

## CHAPTER 1- 50 + YEARS OF CHANGE

Since the 1960's Williston has grown from a small New England village surrounded by working farms that defined its economy to a suburban hub containing a broad mix of residential, commercial, and industrial activity. This has resulted in a 21<sup>st</sup> century community that is one of the fastest growing towns in the state's faster growing region. Williston has become a growing and thriving community with a bustling and diverse economy. Throughout this transformation, the town has used its planning process to address the impacts that have resulted from population growth, economic transformation, and land use change on the environment and character of the community, while it has strived to provide the necessary public facilities and services needed as the town has changed and grown.

These planning efforts have resulted in ...

- substantial open space conservation, including the purchase of development rights on working farms and acquisition of the conservation lands described in Chapter 13 – Open Space and Working landscapes.
- significant investments in the infrastructure needed to support growth, including the early '80's construction of a sewerage system, improvements to town highways, an expanding system of pedestrian ways, the recent construction of new fire and police stations and public facility, and the creation of Williston's first ambulance service;
- a growth management system that confines suburban infrastructure to approximately one-quarter of the town's area, matches the pace of growth to infrastructure capabilities, and strives to protect the rural character of the rest of the community;
- a design review process that protects the historic character of Williston Village; and
- a long-range plan to create a functional, pedestrian-friendly, mixed-use commercial center around Taft Corners including the approval by the State of Vermont as a designated Growth Center; and
- the adoption of an entirely new *Unified Development Bylaw* in 2009 and subsequently amended, that supports many of the goals and objectives presented here.

These efforts are a work in progress. Some have been more successful than others. Some have been controversial. Williston has been learning how to grow, and those lessons have been reflected in the previous five-year updates of the comprehensive plan that are required by Vermont law.

This 2016-2024 comprehensive plan is no exception. The plan now spans eight years instead of five because of recent state legislative changes, it continues many long-standing policies, but also features new or revised approaches to important issues. The fun begins in Chapter 2, which states the purpose of this plan and adopts a vision for continuing growth management in Williston. Before moving on, however, some housekeeping is in order. The remainder of this introductory chapter (Chapter 1) explains how this plan complies with Vermont law and describes the process leading to its adoption.

### **Authority**

Vermont state law provides the statutory authority for municipalities to develop a comprehensive plan under V.S.A. 24 § 4381, 4382 and 4384(a) consistent with state established goals in V.S.A. 24 § 4302. That statute establishes the procedures Williston's planning commission followed in preparing a draft plan for consideration by the Selectboard. V.S.A. 24 § 4385 sets forth the process the Selectboard followed in adopting this plan.

## Required Elements

Comprehensive plans developed by municipalities in Vermont are required to include a number of specific elements or sections in order to encourage the appropriate development of land. These elements are specified within V.S.A. 24 § 4382. Table 1.A shows which chapters of this document address which required elements.

**Table 1.A – Statutory Plan Elements in this Plan**

<b>Required Element, per 24 V.S.A. § 4382</b>	<b>Where Found in this Plan</b>
(1) Objectives, Policies, and Programs	Objectives and policies appear in each chapter. Chapter 14 presents an implementation program.
(2) Land Use Plan	Land use is addressed in every chapter, but principally in Chapter 3.
(3) Transportation Plan	Chapter 6.
(4) Utility and Facility Plan	Most utilities and facilities are addressed in Chapter 7. Recreational facilities are in Chapter 8. The schools are in Chapter 9. Power generation and distribution are discussed in Chapter 10.
(5) Policies on the preservation of Natural Resources	Chapters 3, 4, 12 and 13.
(6) Educational Facilities Plan	Chapter 9. This chapter also addresses child care, as required by 24 V.S.A. § 4302(C)(13)
(7) Implementation Program	Chapter 14.
(8) Relationship of the plan to trends and plans of adjacent municipalities, and the region.	Williston’s efforts to coordinate with other jurisdiction are described in Chapter 14.
(9) Energy Plan	Chapter 11.
(10) Housing Element	Residential land use is covered in Chapter 3. Housing policy, including incentives for affordable housing, is addressed in Chapter 5.
(11) Economic Development Element	Chapter 7 Economic Development
(12) Flood Resilience Plan	Chapter 12 Watershed Health

**Vermont Statutes** – State laws are on-line at: <http://www.leg.state.vt.us/statutes/statutes2.htm>.

## The Planning Process

Williston’s 2016 plan update has taken approximately 18 months. It began in earnest during the fall of 2015, with staff’s submission of a work program to the Planning Commission. The people of the town were invited to a “kickoff” meeting on May 7<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>rd</sup>, 2016. The results of that event are summarized in Appendix A.

The Planning Commission also utilized the expertise and resources of its citizen volunteers, the people who sit on one of the various town boards and committees that help the town develop and shape the town’s policies. These include the Development Review Board who provided help in understanding development and permitting issues, the Conservation Commission who commented about natural resource conservation and protection, the Historic and Architectural Advisory Committee who provide guidance with issues pertaining to the historic village and design review, and the Recreation Committee who commented on recreation facilities and programming. The heads of various town departments were also consulted for their guidance and recommendations on each of their own special needs.

The Planning Commission involved many other residents in finalizing its draft. The Conservation Commission reviewed and commented on open space, watershed, and energy elements. The ad-hoc Sustainable Williston Initiatives citizen group took a leading role in revising the energy chapter.

