes in the high elevation forested areas along of the Green and Worcester Mountain Ranges, do not present an undue adverse impact to the ecological integrity of intact forest blocks. Residential development in these forested areas should also not disrupt any existing working forest lands.** With the 2020 zoning change, the goal of protecting forest connectivity was added for the first time into the §510(2) purposes of the town's highly successful conservation subdivision bylaw. This inclusion will minimize the encroachment of residential development into the interior of intact forest blocks, reduce impacts on habitat connectors, and minimize the fragmentation thereof. More work can be done to prevent further forest fragmentation and degradation of wildlife corridors, with the acute goal of ensuring connectivity between the Green and Worcester Mountain Ranges. As such, the Planning Council should evaluate if wildlife and forest connectivity should be designated as

§340 Environmental Resource Areas in the zoning bylaws to promote the health, viability, and ecological function of these important areas.

There is more to our town's beauty and natural resources than just our two mountain ranges that bracket where we call home. **Joe's Pond and Molly's Bog are natural and irreplaceable areas that need recognition, and perhaps further protection than the local zoning process has thus far afforded.** "The Joe's Pond property consists of an 11.3 acre pond and wetland complex bordered to the north by an approximately 19 acre mixed hardwood and softwood forest. The remainder of the property is an actively hayed agricultural field with frontage on Stancliff Road. Joe's Pond, which is reasonably well protected by the Stowe Land Trust, is open to the public for a number of non-motorized recreational activities including, but not limited to, hiking, hunting, birdwatching, cross country skiing, snowshoeing and nature study.<sup>1</sup> Nearby Molly's Bog is even more noteworthy, having achieved National Natural Landmark Status by the National Park Service. Molly's Bog "illustrates a classic, early successional, cold northern bog. The site contains a small, dark-water pond, floating mat of sphagnum moss and heath plants, and black spruce-tamarack forest."<sup>2</sup> While the bog itself is owned mainly by the State of Vermont, some of this natural area, and its headwaters, are located on privately owned lands. The Planning Council should evaluate what zoning tools might be available to help better protect Molly's Bog, and Joe's Pond. The Conservation Commission should also work towards conserving the private lands that encroach upon both of these rare and irreplaceable natural areas.

Other less visible, but not less important, rare, irreplaceable, and natural areas in our town can be found by using the Agency of Natural Resources "Natural Resource Atlas" mapping system. §340, Environmental Resource Areas, of the town's zoning already screens potential subdivision development so it will not have an undue adverse impact on the following natural resources, as mapped on the Atlas: Wetlands, Rare Threatened Endangered Species, Significant Natural Community, Uncommon Species, Deer Wintering Areas, and Steep Slopes. §510 of the zoning bylaws looks to conserve and permanently protect these same areas as part of the conservation subdivision development process. **These rare and irreplaceable natural areas and resources shall continue to be protected from subdivision development via the town's conservation subdivision bylaw, and the Conservation Commission's conservation efforts.**

Before closing this discussion on natural resources, it is of paramount importance to discuss groundwater. Groundwater is the source of over 90% of the drinking water for rural areas in Vermont. It is replenished through rain and surface water which percolates through the soil. Any activity that introduces contaminants directly into the ground, such as underground storage tanks, leach fields, and agricultural activities, can negatively affect ground water quality and drinking water reserves. Source Protection Areas (SPA) are surface and subsurface areas that serve as natural recharge, collection, transmission, and storage zones for public water supply systems.

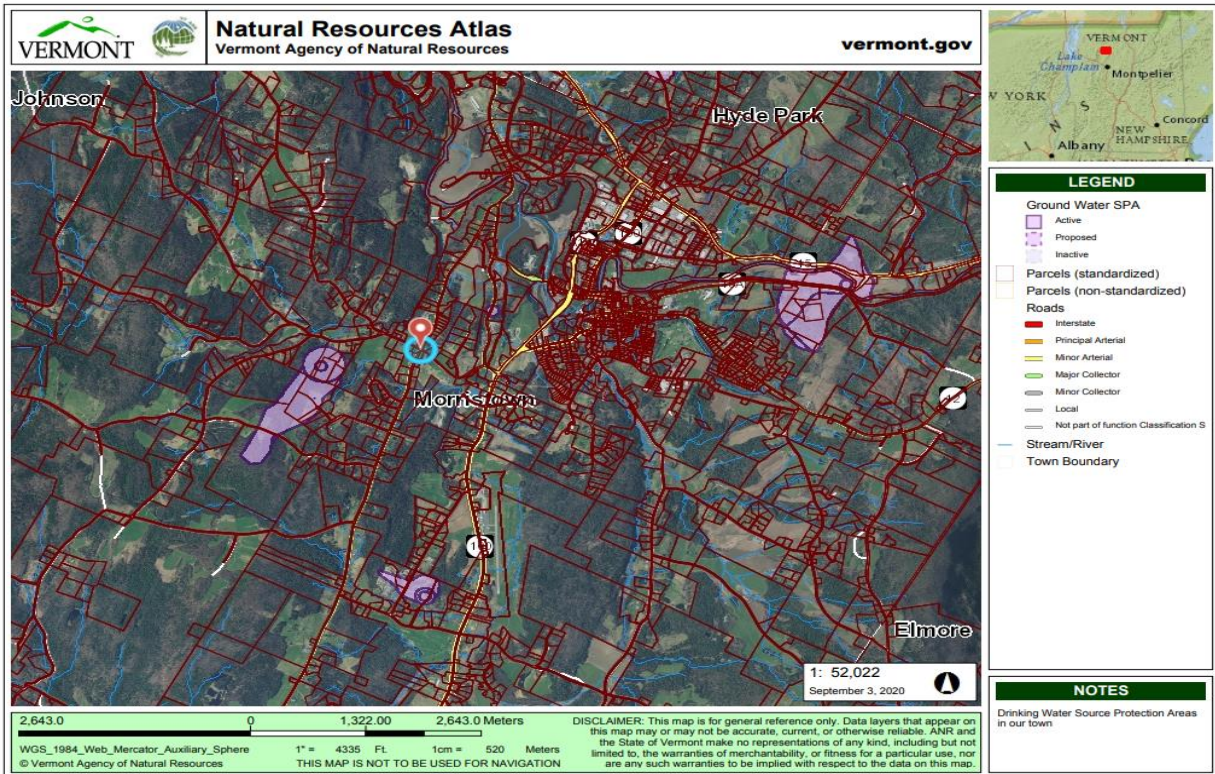
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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.stowelandtrust.org/conserved/properties/joespond>

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



SPAs include a buffer, which incorporates the area through which contaminants would likely move to reach the well. The 3 SPAs, which are located at least partially on public lands in town, can be seen in purple on the following map.



