

# Conceptual Vision Plan for Our Community

Before & After

**Wilmington Vermont** is nestled in the heart of the Deerfield Valley and a gateway community to the Green Mountains. The picturesque village with a population of 2,225 is surrounded by beautiful rural mountainous countryside. All four seasons are unique in Wilmington. The location in the snow belt of Vermont brings skiers on their way to and from the mountains through the downtown. Wilmington was previously known as a dining destination for skiers but that profile has slowly altered as ski resorts have incorporated more services on site. Just outside of the downtown area is a large reservoir, which has endless potential for summer activities.

On August 28, 2011, Tropical Storm Irene dropped up to 15 inches of rain in Wilmington, causing the Deerfield River to rise nearly 27 feet in the downtown, bringing nearly six feet of water onto Main Street and throughout the downtown area. Floodwaters heavily damaged downtown businesses, many of which occupy historic structures that date back as far as 1836 and are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Both of the Wilmington emergency operation centers, located at the Police and Fire Departments, and their respective communication centers were quickly rendered useless. The river receded as quickly as it rose, and by midnight was almost back inside its normal channel.

The Vermont Downtown Action Team (V-DAT) was selected by the State of Vermont, Department of Housing and Community Development, Vermont Downtown Program in May 2013 to conduct a community planning and economic development charrette in Wilmington. The V-DAT was comprised of experts in architecture, planning, landscape architecture, historic preservation, economic development, organizational structure, landscape architecture, engineering and community branding.

The V-DAT planning charrette operates on three key tenants: utilizing an asset based approach, addressing the community in a holistic manner, and conducting the exercise in a public forum.

**Make downtown the civic heart of your community.**

The core downtown area must position itself as the heart and soul of the community. Visitors and citizens need to find Town Hall, town information and your town leadership downtown. Ideally, Town Hall should be moved back to the historic downtown core as demonstrated on the plans. The current City Hall can be adaptively reused as a small and much needed medical clinic.

**Fill Vacant Buildings/Preserve Architectural Integrity**

The market study findings for Wilmington show that there is room for additional retail and restaurant growth in the market. This information coupled with the excellent collection of buildings with strong architectural character point to a great opportunity for infill development with specialty shopping and dining in Wilmington's downtown. Many of Wilmington's treasures lie in the details of the architecture of the community rich in classic New England and Victorian details.