The town also solicited participation from the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission, the Green Mountain Transit Agency, and other agencies, all of whom provided information that appears later in this plan. A chronology of the plan update effort appears in Table 1.B.

**Table 1.B – Plan Update Chronology**

<b>November and December 2014</b>	Discuss outline of the plan update with the Planning commission and Selectboard
<b>2015</b>	
May 2015	Kickoff meetings, involving more than 40 Williston residents
September	CCRPC Completes Initial Technical Review of 2011-2016 Plan
October – December	Planning commission meets work on chapters
<b>2016</b>	
January-September	Planning Commission reviews draft chapters, Planning staff meets with other town departments and other Community Boards
August 30, 2016	Selectboard Retreat – Joint Meeting with Planning Commission to Discuss the Plan
October 2016	Planning Commission Reviews Draft Document
October 12, 2016	CCRPC Planning Advisory Committee Reviews Draft Document
November ?? 2016	Planning Commission holds Public Hearing
December 2016	Planning Commission transmits draft plan to the Selectboard
2017	
January, February 2017	Selectboard Public Hearings
February, 2017	Selectboard sends possible changes to the Planning Commission for consideration
March 2017	Planning Commission Comments to Selectboard on Proposed Changes
March, April 2017	Selectboard Public Hearing
April 2017	Adopted by the Selectboard

**Kickoff Event Summary.** Williston’s plan update began with a “kickoff” event sponsored by the Planning Commission on May 7<sup>th</sup> and 9th, 2015. More than 40 residents came to talk about the future of their town and enjoy refreshments. The report from that event is reproduced in Appendix A. This sidebar provides a summary.

After a brief introduction to the planning process, participants were divided into small groups and asked to prepare prioritized lists of issues that should be addressed in the plan update. Each group’s list appears in Appendix A.

As those lists show, there was virtually unanimous agreement on the major issues the town should tackle in its plan update, including maintaining open space; addressing the cost of housing; improving the transportation system, including bike and pedestrian ways and transit; addressing stormwater and other water quality issues; energy efficiency and conservation; and continuing to manage growth in a fair and practical way.

These top priorities, as well as the other issues and needs listed at the kickoff event are addressed in this plan. The kickoff event was also used a way to recruit members for the citizen task forces appointed by the Planning Commission.

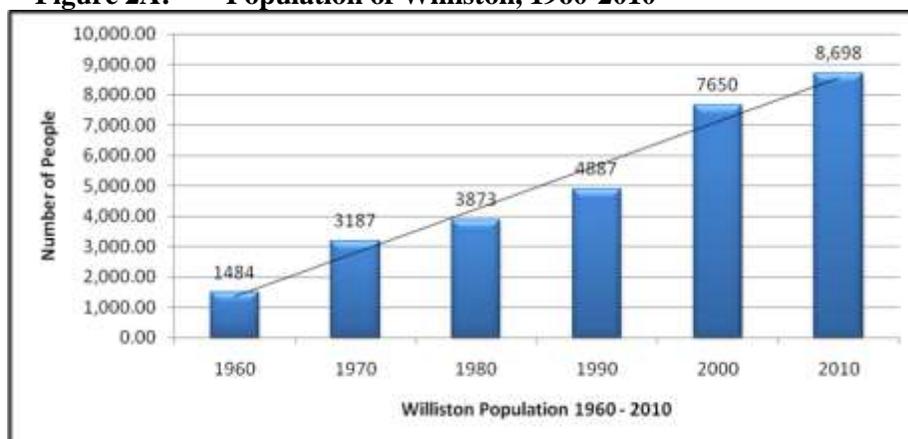
## CHAPTER 2 – 50 + YEARS OF PLANNING: WILLISTON’S EVOLVING VISION

Your Town continues to grow at an ever-increasing rate. Although the growth is primarily in residential dwellings, there have been several small businesses started in Williston. There is a great amount of industrial and commercial potential here and it is urged that anyone who has an occasion to boost Williston for such purposes accept the opportunity to do so.

1964 Annual Report, Town of Williston

Williston adopted its first zoning bylaw in 1963, when the town’s had a population of less than 1,500 people. The first significant residential subdivisions were platted the following year, prompting the adoption of subdivision regulations in 1965. Growth slowed in the early 1970’s, but controversy erupted in 1977 when a shopping mall was proposed on the present site of Maple Tree Place. Fifteen years later, a proposal to open a Wal-Mart in Williston led to Vermont (the whole state!) being declared “endangered” by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. By the year 2000, the town’s population had grown more than four times since 1960, and Williston was absorbing nearly one-fifth of Chittenden County’s growth.

**Figure 2A: Population of Williston, 1960-2010**



The most recent data from the U.S. Census indicates that Williston’s population continues to grow. As shown in Table 2.A, between 2000 and 2010, the town’s population increased by more than 1,000 people. This was significantly less than the pace of growth observed during the 1980s and 1990s, however population growth in Williston outpaces the growth rates of Vermont as a whole and Chittenden County, which is the fastest growing county in Vermont between 2000 and 2010.