§300 of the town’s zoning bylaws protects these SPAs, and the drinking water they supply to Morrisville Water and Light, Morrystown Corners Water Corporation, and the Pinecrest Trailer Park public water systems. **It shall be the policy of this plan to protect these public drinking water source protection areas from contaminants with the full force of the town’s zoning bylaws, ordinances, and any other applicable police powers.**



# Chapter 6: Education

## Public Education Governance

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

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

## Enrollment Changes and Projections

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

## School Facilities and Infrastructure

The Graded Building: The Graded Building is located on one acre of land at the foot of Copley Avenue. It is a three-story, wood framed structure that was constructed in 1899 and was substantially enlarged in 1917. A 1998 renovation updated the electrical, plumbing and ventilation systems and installed an automated sprinkler system throughout the building, bringing this facility into compliance with all State of Vermont safety codes. The Graded

Building currently houses LSSU Central Offices, and preKindergarten classrooms. These programs were relocated into the Graded Building in 2010 when the K and 1<sup>st</sup> grade were moved to the Morristown Elementary School building. In recent years, capital funds were allocated to the Graded Building for improved energy efficiency and repairs of the surrounding grounds to ensure safety, accessibility, and an attractive appearance. Continued investment to maintain this highly visible village landmark is needed, including replacing windows throughout the building.

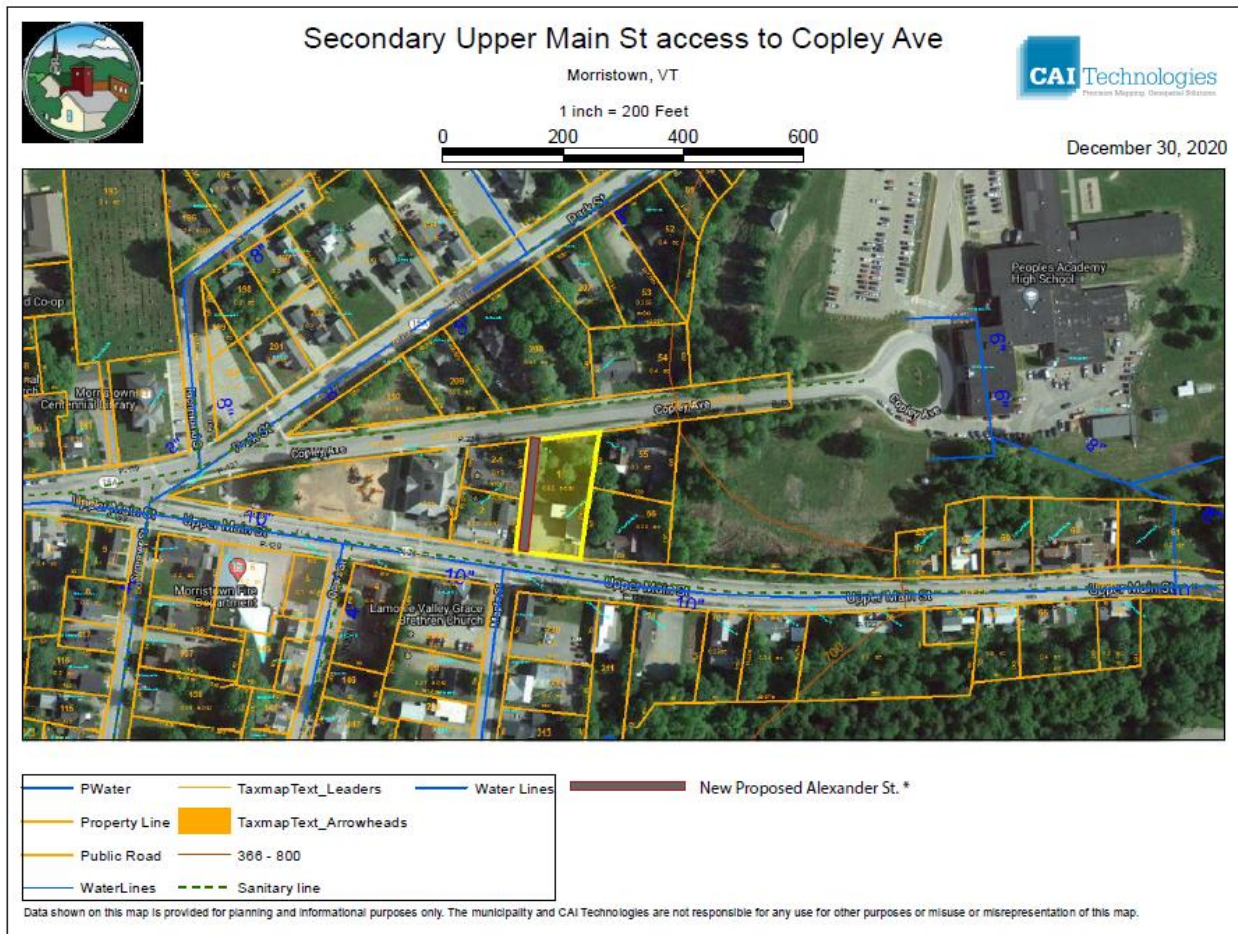
Morristown Elementary: Morristown Elementary is located on Route 15A and shares over 56 acres of land with Peoples Academy. Morristown Elementary School houses students in grades K through 4. It was built in 1972 and was designed without interior walls. A 1998 renovation project provided defined classroom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

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

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

*recreation and internet connectivity should be communicated and plans developed collaboratively as appropriate.*

**Secondary Campus Access Point:** This plan supports adding a new access point to the school property, which would offer school traffic coming from the east a better option than cycling by the fire station and driving up Copley Ave. This new access road, shown on the Educational Facilities Map included at the end of this paragraph, would alleviate traffic jams downhill in the Village caused by school drop-off and pick-up traffic movements. After careful study of multiple options for this needed eastern access, **this plan recommends that the Selectboard, or the School Board, purchase a right-of-way across 259 Upper Main Street (Sharon Green’s old law office) to connect Upper Main Street to Copley Avenue.** This below shaded area is already used by dozens of school children each day crossing from the end of Maple Street to, cutting across the side and back lawn of 259 Upper Main Street, to access the sidewalk on the south side of Copley Avenue. *Funding opportunities should be sought to construct this 190 foot long connector road, and accompanying sidewalk, that would provide a direct connection from Upper Main Street to Copley Avenue.* **The 50 foot right-of-way proposed in the below map should be preserved for a future road if additional development is requested at the existing multi-family apartment building at 259 Upper Main Street. This plan also recommends that this new street, when created, be named Alexander Street.**



### **Future School Facility Mergers:**

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

### **Educational Attainment**

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

### **Other Educational Opportunities in Morristown**

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

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



# Chapter 8: Statement Concerning Development Trends & Adjacent Municipalities

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

1. The completion of the long-awaited Truck Route, which provided some traffic relief for the non-linear streets in downtown Morrisville, has spurred the development of various vacant parcels of land that were given visibility after its construction.
2. The 60,000+ ft<sup>2</sup> expansion of MSI's manufacturing facility, which is one of the more prominent recent developments along the Truck Route.
3. The construction of the 34 unit Fenimore Street townhouse development on old railroad land that was "daylighted" by the development of the Truck Route.
4. The construction of 27 units of new rental housing on the corner of the Truck Route and Bridge Street.
5. The construction of 28 units of new rental housing across from the library on Upper Main Street.
6. The construction and rehabilitation of the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail, which provides both recreational opportunities, and new ways to access existing properties along its right-of-way, including within the heart of downtown Morrisville.
7. The establishment of the second brewery (Lost Nation Brewing) in Morrisville, and the establishment of a distillery by the airport (Green Mountain Distillers), and the recent addition of other tourist centric businesses that will draw visitors from Stowe to our town.
8. The successful effort to locate a food co-op in downtown Morrisville.
9. The creation of the Morrisville Art & History Walk in the downtown that is drawing visitors to the area and helping local residents uncover Morrisville's rich history and architecture.
10. The redevelopment of the Arthur's Block on Lower Main Street, which saved two historic buildings, and brought 18 apartments units back to life that are located above a new coffee shop and new pizza parlor.