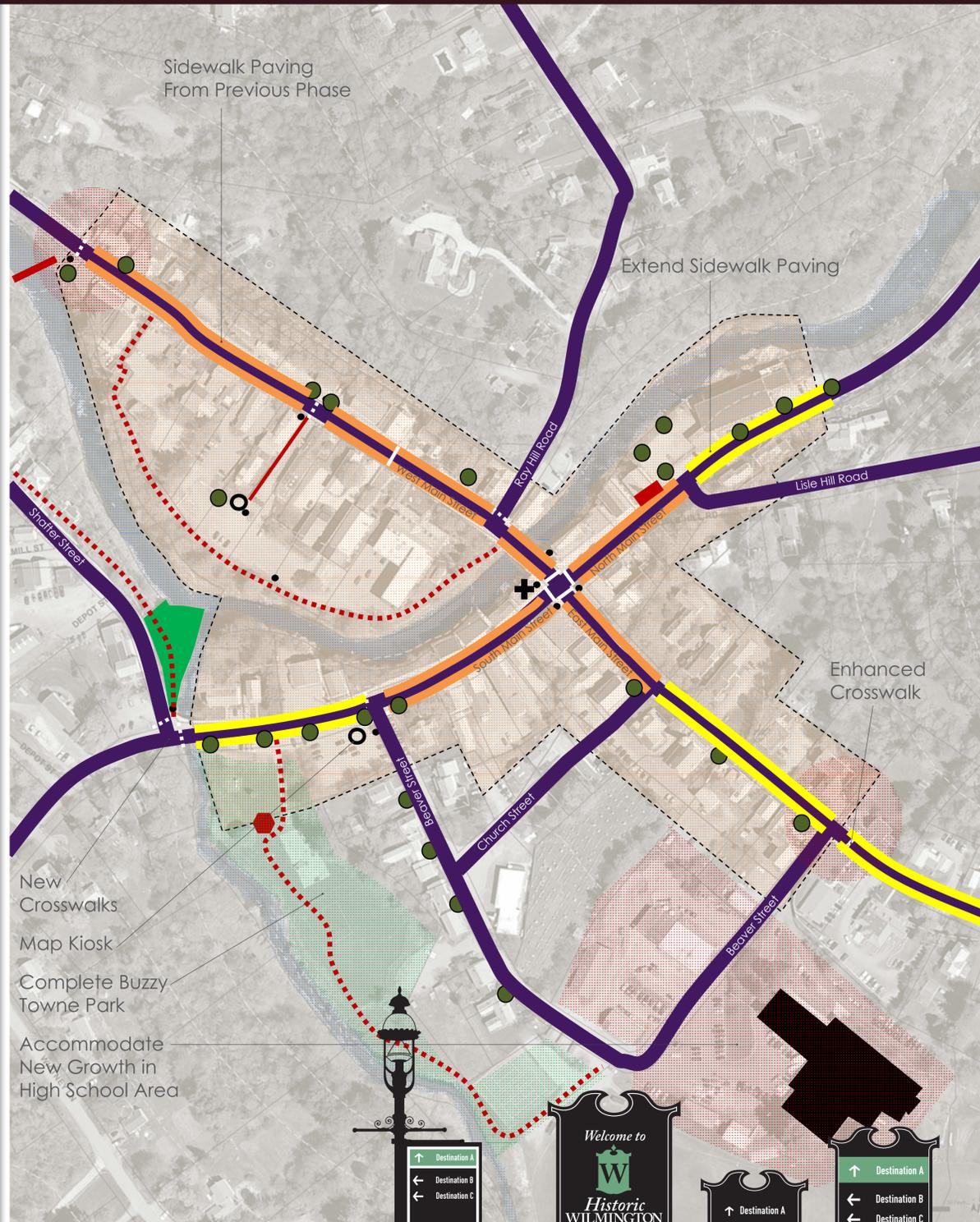


**Build Pedestrian Connections**

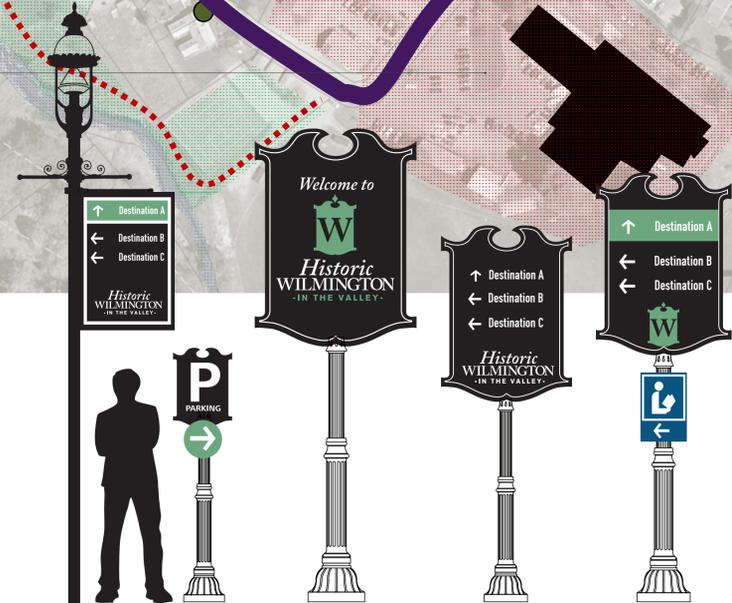
Wilmington is notable as a very walk-able community. There are excellent opportunities to connect different parts of the community, improve crosswalks, and mark where pedestrians can navigate through the downtown area to adjacent amenities. Whether it is crosswalk improvements, improved lighting at night, and ongoing maintenance of the excellent flower program in the community Wilmington makes a strong impression as a place for people to get out of their cars and explore.

**Telling Wilmington's Story**

A singular opportunity exists for Wilmington to seize control of its image and identity. To do so will take many partners and a cohesive strategy to brand Wilmington in an authentic way. Wilmington is truly a classic Vermont Community with an authentic New England Style. The brand reflects these elements.



**Project Funding and Support**  
This project was supported by funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Community Development Block Grant - Disaster Recovery. The plan was prepared as a cooperative effort of the State of Vermont Department of Housing and Community Development, the Division of Community Planning and Revitalization and the Town of Wilmington. For more information on the Vermont Downtown Action Team (V-DAT) program and links to the detailed presentation and report for Wilmington please visit [http://accd.vermont.gov/strong\\_communities/opportunities/revitalization/vdat](http://accd.vermont.gov/strong_communities/opportunities/revitalization/vdat) or call (802) 828-5229.



**Brand Statement**  
We are a distinctive place nestled in Deerfield Valley, we are a Southern Vermont village with a welcome that is warm and an environment that is as relaxing as it is beautiful. Since before the creation of this nation, Wilmington has been a gathering place in the serene mountains, a center for commerce, a traditional community, and a spirit tightly bound.

In the Mountains, our valleys and streams are evident. They captivate our guests calling them to enjoy this place we call home in every season. Whether it is canoeing our reservoir in the summer, skiing our slopes in the winter or taking in the amazing color of our surroundings each fall, Wilmington is the perfect center for your ideal Vermont Experience.

In the Mountains, our story is built on hard work. The branches of the Deerfield River converge here. The very water on which we settled powered the mills that built our homes and the striking buildings of our downtown. Today, we remain a people that know the value of a hard day's work who are always willing to lend a helpful hand. We also recognize the splendor of the place we call home and welcome others to experience this very special place.

In the Mountains, our future is as rich as our history. Here, in the shadow of old Haystack, we are cultivating a vision that will preserve the character of our home, and assure that our grandchildren will love the same things about Wilmington that we do: a stroll through the heart of town, a friendly smile from a neighbor, a gathering to hear music in a place designed by the same man who created Boston's Symphony Hall.

Explore our valley, take a walk down our streets, visit our shops, dine in our restaurants, stay in one of our inns, and experience the place we love. We welcome you as our guest and invite you to discover the best of our Wilmington in the Mountains.