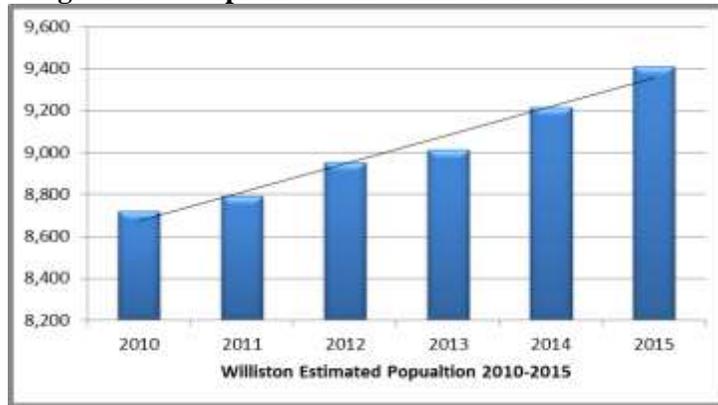
**Table 2.A – Population and Population Growth of Williston Since 1960**

	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	1990-2010
<b>Williston</b>	<b>1,484</b>	<b>3,187</b>	<b>3,873</b>	<b>4,887</b>	<b>7,650</b>	<b>8,698</b>	
<b>10 year rate of change</b>		115%	22%	26%	57%	13.7%	72%
<b>Chittenden County</b>	74,425	99,121	115,534	131,761	146,571	156,545	
<b>10 year rate of change</b>		33%	17%	14%	11%	6.8%	16%
<b>Vermont</b>	389,811	444,732	511,456	562,758	608,827	625,741	
<b>10 year rate of change</b>		14%	15%	10%	8%	2.8%	10%

Source: Bureau of the Census.

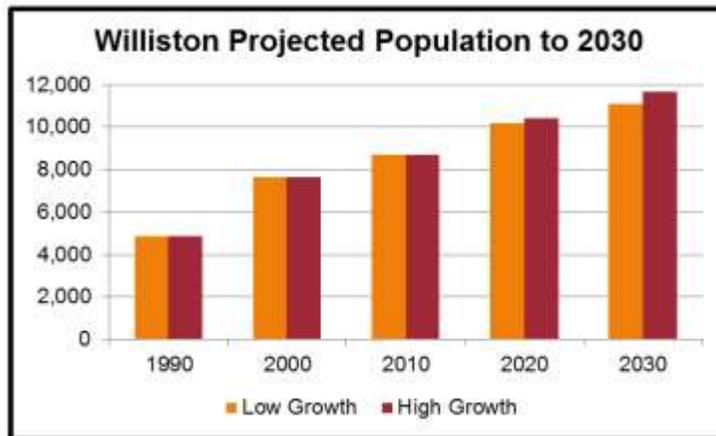
Population estimates between 2010 and 2015 show a continuation of this trend. The population of Williston increased by approximately 700 people in the first half of this decade (Figure 2.B).

**Figure 2.B – Population Estimates 2010-2015**



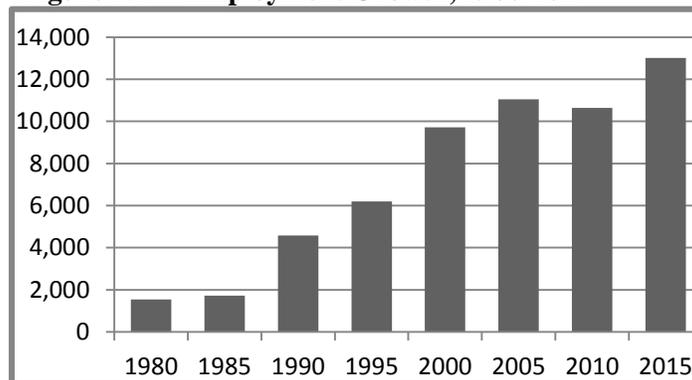
Recent population projections prepared by the Vermont Department of Labor show Williston continuing to grow through 2030 to between 11,000 and 12,000 people depending on different growth rate scenarios, with the town containing to be one of the fastest growing communities in the state (Figure 2.B)

**Figure 2.C – Williston Population Projection 1990 to 2030**



Williston’s emergence as a center of employment has been even more dramatic than the growth of its population. Table 2.c shows the change in covered employment since 1980. These data do not include business proprietors or the self-employed, but are the only employment data available at the town level.

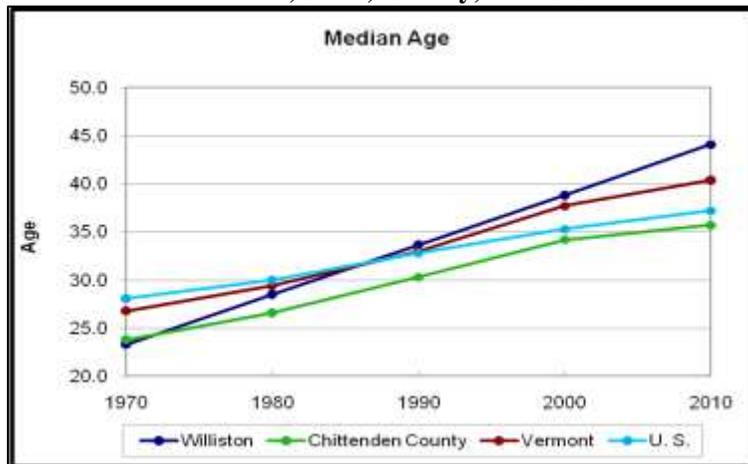
**Figure 2.D – Employment Growth, 1980-2015**