Our town is incredibly fortunate, especially given the aforementioned success over the last decade, to have a number of additional projects still that will, if built, positively impact our

community over the 10 year life of this plan. A sampling of the proposed projects that represent positive development trends are as follows:

- A. The recent groundbreaking for new townhouses on Foundry Street. With five units under construction, and approximately nine more units to come, high quality housing is replacing a dilapidated industrial building, some poorly maintained outbuildings, and the burned out remains of the old Foundry that had sat in ruins for years.
- B. The rebuilding of the old Town Clerk's office on Upper Main Street. Such a development would take the same form as the long ago razed building, but the new building would be used for rental housing.
- C. The redevelopment of the Morrisville Water & Light owned gristmill on Feline Loop, which should be able to finally move forward after the adjacent hydropower facility is re-permitted.
- D. The creation of a boardwalk along the Lamoille River, starting at the redeveloped gristmill and running east, past Brigham Street, and connecting to Bridge Street.
- E. The continuation of the boardwalk from Bridge Street east to Oxbow Riverfront Park.
- F. MACC's planned illumination of the Rail Trail Bridge that spans the river.
- G. The planned construction of a new office building at the intersection of Gallery Lane and the Truck Route, as well as the planned construction of a new office building at the intersection of Brooklyn and Harrel Streets.
- H. The addition of new townhouses and single-family homes on the hillside owned by Crane Contractor Service that sits above Tractor Supply on Route 15.

While none of the above projects are large enough to impact the town's economy on their own, the sum of the above projects (that are actually constructed) will provide for years of solid, diverse, and sustainable growth within our community without negatively impacting the environment. **The Town government should lend whatever assistance it has at its disposal to ensure that the aforementioned projects, as well as any new development projects that further the goals of the Town Plan, become a reality.** Such assistance is inclusive, but not limited to, malleable zoning regulations (where necessary), and the use of the Morrisville Development Fund (where appropriate). With that being said, village water and sewer services should only be extended where necessarily to support new development to ensure that we make prudent use of existing public services and facilities.

The true benefit of the aforementioned projects, is that the underlying development trends thereof are in lockstep with the goals, priorities, and the objectives of the Town Plan. Most of the development proposed is in-fill housing, within mixed-use areas, that makes prudent use of

existing Morrisville Water & Light services, while also reinvigorating the core of downtown Morrisville. The proposed development of vacant parcels of land being given visibility by the Truck Route, reinforces the uptown section of Morristown as a regional hub for jobs, commerce and business growth. The confluence of this new economic activity bolsters the stated goals in the Town Plan's Economic Development Chapter that call for "a diverse economy and retaining Morristown's status as the commercial and industrial center of the region." Morristown's status as a regional job center also assists some of the surrounding municipalities' town plan goals to remain rural and undeveloped.

Aside from directing new housing into the core of the village, and supporting business growth in areas zoned for such, this Town Plan reinforces the existing rural character of our community by ensuring the continued existence of the agricultural, low density residential, and open land in the rural sections of the town. The Town Plan's vision for a compact village core and uptown business area surrounded by rural and agricultural countryside mirrors the goals of the State's Planning and Development Act. This vision also meshes well with the municipal plans of the town's surrounding municipalities. None of the surrounding municipalities that have town plans call for anything other than the existing agricultural and low density residential development of land where it borders our town. This fact, coupled with our town's plan for similar rural residential and agricultural areas located outside the village and the uptown business area, ensures that the existing miles of unbroken countryside between villages in Lamoille County will remain intact for the foreseeable future.

# Chapter 9: Energy

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

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

## Electricity

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

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

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



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

The amount of power generated by local hydropower remains relatively fixed, but is subject to minor fluctuations caused by dry and wet years. Overall demand for electricity from MW&L has generally been flat since 2000. While the number of hookups has increased gradually over this same time period, the average amount of power per hookup for residential uses has been on the decline due to efficiency improvements and conservation. In 1988 the average residential unit consumed 562 kWh of power. By 2001, this figure dropped to 529 kWh of power per residential unit. In 2012, the average residential unit consumed only 515 kWh. As of 2019, the average residential unit is consuming 510 kWh of power annually. This trend of declining electricity demand per household is clearly waning per this data. The mainstreaming of heat pumps and electric cars (i.e. the new “electrification” of our community) in the very near future will likely reverse the trend of declining annual electric use by household. MW&L should therefore be on notice regarding the need to increase total power supply as our community continues to “electrify” and grows in population.

A positive trend that will help offset the growth in electricity demand per household is the proliferation of solar power being generated locally just within the last few years. Not long ago, solar power was a very small percentage of the local energy supply. By 2019, solar projects in our community generated over 1 mW of power. The amount of solar power being generated locally will continue to increase in the coming years as solar panels are becoming more efficient and cost effective. This is true for both the average homeowner with rooftop panels, and for the larger utility scale projects that we are now seeing proposed and built within our community, with one large commercial project currently under construction on the south end of Route 100, and another large commercial project located in the old Hess junkyard that is currently in the permitting phase with the Public Utility Commission). **This plan strongly supports the use of rooftop solar power. This plan also supports ground mounted solar, provided that adequate screening is planted to shield any adjacent house, including a house across a roadway, from view of a ground mounted solar array that is greater than 15 kilowatts in size.** While this plan supports solar, it should be mentioned that the recent proliferation of solar power puts upward pressure on our electric rates, as solar power is more expensive than other power source in MW&L’s portfolio of purchased power.

Other potential sources of local renewable electricity include wind, anaerobic digestion, and cogeneration (wood burning) Tackling cogeneration first, large tracts of forested town and village own land exists that could provide a wood heat resource for community members, especially those with limited incomes. **This plan supports examining if sustainable logging could take place on these municipally owned lands to provide a firewood resource for town residents, especially those residents that struggle to afford heat in the winter.** Regarding

wind, the Planning Council believes that our town does not have sufficient locations with enough reliable wind to generate wind energy in a profitable manner, but locations may exist in town where homeowners may be able to generate enough wind power for personal use or net-metering<sup>4</sup>. **Morristown supports the generation of residential scale wind power, but is opposed to wind power that is not net-metered, which often referred to as “utility scale” wind. If wind power facilities are constructed elsewhere in more favorable locations in the state, Morristown supports MW&L negotiating a power purchase contract therefrom to contribute to MW&L’s portfolio of renewable and locally purchased power. Finally, this plan supports anaerobic digestion as a potential renewable and locally produced energy source.** Besides the obvious benefit of producing local renewable energy, the siting of an anaerobic digester in our community would have the added benefit of providing a local destination, with reduced trucking costs, for the spent grains from our local breweries, and waste from various food facilities in our community when these end products are not wanted by a local farmer.

While not a cost savings initiative, the desire remains to further divert or bury the electric and other utility lines in downtown Morrisville, specifically on Portland Street and the Route 100 sections of Main and Bridge Streets. Such an initiative would come at a very high cost, so **this plan supports the search and acquisition of any grants funds that would help fund such a project. This plan also supports state legislative efforts to create a finding mechanism that allows the town to vote to enact small surcharge that is levied on electric bills over the course of many years for the purpose of accruing the funds necessary to bury the overhead wires in this section of downtown Morrisville.** Massachusetts adopted a similar law within the last 20 years that, after years of funding through this same small surcharge idea, has resulted in many downtowns across the state successfully burying the overhead utilities therein. This same strategy could be successful in Vermont, and in downtown Morrisville.

### Heating & Cooling

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

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

The new energy efficient townhouses being built in the village, and the new energy-efficient multi-family housing being built in the heart of the downtown, have thus far been heated with propane (with no cooling provided). *The Planning Council should therefor study if it would be worthwhile to develop thermal energy standards, or more simply, to offer a density bonus to encourage developers to use heat pumps within new townhouses and new multi-family construction, so efficient heat and air conditioning can be readily available for these new households.*

The new downtown multi-family housing, in particular, with its much smaller square footage size than is typical within our community, is a positive trend that will continue to decrease, or at least help keep at bay, electric demand per household, on average, within our town. **With new construction, or for existing buildings, this plan supports all efforts to improve weatherization of buildings for both heating and cooling. This plan also supports the recent zoning change that removed residential density caps within the Central Business Zone as a means of conserving energy needs per household as our community grows.**

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

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

## Transportation

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

Much like personal transportation expenses, transportation expenditures on road maintenance account for a significant share of the town's energy costs. During fiscal year 2005/2006 the Morristown Highway Department spent \$85,106 on fuel. During fiscal year 2011/2012, thanks to much higher gas and diesel prices, the Highway Department's fuel costs ballooned to \$131,920. With the recent pull-back in oil prices, the Highway Department spent \$70,175 on fuel during fiscal year 2019/2020. While the Town budget is currently enjoying the spoils of very low fuel prices (spending in today's dollars for what amounts to less than 2005/2006 total fuel costs), we must be cognizant that fuel costs may not stay this low over the long term. Overall, all of the Town spent \$86,729 on fuel for transportation in fiscal year 2019/2020. This amounts to a gas/diesel bill for transportation of \$237.61 per day. If fuel prices increase again, while growth continues into more remote areas of the town, and with the Selectboard recently accepting more new Town Roads (including dead-end roads), fuel use to provide services and road maintenance will continue to rise. Given the Town's significant fuel use, the Selectboard should make fuel efficiency a leading component in the decision-making process when municipal vehicles are purchased. The Selectboard should also consider setting a generous fixed fuel budget every year with the goal of spending unused funds when fuel prices are low on improving the efficiency of the Town's energy use. For example, setting a fixed transportation fuel budget of \$100,000 the last few years would have resulted in annual surpluses that could have been used to buy the community's first electric police car, or to upgrade the energy efficiency of town buildings. The reader should note that Village and school fuel use is not included in the above figures.

## Municipal Facilities & Services

In 2016 the Town worked with MW&L to replace all of the streetlights in the village and in the town with LED bulbs. LED bulbs are brighter, provide crisper light, require much less energy, and have a significantly longer lifetime than conventional streetlight bulbs. This street lighting changeover resulted in a much lower energy cost to the Town. In 2019-20, street lights cost town tax payers approximately \$21,200. The cost stood at \$35,836 in fiscal year 2011/2012. This annual savings of nearly \$15,000 for street lighting shows that energy use can be reduced, and financial rewards will follow, when we allow the



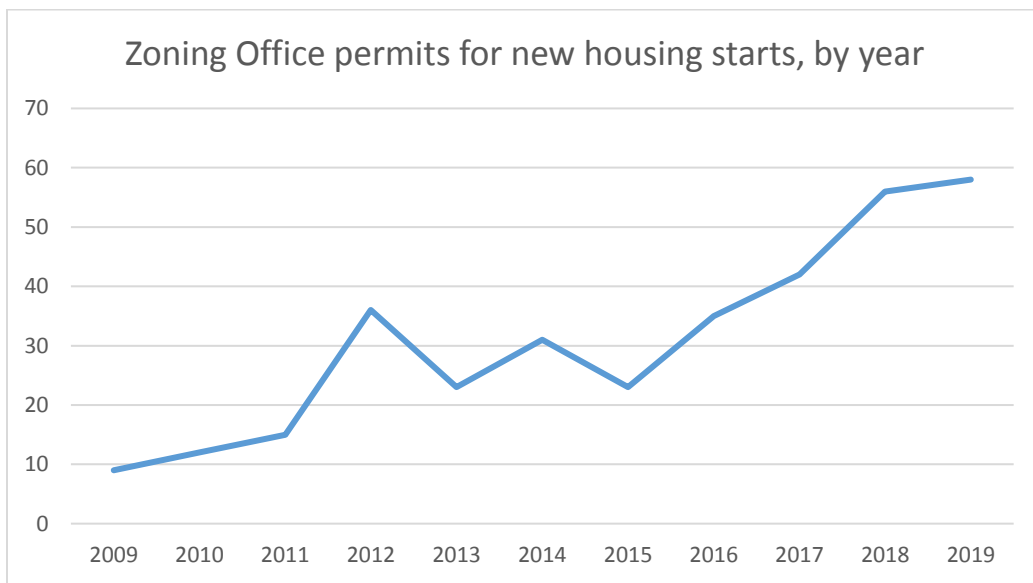
status quo for energy to be challenged. The Selectboard should immediately look to build on this success by converting the interior lighting in Town owned buildings to LED bulbs to create additional energy and cost savings.

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

Overall, the Town spent \$242,775 on energy in fiscal year 2019/2020 (electricity, heating, and transportation). This dollar amount represents a significant percentage of the Town's annual expenditures. Also, the current practice of having a portion of the Town's budget tied to the price of fossil fuels complicates the budgeting process due to the price swings inherent in the energy market. The Selectboard should evaluate the Town's daily operating energy costs of \$665 to seek out additional cost savings through achieving greater efficiencies.

# Chapter 10: Housing

After decades of relative stagnation and slow housing growth, the production of new housing in our town has exploded in recent years. From 2009 through 2011, only about a dozen new housing starts were permitted each year, on average, by the Town’s zoning office. The amount of new housing has skyrocketed to five times that annual amount in recent years. The below graph shows new housing starts accelerating from 9 per year to 58 per year within the last decade. So far in 2020, with another quarter to go, more than 150 new housing starts have been permitted. However, it is unclear if all this new 2020 housing will actually be constructed due to the Covid-19 Pandemic. At least two large permitted projects, totaling more than two dozen of the 150 new housing starts will not move forward, falling victim to the virus. If Covid-19 becomes a long-lasting and reasonably intractable economic hurdle, the below trend-line will surely flatten or even retreat to a lower annual production number. If Covid-19 proves to only be a short term hurdle, the accelerating trend-line of accelerating annual housing starts, highlighted by the below graph, will continue into the foreseeable future.