## An Aging Population

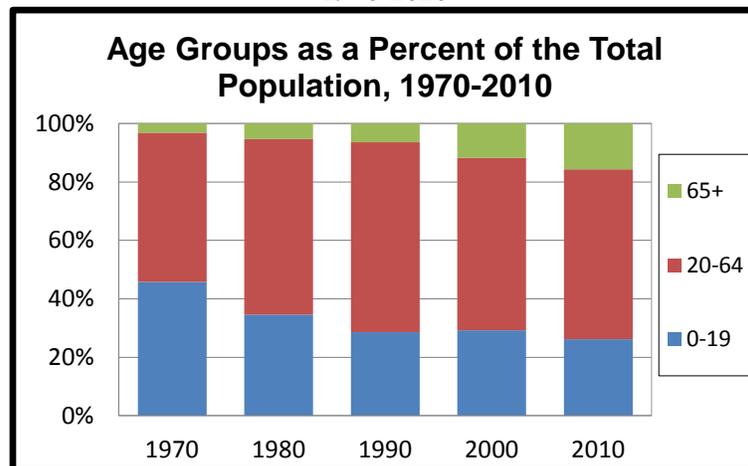
Managing the challenges of growth and development have been the primary themes in the town's planning efforts for the past 20 years. Keeping pace with providing the infrastructure and services necessary to meet the needs of an expanding community into the 21<sup>st</sup> century has been the task at hand. This has included basic infrastructure such as roads, water and sewer services, public safety such as police, fire and EMT services, and providing schools for the education of the town's children. Williston now, however, finds itself with some different challenges as it prepares to meet the needs of an older and aging population (Figures 2.E and 2.F). The share of the town's population that is school aged is shrinking, while the portion of residents in or entering the retirement years is growing. At the same time, household size continues a long range decrease in size, currently averaging 2 ½ people per household (Figure 2.F). These changes in the make-up of the town's population will no doubt affect the way in which the town plans for its future.

**Figure 2.E – Median Age Comparison, Williston, State, County, and U.S.**



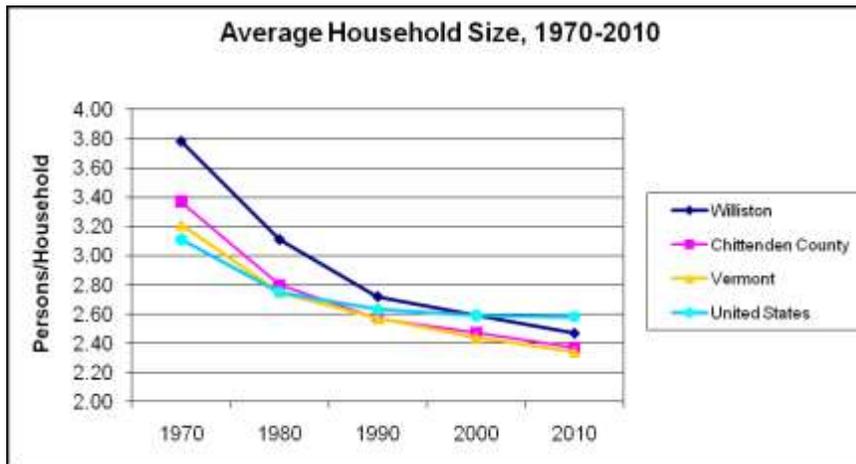
Source: U.S. Census

**Figure 2.F – Age Cohorts in Williston, 1970-2010**



Source: U.S. Census

**Figure 2.G – Average Household Size**



Source: U.S. Census

### And More to Come

Other indicators could be offered (see for example Table 3.A), but Table 2.A and Figures 2.A and 2.B effectively document Williston’s long term growth picture. Population projections prepared by the State of Vermont suggest that Williston will continue to grow and grow faster than the rest of the state and perhaps the region as a whole. The potential for continuing change is explored in a build-out analysis conducted for the town by the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission in 2005. That study is presented as Appendix B, but its results can be easily summarized. Given the current regulations and accounting for both the natural constraints on development and conserved lands:

- the number of housing units in Williston could double, growing from around 3,200 to almost 7,000, and
- the amount of commercial and industrial space could expand by roughly 25%, resulting in another 1.8 million square feet of development.

The appendix explains the assumptions - which are tailored to Williston’s actual experience - on which these figures are based. It also explains that build-out analysis has no time dimension. It does not say whether, or when, the potential for growth will be realized. Build-out analysis tells us what could happen - as market demand and infrastructure capacity allow - and challenges us to prepare for the future.

The data contained in Table 2.A and Figures 2.B and 2.C point out two important observations about the growth of the Town of Williston. First, the town has experienced prolonged periods of growth in population and employment extending across several decades. The influx of new homes and residents and the growth of the town’s economy have transformed the town’s size and economic make up. Williston is no longer a sleepy rural community; it has become an important part of a modern and multi-faceted metropolitan region. Secondly, the more recent pace of growth has moderated considerably to a pace that might be described as more incremental and manageable. The town has to some extent managed to “catch up” and has built many of the facilities it will need to provide the services necessary to serve this community. Predicting future trends against the backdrop of these two observations poses a challenge. Is the more recent, short range trend a picture of what lies ahead, or is the town experiencing a brief pause before another surge of renewed growth pressure?

## **Purpose of This Plan**

This plan is the latest edition of the town's response to past and potential change. It informs us about growth, land use change, and the town's ability to accommodate development, but it is a statement of policy, not an encyclopedia. Most factual details will be found in other documents, many of which are referred in the plan.