As we await the results of the 2020 Census, it is important to note that the above graph, even with the dramatic acceleration in new housing starts over the last decade, may not actually result in a large population gain for our town. Actual housing needs, both nationwide, and within our own town will be quite dynamic during the 2020-2030 lifecycle of this Town Plan. According to *Reshaping Metropolitan America* by Arthur Nelson, by the year 2030, 83% of US households will have no children, only 11% of housing demand will be for families with children, and 63% of US households will consist of only 1 person. If these projections prove even to be somewhat accurate for our area, our town will have to work through a massive mismatch between the miniaturizing US household size, and an existing housing stock that was built generations ago to accommodate large families. Without the new apartments constructed downtown in recent years,

the mismatch in 2030, with 63% of households consisting of a single person, and 83% of households having no children, juxtaposed with the large Victorian style homes that populate the village, would have been extremely problematic. **While our community has always been and continues to be supportive of varied forms of housing (from apartments, to condos, to starter homes, and larger single-family homes), the Planning Council must incentivize, through its zoning allowances, the creation of significantly more small-sized housing stock. While there is clear and immediate need for all types of housing in our community, this plan strongly supports efforts to create new ownership multi-family housing or condos.** This preference for ownership versus rental housing results from the recent growth in multi-family rental construction without any corresponding construction of multi-family ownership housing.

Using Nelson's projections, if our town is to retain its currently assumed population of approximately 6,000 people, more than 1,000 new 1 or 2-bedroom apartments, condos, or small homes will need to be created during the lifecycle of this 2020-2030 town plan. According to the Kennedy housing study of Lamoille County in 2018, only 523 new housing units were created in our town between 2000 and 2016. This data point shows that, with only about 30 units of new housing being created annually during this 17-year time span, our town is already well behind the curve in terms of needed housing production. Three times as many annual housing starts are needed just to keep pace with the shrinking household sizes, never mind any additional growth demands within the town, or from the larger area. As such, **it is of paramount importance that the Planning Council ensures that the town's zoning, which was previously an impediment to the construction of new housing, continues to allow and even promote the construction of new housing in areas designated for such in the Land Use Chapter of the Town Plan.**

Per State and Federal law, the Town must ensure that Fair Housing Laws are upheld and local zoning does not discriminate against accessory apartments, group homes, mobile homes, mobile home parks, multi-family housing, and similar housing arrangements that are typically more affordable than a traditional single-family home. It is extremely important to keep in mind that the cost of housing directly impacts the quality of life in our town. When the cost of housing remains reasonable, residents have more expendable income to spend at local restaurants and businesses. Employers are also sensitive to housing costs. High housing costs place upward pressure on wages. With less upward pressure on wages, locally produced items are more competitive in outside markets. This is why the availability of affordable housing has been identified as a key factor in attracting business and industry to the area. If our town fails to allow enough housing to be built to meet demand, which has already been happening in recent years, housing affordability problems are quickly created. In the last iteration of this chapter of the town plan, the housing in our town was statistically affordable. Unfortunately, that is no longer the case. According to the Kennedy report, 30% of the Town's owner occupied households are now paying more than 35% of income towards housing costs. For rental housing, 35% of the Town's rental households are now paying more than 35% of income towards housing costs.

**Eroding affordability is an extremely negative trend for our community that must be combatted by allowing the market to create enough new housing to meet demand.** General affordability, including housing, has always been one of our town's great strengths when compared to other comparable communities, and especially the Burlington metro area. *The Planning Council must keep a close-eye on this affordability metric and ensure that the zoning regulations, while directing development to the appropriate locations within the community, allow for enough new housing to be created to meet demand (both for shrinking household size and new growth considerations).* **The creation of more infill housing, and smaller single-family homes on newly created small lots, is a strategy that must be echoed by our zoning code in order for our town to meet its housing creation goals.** To accomplish this, the Planning Council should focus on converting land zoned Rural Residential Agricultural Zone to Low Density Residential in areas where municipal services already exist, such as Cadys Falls, Morristown Corners, and Needles Eye Road (which all are served by municipal water). **The areas should be relied upon to house much of the small lot new single family home growth outside the village for the next decade.**

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

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



**Recent zoning changes in the village’s Central Business District and in the High Density Residential Zone have encouraged the creation of more affordable multi-family housing in the heart of our community. This trend should continue in these zones. The reuse of historic apartments above existing storefronts in the downtown to provide housing that is affordable and convenient has been successful, and continues to be encouraged.** This type of housing is currently desired by both young professionals and senior citizens looking to downsize and relocate close to village amenities. **The Planning Council should continue to ensure that zoning regulations support efforts to increase senior housing opportunities within the village. Increasing senior housing opportunities includes this plan strongly supporting the construction of a large assisted living facility for seniors, provided it is located within a 5 mile drive of Copley Hospital.** Currently, residents who need assisted living are forced to move away from their own community to seek out such a living arrangement. This is a not an acceptable reality, and we must do better by our seniors as a community. Outside of assisted living arrangements, town policies and practices must support efforts to assist elderly and disabled residents who wish to age in place (and the community based health care systems that enable this). Accessory apartments, which continue to be strongly encouraged by this plan, can be a great way to provide smaller household sizes, affordable housing (and needed income for homeowners), while maintaining the existing character of a neighborhood.

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

# Chapter 11: Economic Development

## Employment & wages

Local employment opportunities have progressed steadily during the last few decades. The job base in our town has grown from just 2659 jobs in 1991, to 3,555 jobs in 2001, to 3,578 jobs in 2011, and to 4,041 jobs in 2018.<sup>5</sup> Meanwhile, unemployment in our town remains very low, ranging from 2% during the summer of 2019 to a relatively low “high” unemployment rate of 4.2% during the preceding winter. These numbers compare favorably to the unemployment numbers for Lamoille County, which has a winter unemployment rate of 4% and a summer low unemployment rate of 2.4% during the same time period.<sup>6</sup>

Our town’s employers in 2018 paid an average wage of \$42,447. This is higher than Lamoille County’s average wage of \$38,506, but lower than the State’s average wage \$46,115.<sup>7</sup> Our town remains the County’s center of non-seasonal jobs, providing employment for a wide area. This primary position in the regional economy creates advantages for the local population. However, the town’s leadership in the regional economy increases demands on both local infrastructure and Town services. **During the next decade, all land use policies shall reflect the strong desire to remain as the commercial and industrial center of the county.**

## Major employers & opportunities

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

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<sup>5</sup><http://www.vtlmi.info/profile2018.pdf>

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

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.vtlmi.info/profile2018.pdf>

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

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

#### Infrastructure

Wastewater capacity is critically essential to support existing and new economic development activities through the year 2030. **This plan supports a municipal sewer system with a transparent and competitive rate structure, and management of the plant asset that is adoptable and flexible enough to work with existing businesses, and any new business wishing to locate in Morristown. It is an unassailable goal of this plan that sewer capacity, or the cost thereof, should never be a limiting factor for locating new residential or commercial development in our community.** While conservation of a resource should always be the first priority, should flow, phosphorous, or BOD levels become problematic at the sewer plant, **this plan supports funding and constructing any needed additional capacity. This plan also supports alternative treatment strategies,**

**such as the local siting of a methane digester, which would divert high strength waste away from the sewer plant and generate electricity locally.**

It is important to note that this plan also views the existence of sewer service as a common good. Morrisville Water & Light can only spread the cost of sewer plant operation and upgrades amongst its roughly 800 user accounts. Town residents, even those using well and septic to support their homes, benefit from the existence of a municipal sewer system. Essential parts of our community, such as Copley Hospital, our grocery stores, and even downtown Morrisville, could not exist without municipal sewer service. Because the sewer plant benefits all Town residents, and not solely the users of the system, **this plan therefore supports any effort to spread some of the cost of the sewer plant’s operations to these additional non-user beneficiaries. If an effort to share these costs includes the Town acquiring the responsibility for water and sewer service, this plan supports such a transition. This plan also supports efforts to make sewer charges more equitable across users, such as creating a billing surcharge for users that rely on expensive and maintenance heavy pump stations for sewer service.**

#### Child Care

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

#### Broadband, technology, co-working, and maker spaces

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



# Chapter 12: Flood Resiliency

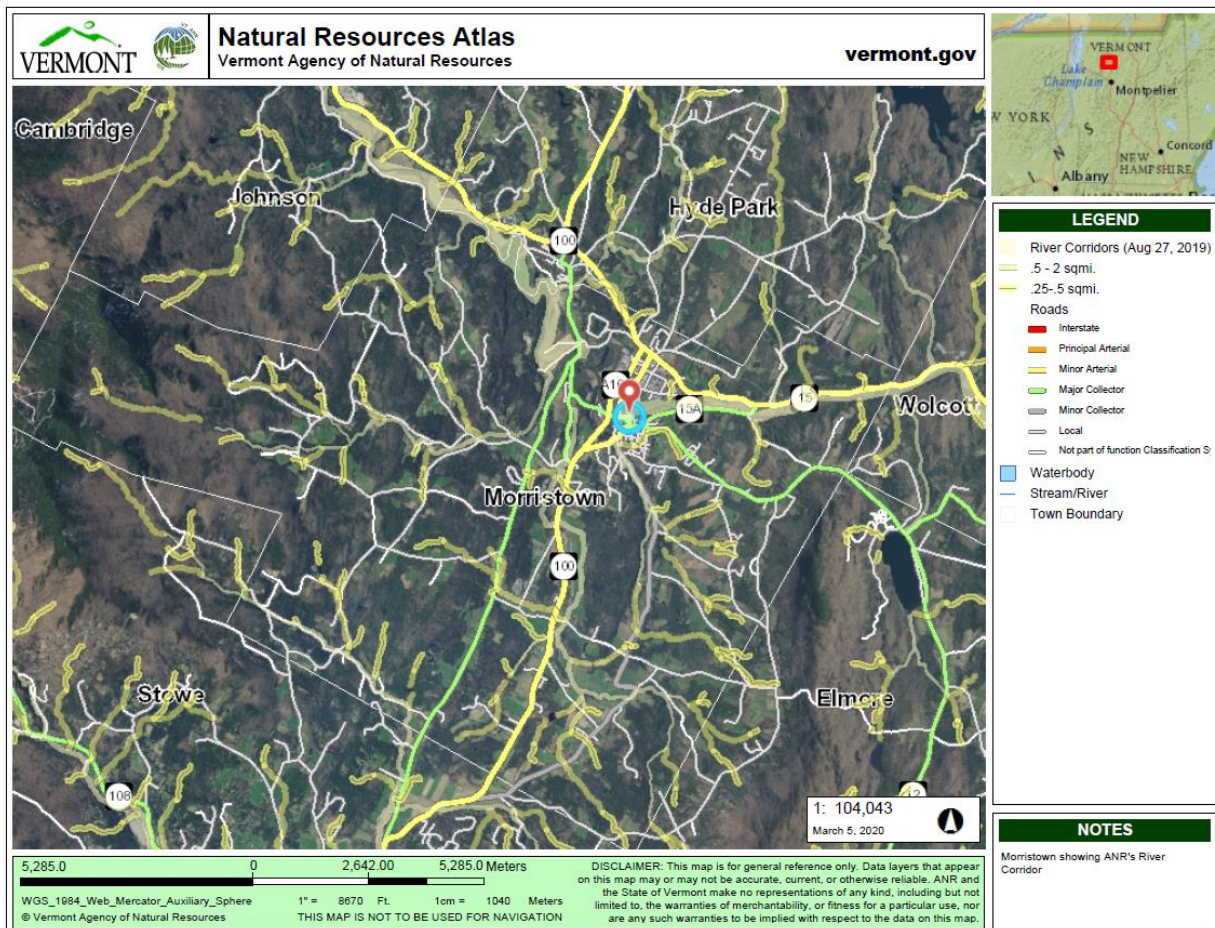
Flood Risk and flood resiliency. Morristown and Morrisville, although having significant land areas susceptible to flooding, are lucky to have the vast majority of their structures located out of harm's way. In fact, Morristown only has twelve e911 structures located in a Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA). Morrisville has an additional six e911 structures located in a SFHA. Compared to other similarly sized communities in Vermont, especially neighboring communities like Johnson and Cambridge, where flooding from the Lamoille River is a significant community concern, Morristown and Morrisville are flood resilient communities. In an effort to ensure that investment made in properties in the SFHA always increases the flood residency of our community, **structures located in SFHA that are substantially damaged, or substantially improved, should have their lowest floor elevated at least 2 feet above the base flood elevation. This plan also supports the unique section of the Town's existing zoning bylaws that require mechanicals in the basements of new homes to not be located below the base flood elevation, even when said home is located outside, but within 100 feet of the SFHA.**

Programmatic means to increase flood resiliency. Even though nearly every structure in town is already reasonably safe from flooding, we can still do more to encourage greater flood resiliency. At a minimum, **the Town should continue to enforce its Flood Hazard Regulations based on the existing 1987 FEMA flood plan maps and studies to ensure continued participation National Flood Insurance Program. This plan strongly supports any opportunity to have the remaining undetermined flood zones in Morristown studied and mapped by FEMA (including the re-study of the Ward Pond area now that the dam thereat has been removed). This plan also supports proactive efforts by the Town to encourage owners of the few structures located in the SFHA to carry flood insurance.** It is also worth stating that **structures located outside the SFHA can still flood in major storm events, so carrying flood insurance, which is much less expensive outside of the SFHA, is recommended for any property that might experience flooding.** *Moving forward, this plan recommends that the Planning Council identify the property owners that have, or should have, flood insurance to discuss if the premium savings generated by participating in the base level of FEMA's Community Rating System could incentive the insurance of additional properties.*

Structural means to increase flood resiliency. In addition to the aforementioned programmatic means of making the town more flood resilient, there are also structural means available to protect people and property from flooding. In the southern part of our country, elevating structures on pilings, and the use of louvers to equalize hydrostatic pressure (by allowing floodwaters to flow through fully enclosed areas), are much more prevalent than where we live in Vermont. Unfortunately, these proven flood resiliency applications (which allow development to happen safely in the SFHA), are far less practical in a cold weather climate. Therefore, the use of fill is the best weapon we have in Vermont to keep people and property safe from flooding. As mentioned earlier, our town is very lucky that FEMA studied the entirety of the village, and the

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

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



Upon closer examination of ANR's river corridor mapping, every property on Bridge Street, between Portland Street and the Bridge Street Bridge (with the exception of 28 Bridge Street), is located within the River Corridor layer area. The intent of the River Corridor is to prohibit development within that designated area to allow the river to meander naturally over time. In no future scenario will the Lamoille River ever be allowed to permanently reclaim this section of Route 100 / Bridge Street, and the housing and businesses located thereon. Therefore **this plan does not support limiting development by adopting river corridors in areas with existing roads and existing development for a future meandering of the river, because the river will never permanently be allowed to assume these areas. Likewise, this plan does not support the adoption of river corridors where the accompanying SFHA has an established Floodway since, as previously discussed, the science behind the calculation of the Floodway assumes the area outside of it, but within the SFHA, is already filled. Furthermore, this plan is opposed the creation of any development restrictions for areas inside the mapped river corridor area, but outside the SFHA, that are already commercially developed.**