The purpose of this plan is to guide land use and public investment decisions, ensuring that each action contributes to the town's vision of a desirable future. The plan will be consulted in every major development review and in the creation of the capital budget. Any change in the town's bylaws must be consistent with the direction set here (24 V.S.A. § 4401 and 4411 require this), as must decisions about the use of Williston's Environmental Reserve Fund and the allocation of the town's limited sewage treatment plant capacity. This plan also calls for a number of studies that will inform those who prepare the next plan.

## **Organization of This Plan**

There are three layers of guidance for decision-makers in this plan, ranging from the general to the specific.

- ***Vision***  
The overall vision statement that appears in this chapter sets the stage for the more specific direction that follows.
- ***Broad Objectives***  
Each chapter contains objectives, which are broad statements about how the town will address a particular issue or need.
- ***Policies***  
Most objectives are accompanied by policies, which are more specific statements of how the town will achieve that objective.

Chapter 14 – Implementation provides a summary, including a suggested timeframe and, where known, an estimated cost for the implementation of each objective and policy.

## **Williston's Vision for the Future**

Williston will strive to balance responsible, livable suburban growth with rural character and conservation. To do this, the town will ...

- concentrate and limit high intensity development to areas within the town's designated Growth Center in and around Taft Corners;
- permit the flexibility and intensity of use necessary to foster creation of a design-conscious, mixed use, pedestrian-friendly commercial center around Taft Corners;
- encourage and support the use of mass transit and non-motorized modes of transportation through mixed use development policies and transportation facilities planning;
- sustain rural landscapes by requiring an open space pattern for subdivisions, conserving lands identified in Chapter 13 - Open Space and Working Landscapes through acquisitions or easements; and finding ways to help the owners of working lands continue their stewardship;
- use design review and public investment to maintain the character of its historic village center;
- manage the timing of and pace of new development to ensure that necessary public facilities and services are available when development occurs;
- protect residential neighborhoods from incompatible uses and offer incentives for the provision of a diverse housing stock, including homes that are affordable to working people and their families;
- attend to the details of site planning and architectural design, including outdoor lighting, signage, access, and landscaping that give development both market appeal and long-term community value;
- invest in new facilities, including utilities, roads, schools, parks, and trails, as necessary, while managing the location and pace of development to ensure that growth does not outstrip the capacity of public facilities and services, including fire protection and law enforcement;
- conserve energy in its own operations through energy efficiency, and by incentivizing and encouraging builders to meet "green" building standards;
- use regulatory and non-regulatory tools, including funding for the acquisition of development rights or land, to protect water quality, wildlife habitat, scenic views, and other natural and cultural resources; and
- engage all citizens who are interested and willing to participate in the town's planning process.

## CHAPTER 3 - LAND USE

The rapid growth of the town's population and housing stock is clearly reflected in the landscape we drive through every day. The question is: how do we deal with that change? How do we maintain the town's vision as it was stated in Chapter 2? How do we ensure that new uses will be compatible with the old? How do we protect environmental quality and the rural landscape that remains? How do we meet the growing demand for public facilities? How do we nurture good design?

These questions are what planning is all about. The answers begin here, with land use, with how the town will guide and regulate the initial decision a landowner makes to change from one use to another. This chapter includes the following objectives.

**3.1 – Taft Corners and Growth Center** – Williston has emerged as a regional center of commerce, business, and employment. The town accounts for more retail sales than any other municipality in Vermont. This objective provides a basis for the town's continuing efforts to build a design-conscious, pedestrian-friendly, mixed-use town center in area of Taft Corners.

**3.2 – Rural Williston** -- Dramatic changes have occurred in the rural part of Williston over the years. This objective reflects recent changes in the regulation of rural residential development and the town's efforts to preserve its rural landscape.

**3.3 - Industrial Lands** –This objective also calls for changes in the standards applied to uses of industrial lands which are an essential part of the town's economic vitality.

**3.4 – Residential Neighborhoods** – Most of Williston's residents live in the Residential Zoning District.

**3.5 – Open Space** – This goal reflects the importance of protecting open space, from neighborhood parks to working farms, and it is among Williston's most important goals.

**3.6 – Williston Village** – “Williston Village” is broadly the area in the Village Land Use designation and the Village Zoning District (VZD). Contained within the VZD, there is a state-designated Village Center, which roughly contains both the Williston Village National Register historic District and the “Additional Review Area.” See Map 6. This objective continues the policy of maintaining the historic character of the village.

**3.7 -- Explore the Creation, Definition, or Modification of other Land Use Areas** - This objective identifies several parts of town where changes to land use rules, prevailing uses of land, and other physical realities need to be addressed.

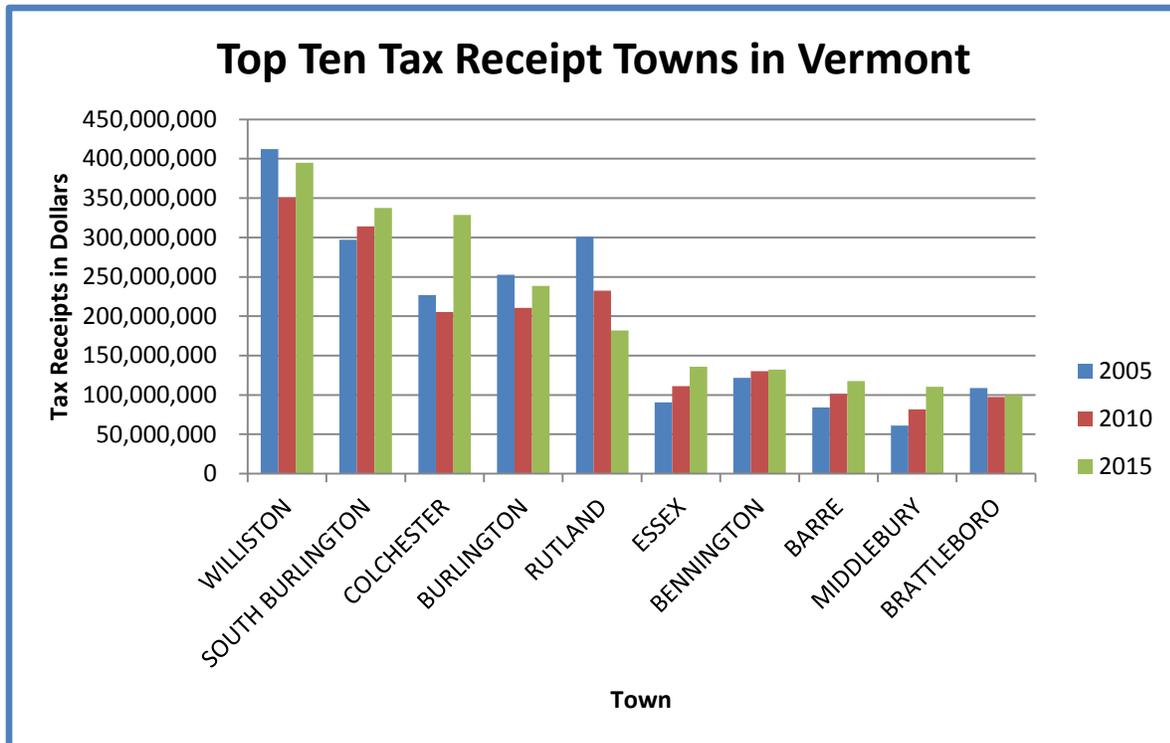
**3.8 – Compatibility with neighboring municipalities and the regional ECOC plan** – This goal describes how Williston will continue to implement land use policies in a manner that is compatible with the land use patterns of its neighbors, Essex, Essex Junction, Hinesburg, Jericho, Richmond and South Burlington and is consistent with the regional ECOC plan of the CCRPC.

**3.1 – Taft Corners and Growth Center.** The Town of Williston will encourage and support a design-conscious, pedestrian-friendly, mixed-use development and redevelopment pattern in the Taft Corners area. The town has worked toward this objective by successfully obtaining Growth Center Designation in 2008 and revising the *Unified Development Bylaw* in 2009. The town envisions the majority of new growth and development activity taking place in the Growth Center. The town will continue to support this objective by encouraging the construction of planned infrastructure in the

**Growth Center, concentrating new development in the Growth Center, and examining and monitoring the effectiveness of its bylaws**

The appropriate extent of commercial development has been a subject of debate in Williston for nearly 30 years. What has emerged from the controversy is a regional commercial center that employs almost 2,200 people in retail trade and nearly 2,600 in services. As Figure 3.A shows, Williston has by far the highest value of retail sales of any Vermont community. This generated almost \$400 million in taxable sales in 2015.

**Figure 3.A – Retail Sales in Top 10 Vermont Municipalities, 2005-2015**



Source: Vermont Department of Taxes *Sales and Uses Statistics Report*

The shopping opportunities, jobs, and tax base generated by Williston’s commercial growth must be balanced against traffic congestion and the costs the town incurs in providing services to a large population of workers, commuters, and shoppers. But the policy question addressed in this plan is not whether Williston should become a regional commercial center, the policy question is how best to guide new development in the town’s Growth Center.

The question is how the Taft Corners area can be encouraged to evolve into a more cohesive, more diverse, more pedestrian-friendly, and more functional commercial center. A great deal of discussion has been devoted to this topic since the Pyramid Mall was proposed (on the site where Maple Tree Place now stands) in 1977. As a result, the Taft Corners area has more sidewalks and bike paths, more landscaping, and more restrained signs than most similar commercial districts. Maple Tree Place is an important joint effort to create a different model of suburban commercial development. The completion of the Finney Crossing mixed-use development currently under construction and the mixed-use development of the former driving range property adjacent to Maple Tree Place (Cottonwood Crossing) will result in compact neighborhoods of commercial, residential, and open space uses.

Only two relatively large parcels remain to be developed in the Taft Corners area. They are zoned for mixed use, and their eventual use will be consistent with the town's goals. The challenge is how to encourage the appropriate infill and redevelopment of existing commercial spaces. The policies adopted here will make infill and redevelopment that is consistent with the town's vision possible.

**3.1.1 Work with Developers to Build Grid Streets.** Williston will support and encourage landowners to build the grid streets that have been planned for the Taft Corners area west of route 2A between Marshall Avenue and Williston Road. Williston should consider adding proposed grid streets to the list of approved projects in the Traffic Impact Fee Ordinance. These streets will provide the access needed for a more intense, pedestrian-friendly development pattern. They should also help relieve congestion on Route 2A and Marshall Avenue. A study of the potential benefits of the grid streets was completed in 2006, and the grid street network was studied again and affirmed as part of the Williston Essex Network Transportation Study (WENTS) as part of the Circ. Highway Alternatives process completed by the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission in 2014.