With that being said, **there is merit to adopting the river corridor in the rural sections of town where the base flood level of an SFHA has not been determined. Fill is not recommended in areas without a base flood elevation, and these floodplains should be preserved to allow for flood attenuation, fluvial erosion, and the actual meandering of the river over time.** *The Planning Council should evaluate these remote SFHAs in the town that have not been studied to determine in which areas it is actually logical to adopt the river corridor layer, and to develop companion zoning restrictions.*

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

It should be noted that the town's roadway system remains flood resilient despite its refusal to adopt to the State's 2019 Town Road and Bridge Standards. The State Town Road and Bridge Standards are better matched to Chittenden County, and they are not well equipped to deal with the reality of steep rural mountain roads that we have in our community. Fully adopting the State's Town Road and Bridge Standards would drive the town's highway budget to unsustainable levels, and potentially put the ability of the town to harvest gravel from its

Duhamel Gravel Pit at risk. As such, **this plan is opposed to the adoption of the State’s Town Road and Bridge Standards, especially if the argument to do so is based upon flood resiliency.**

#### Local Hazard Mitigation Plan

FEMA approved the most recent version of the Town’s Hazard Mitigation Plan in 2014. The purpose of this plan is to identify all hazards facing the community, and develop strategies to begin reducing risks from these identified hazards. Morristown’s Local Hazard Mitigation Plan was last updated in March of 2014. Given the age of this plan, it is now in need of an update. *The Town Plan supports any and all efforts to update the Town’s Hazard Mitigation Plan.*

**Continued flood emergency preparedness and response planning should always be encouraged.** The Town’s Hazard Mitigation Plan, as most recently revised, is hereby incorporated into this Flood Resiliency Chapter.



# Chapter 13: Wellness

## Access to Healthy Foods and Choices

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

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

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

## Community Wellness Committee

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

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

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

### Environmental Quality

- Evaluate the additional cost associated with building and maintaining safe, pleasant streets for walking and biking, paying particular attention to high traffic areas by schools. Pedestrian and bike oriented transportation options provide residents with the option to walk/bike rather than drive, lessening traffic congestion and improving our air quality.
- Plant street trees in the core of the village, particularly in the Central Business Zone (Pleasant St., Portland St., Main St. & Bridge St.).
- Investigate and encourage environmentally conscious municipal practices.
- Prioritize protection and use of municipally owned recreational and natural spaces, including the Town Forest, Oxbow Riverfront Park, and Clark Park.
- Incorporate healthy homes principals into all public housing development ([www.healthvermont.gov/environment/home](http://www.healthvermont.gov/environment/home)).
- Explore signing on as a partner with the Vermont Department of Health as a 3-4-50 Healthy Community. The Vermont Department of Health 3-4-50 Campaign identifies 3 behaviors (lack of physical activity, poor nutrition and tobacco use) leads to four chronic diseases (cancer, heart disease and stroke, type 2 diabetes, and lung disease) which cause the deaths of over half of Vermonters. Promoting healthy activities through the built environment supports overall good health.

### Mixed Use Development

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

### Rescue

- Support a 24/7 staffed community located, patient centered, Emergency Medical Service.
- Support community education related to emergency medical situations such as, CPR/AED training and Stop the Bleed Programming
- Support community wide AED signage and recognition programs
- Continue support of the Heartsafe community designation
- Support Morristown Emergency Medical Service in its application to achieve the Vermont Pediatric Safe Agency designation
- Offer Narcan response kits to at risk populations

### Substance Misuse Prevention, Treatment, Recovery, Decrease Use Of Tobacco, Alcohol and Other Drugs.

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

## CHAPTER 7: IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The objectives identified in each chapter of the Town Plan are included below with an indication of when the action is currently anticipated to occur, the parties responsible for that action, and potential funding sources.

Chapter #	Objective	Time Horizon	Responsible Party
1	<u>Create and charge a committee with studying the dual town name issue, with the goal of said committee initiating a Selectboard, Village Trustee, or Town meeting action that results in a binding vote on adopting a singular name for our community.</u>	1 year	Selectboard & Village Trustees
1	<u>A study committee should be jointly formed within the next two years by the Village Trustee and Town Selectboard to ascertain what it would entail to update the Village Charter, with the goal of expanding or eliminating the village boundary lines within the large town, or fully merging these municipal governments into one singular town.</u>	2 years	Selectboard & Village Trustees
2	<u>Current efforts to expand the Pleasant Street municipal parking lot should be supported and funded by the Selectboard within the next two budget years.</u>	2 years	Selectboard
2 & 4	<u>The Selectboard should also create and begin to fund a capital account that, as the balance grows over the years, could eventually be used to create a deck of parking accessed from Hutchins Street, located above but preferably beneath the surface of the existing municipal parking lot on Pleasant Street.</u>	1 year	Selectboard
2	<u>The Planning Council should work with the Selectboard to help spur the redevelopment of both of the Nepvue Building on Portland Street and the Sunoco gas station at our main downtown intersection</u>	Prior to, or as soon as, either property comes onto the market	Planning Council



2	<u>The Planning Council should work with the Copley Trust to see if there is an appetite for funding a boardwalk along the Lamoille River that parallels Portland Street (linking Lower Main Street to Bridge Street), that includes lighting, benches, etc., with a purpose of relinking downtown Morrisville to its riverfront.</u>	As soon as the owner of 90 Lower Main St agrees to the boardwalk location	Planning Council
2 & 3	<u>The Selectboard should work with the road crew to prioritize connecting Best Street to Foss Street while the Town still has property owner permission to do so.</u>	1 year	Selectboard
2	<u>The Planning Council should open up a dialogue with the Bishop Marshall School Board about rezoning the school's land.</u>	1 year	Planning Council
3	<u>With the new pavement on Route 100, and likely increase in resultant travel speeds, efforts should be made to see if the Agency of Transportation will study and potentially restore the longstanding 50 mph speed limit in Stowe's Moscow Road / Shutesville Hill area (while examining other efforts to ensure wildlife can better navigate this corridor).</u>	1 year	Selectboard
3	<u>The Selectboard should allocate funding to update the North End Circulation Study so it contains post Truck Route traffic data.</u>	4 years	Selectboard
3	<u>The Selectboard, with assistance with the Planning Council, should also work with the School Board and nearby property owners to open up a new access driveway to the school that obviates the need for all the traffic that comes down Elmore and Upper Main Streets from cycling around the fire station to turn up Copley Avenue.</u>	2 years	Selectboard
4	<u>The Selectboard should develop a permit process for all future point connections to the stormwater system on Brooklyn Street, with said permit process designed to protect the capacity of the system by slowing the rate that stormwater arrives at the swirl separator.</u>	2 years	Selectboard