**3.1.2 Work with VTrans on Other Circulation Improvements.** The long anticipated Circumferential Highway (Circ), which had been planned to link I-89 in Williston to VT-289 in Essex, has been abandoned by the state. The town completed a complex planning process with the Circ. affected communities

**3.1.3 Commercial Zoning Districts.** Williston currently has five districts that allow commercial uses, and these are shown on Map 3. Each of these districts serves a particular function.

- **Business Park** – The existing Business Park Zoning District consists of Blair Park, which is largely built-out, and six parcels south of Blair Park across U.S.Rt. 2, only one of which is vacant. This district will continue to be the town's tool to regulate the spacious, suburban commercial development pattern of Blair Park and adjoining parcels.
- **Gateway** – There are three Gateway Districts. One is located around Exit 12 of I-89, and replaced the former Interstate Commercial Zoning District. The second is located west of VT Rt. 2A between River Cove Road and the Winooski River and contains the mixed commercial-office-industrial area developed during the 1980s. Both of these areas look different from each other because they were developed at different times, but both are auto-oriented and have a mix of retail, office, and industrial uses that can appropriately be subject to the same regulations. The third Gateway District, Gateway West, was developed in 2015 along Williston road in the vicinity of Brownell Road in order to deal with the changing nature of this once rural part of town. The Gateway West District allows a range of office uses in addition to residential uses along this heavily traveled corridor.

**Development Agreements and Zoning.** Most development in Maple Tree Place and Taft Corners Park – which comprise most of the TCZD and Mixed Use Commercial Zoning District – is subject to agreements between the landowner and the town. These agreements will continue in force (as they have done through past changes in the town's bylaws).

- **Taft Corners** – The Taft Corners Zoning District (TCZD) is the core of Williston's commercial area – the place where the town's goal of creating a pedestrian-friendly, design conscious, mixed use commercial center can best be realized. Coupled with the construction of the grid streets, this will allow diverse, smaller-scale retail, office, and residential uses to

be intermingled with the large retail stores and extensive parking areas that now dominate the area.

- **Mixed Use Residential** – This district lies east of Maple Tree Place, and includes Taft Farm, the driving range, and adjoining parcels. It is intended to permit higher density residential development mixed with limited retail and office uses. The town’s vision for its commercial center can only be realized if a substantial number of people live here, within walking distance of the theater, shops, cafes, and other businesses in the TCZD. Significant development and redevelopment in this and the Mixed Use Commercial zoning district could be reviewed according to the specific plan process in Chapter 9 of the *Unified Development Bylaw*.
- **Mixed Use Commercial** – This zoning district lies between Williston’s industrial and commercial areas, west of Harvest Lane. It is currently occupied by a mix of large retail stores and industrial uses, and four vacant lots. The revised bylaws will guide most retail uses into the TCZD, leaving this area available for development that supports the functions of the adjoining retail center, including lodging with conference space and offices housing educational, financial, management, personal, and professional services. Dwellings and a limited number of shops will be allowed in mixed-use buildings. New retail buildings will be permitted only for uses that generate very little traffic per square foot, and thus do not fit into the more intensive, or active, pattern of the TCZD.

Development in each of these districts will be guided by a checklist of performance standards that addresses both basics like access and stormwater management, and the site planning and architectural design considerations that implement the district’s intent. Objectives 4.2 and 4.3 build on this policy with more specific direction for commercial and mixed use design review.

**3.1.4 Review and Refine Development Standards in the Zoning Districts within the Town’s Growth Center.** In 2009, the town approved a set of sweeping revisions to the town’s zoning and subdivision regulations contained in the Williston *Unified Development Bylaw*. The development standards for the zoning districts within the town’s growth center provide developers with a number of options for how they can meet the town’s development standards when developing their properties. These standards reflect a desire on the part of the town to see the Taft Corners area develop into a vibrant, mixed use downtown area with a strong pedestrian orientation. The town has begun to see these development regulations be implemented since then, and has made some minor improvements to the development regulations. The town should evaluate the effectiveness of these standards thus far based on current experience and consider refining these standards further if necessary.

**3.1.5 Consider Developing and Adopting a Form Based Code.** The town’s development standards in the growth center already contain some form based elements which are a method of regulating development to achieve a specific physical form, with less focus on use categories and more emphasis on the relationship between buildings and the street, and the form and mass of buildings to one another. The town should consider making greater use of form based techniques in the Growth Center as a means of refining the town’s current development standards.

**3.2 Rural Williston - The Town of Williston will maintain a rural character outside the sewer service area, and protect open space resources, including productive agricultural lands, open meadows, ridgelines, riparian corridors and wetlands, view corridors, and wildlife habitat.**

Preserving the rural landscape that still occupies some three-quarters of Williston is an important goal of this plan. In 2009, the town adopted the *Unified Development Bylaw*, which included a set of regulations designed to foster an open space development pattern on parcels of 10.5 acres or more.

**3.2.1 Continue to Protect Rural Character and Open Space Resources by Requiring Open Space Development Patterns.** Since the adoption of the September 2004 interim regulations set the standard for promoting open space in the ARZD, approximately 256 acres of open space have been protected by Williston's 75% open space requirement. An additional 358 acres of open space has been protected in all of the other zoning districts.