4	<u>The Town's zoning Bylaws should be amended to codify that current informal practice that requires all structures to have an E911 address prior to the receipt of a zoning permit, and that permitted structures clearly display said address prior to occupancy.</u>	1 year	Planning Council
4	<u>The Selectboard should look to acquire any adjacent properties that come on the market to ensure that there is ample room to expand the fire station, if needed, at a later date.</u>	ongoing	Selectboard
4	<u>This plan supports continuing the current ½ penny on the Grandlist of annual funding that the Noyes House Receives from Town Meeting, and the sourcing of any grant funds that can be procured, to ensure the preservation of what is believed to be the second oldest house built in Morrisville.</u>	ongoing	Selectboard
4	<u>To support awareness and accessibility of recreational amenities in our community, the Selectboard should look to employ someone part-time to staff the recently resurrected Parks &amp; Recreation Committee.</u>	1 year	Selectboard
4	<u>The Recreation Committee should create an online calendar, and list of recreational amenities in the community, including: tennis and basketball courts, groomed Nordic ski trails, athletic fields, fitness and nature trails, the Copley running track, the school gymnasiums, and the two playgrounds.</u>	1 year	Recreation Committee
4	<u>The Recreation Committee should also work collaboratively with MACC, and other like-minded organizations, to investigating the re-development of Clark Park.</u>	2 years	Recreation Committee
4	<u>The Recreation Committee and the Selectboard should work with the Village Trustees to obtain a lease for the park that would allow the Town's Parks &amp; Recreation Committee to maintain and make improvements to Clark Park.</u>	2 years	Recreation Committee

4	<u><i>In an effort to create more parking downtown, the Planning Council should also work with the Mt. Vernon Lodge at 65 Portland Street on a plan to turn the south facing side lawn of that building into angled parked.</i></u>	2 years	Planning Council
4	<u><i>The Selectboard should secure the old rail car loading area lease from VTrans when it expires in 2031 so a proper parking lot can be built that services the downtown and the rail trail at the kiosk on the bottom of Pleasant Street. The Selectboard should reach out to the existing leaseholder and VTrans in the interim in hopes of taking over the current lease prior to expiration.</i></u>	Prior to 2031	Selectboard
4	<u><i>The current status with the Village paying property taxes to the Town for property, including light poles, that is located outside the Village (with most of those dollars being sent to Montpelier for education) for non-revenue producing properties should come to an end, either via the sale of the subject properties, or the possible expansion of the Village line, so most of these properties can be located inside the Village limits, and therefore become tax exempt.</i></u>	2 years	Village Trustees
5	<u><i>The Planning Council should immediately evaluate if a demolition delay provision belongs in the town's zoning bylaw for contributing structures in Morrisville's original 1983 historic district.</i></u>	1 year	Planning Council
5	<u><i>The Planning Council, with an assist from the Historical Society, should evaluate if the historic district should be enlarged again to the south down E. High Street, Congress Street, Summer Street, Court Street, and Maple Street, as there are many largely intact historic homes in this primary residential section of the village that will be nearing 200 years in age by the time the 2020-2030 Town Plan expires.</i></u>	3-5 years	Planning Council
5	<u><i>The Planning Council should also examine if the town should adopt zoning for at least its initial historic district designation per 24 VSA, §4414(f).</i></u>	2 years	Planning Council

5	<u>The Morristown Historical Society should help preserve the Civil War Bell hanging on the corner of Upper Main and Maple Streets by allocating the time and resources needed to help the owners of the bell, the Lamoille Valley Grace Brethren Church, preserve it, and make it available for public viewing.</u>	2 years	Planning Council & Historical Society
5	<u>The Morristown Historical Society, with backing from the Planning Council, should investigate the steps needed to designate the Grace Brethren Church, with the Civil War bell hanging in its spire, as a State and potentially even a National Historic Landmark.</u>	1 year	Historical Society
5	<u>The Conservation Commission should work towards the conservation of, and potential recreational opportunities on, the 82 acre “Bugby Springs” property.</u>	1 year	Conservation Commission
5	<u>The Planning Council should work to see if preserving the natural areas and existing scenery on our side of Elmore Mountain is attainable via instituting a design review district, or adopting an elevation limitation for new development in this area.</u>	5 years	Planning Council
5	<u>The Planning Council should evaluate if wildlife and forest connectivity should be designated as §340 Environmental Resource Areas in the zoning bylaws to promote the health, viability, and ecological function of these important areas.</u>	3 years	Planning Council
5	<u>The Planning Council should evaluate what zoning tools might be available to help better protect Molly’s Bog, and Joe’s Pond.</u>	3 years	Planning Council
5	<u>The Conservation Commission should also work towards conserving the private lands that encroach upon Molly’s Bog, and Joe’s Pond.</u>	Ongoing	Conservation Commission

6	<u>The School Board should evaluate the construction of a larger field house. Concurrent with the construction of the new field house, the school's outdoor recreational facilities are also in need of attention. In order to allow that a regulation-sized track be rebuilt, it is recommended that the baseball field be repositioned, the tennis courts be replaced.</u>	2-3 years	School District
6	<u>For projects like the proposed field house, the school district's capital budget should be coordinated with those of the village and town. Furthermore, information regarding key infrastructure needs such as for community recreation and internet connectivity should be communicated and plans developed collaboratively as appropriate.</u>	1 year	School District
6	<u>Funding opportunities should be sought to construct this 190 foot long connector road that provides a secondary access point, and accompanying sidewalk, that would provide a direct connection from Upper Main Street to Copley Avenue.</u>	1-2 years	School District & Selectboard
9	<u>An overarching objective for our community is to encourage the protection and use of local renewable energy resources, to reduce reliance on out-of-state energy resources, and to especially reduce reliance on out-of-state non-renewable energy resources</u>	Ongoing	Selectboard & Village Trustee
9	<u>Encouraging greater efficiency and energy conservation is a primary objective that must be kept in the forefront of all energy related decision making.</u>	Ongoing	Selectboard & Village Trustee
9	<u>The Planning Council should therefor study if it would be worthwhile to develop thermal energy standards, or more simply, to offer a density bonus to encourage developers to use heat pumps within new townhouses and new multi-family construction, so efficient heat and air conditioning can be readily available for these new households.</u>	1 year	Planning Council



9	<u>Given the Town's significant fuel use, the Selectboard should make fuel efficiency a leading component in the decision-making process when municipal vehicles are purchased. The Selectboard should also consider setting a generous fixed fuel budget every year with the goal of spending unused funds when fuel prices are low on improving the efficiency of the Town's energy use.</u>	Ongoing	Selectboard
9	<u>The Selectboard should immediately look to convert the interior lighting in Town owned buildings to LED bulbs to create additional energy and cost savings.</u>	1 year	Selectboard
9	<u>The Selectboard should evaluate the Town's daily operating energy costs of \$665 to seek out additional cost savings through achieving greater efficiencies.</u>	Ongoing	Selectboard
11	<u>The Selectboard shall exercise all the political avenues available if the Green Mountain Care Board attempts to move critical hospital operations like Mansfield Orthopedics out of Morrisville, to ensure the continued existence of the hospital, with the hospital offering future health care services that are at least on par with current levels.</u>	Ongoing	Selectboard
12	<u>The Planning Council should identify the property owners that have, or should have, flood insurance to discuss if the premium savings generated by participating in the base level of FEMA's Community Rating System could incentive the insurance of additional properties.</u>	3-5 years	Planning Council
12	<u>The Planning Council should study the remote Special Flood Hazard areas in the town that have not had a flood study to determine if it is logical to adopt the river corridor layer, and to develop companion zoning restrictions.</u>	3-5 years	Planning Council
12	<u>The Town's Hazard Mitigation Plan is out of date and should be updated.</u>	1-2 years	Selectboard