**3.2.2 Continue to Permit Larger Open Space Developments in Highly Suitable Locations.** There are numerous constraints on large-scale residential development in rural Williston. As Map 4 – Suitability for On-Site Sewage Disposal shows large areas are not well-suited for on-site sewage disposal. Rural residential development may also conflict with agricultural production on neighboring farms, scenic and wildlife values, and the limited infrastructure available in rural Williston. There are, however, a few sites with suitable soils and safe access, where development will have little or no visual impact, and will result in the permanent protection of open space resources identified in Chapter 13 - *Open Space and Working Landscapes*. The town has revised its bylaws to permit larger open space developments in these highly suitable locations.

**3.2.3 Develop a more robust and refined Mechanism for Transferring Development Rights to help Preserve Williston's Rural Character and Important Open Space Areas.** Transferring the development rights from one piece of land to another can be an effective tool for preserving important agricultural lands and other environmentally sensitive landscapes. The town has used this mechanism to a limited degree but the process for doing this has been defined only in outline form. The town should consider developing a more robust set of standards for transferring development rights from land areas that the town wishes to preserve, such as those stated in Policy 13.1.11, to those portions of town where the town wishes to encourage development, such as the Growth Center.

**3.2.4 Continue to Encourage Adaptive Re-Use of Historic Barns.** The permitted uses in the ARZD generally include only one and two family dwellings. An exception is permitted for historic barns that might be conserved by being reused for appropriate commercial and residential use. Historic Barns will generally be ones that were constructed prior to 1900 and/or appear on the state or national lists of historic places.

### **3.3 – Industrial Lands - The Town of Williston will continue in its role as an industrial center and the site of the proposed regional landfill. The policies adopted here facilitate continuing industrial use with bylaw amendments and permitting of the landfill.**

Williston has a diversified industrial economy. In 2015, there were roughly 2,100 workers in retail trade, 1,200 employees working in construction, almost 1,300 in manufacturing, 1,800 in professional services, roughly 1,600 working in government, and roughly 1,000 in transportation and warehousing. This is an increase in the number of workers in Williston of 22% since 2010 and 33% since 2000. Overall, activities permitted primarily in the town's industrial zoning districts generated nearly 3,500 jobs (33% of the town's total) and contributed more than \$147.3 million in property value (12.7% of the town's total).

In the last ten years, the mix of uses in the industrial lands has changed and diversified. Buildings that were formerly used for manufacturing or warehousing have been converted to lighter industrial, office, and personal service uses. Particularly, space in large buildings along Industrial Avenue has changed. Offices, a gym, and several day care operations now exist along Industrial Avenue. These types of uses are allowed by zoning in this area, especially when existing buildings are converted.

For more information about CSWD and the proposed landfill, see Chapter 8 - Public Facilities or visit CSWD's web site <http://www.cswd.net/>.

**3.3.1 Make Transportation Improvements that Support Industrial Activity, While Directing Truck Traffic Away from Taft Corners.** A number of the improvements proposed in Chapter 6 are intended to provide better access for Williston's industrial areas. Those include intersection improvements at Rt. 2 and Industrial Avenue (Policy 6.4.6).

**3.3.2. Consider revising the range of allowed uses and development standards in the Industrial Zoning District West.** The Town's industrial area lies within the IZDW, which is in the westernmost part of town and is served primarily by Industrial Avenue in its northern portion and Marshall Avenue to the south. Recent activity in these areas has seen a move away from heavy industrial uses toward uses better described as warehousing, distribution and office uses. The town should examine the existing development standards to evaluate their appropriateness for meeting the needs of the uses now seeking to locate in this zoning district. The town should also consider refining the design standards for properties located in the town's Design Review District. These properties are those located along Industrial Avenue, S. Brownell Road, Marshall Avenue, and Williston Road; roads that are heavily travelled each day and form a large part of the town's developed visual landscape.

**3.4 Residential Neighborhoods – The Town of Williston will continue to protect the character of its residential neighborhoods. It will also encourage better neighborhood design in the Residential Zoning District.**

The Residential Zoning District provides a regulatory framework for residential development that is, in most cases, served by central water and sewerage. It encompasses some 2,391 acres and includes most of Williston's dwellings. The town's subdivision evaluation criteria were recently amended to favor site plans that protect open space resources, provide landscaped buffers, and promote walking.

**3.5 Open Space – The Town of Williston will continue to protect open space resources, and provide outdoor recreation opportunities for its residents, as directed by Chapter 12 - Open Space and Working Landscapes.**

Williston adopted its first Open Space Plan in 1989. In 2005 the Open Space Plan was broadened and became Appendix C to the 2006 Comprehensive Plan. Since it was decided that Williston's Open Space Plan is in no way ancillary to the way that Williston is managed, Appendix C incorporated into the town Plan in 2011. It remains in this plan as two chapters, Chapter 9 - Parks & Recreation and Chapter 13 - Open Space & Working Landscapes, and incorporated into the main body of this Plan. Williston's open space rules have guided the town in development review and successful land conservation efforts for 27 years.

**3.6 – Williston Village - The Town of Williston will continue to maintain and protect the historic character of its village center.**

The Village Zoning District (VZD) encompasses one of the two focal points of Williston's settlement (the other was in North Williston, at the railroad). A portion of the VZD is included in the Williston Village Historic District, which is on the National Register of Historic Places (see Map 6). A larger portion of the VZD includes a mix of historic and more recent development. Development in both areas must comply with the *Williston Village Historic District Design Review Guide*, as incorporated into the town's zoning

bylaw. For more on the design review process please see Chapter 4 – Community Design. Williston Village also contains a state-designated Village Center. In Williston, village center designation is particularly important because it impacts the designated growth center adjacent to it. Ongoing approval of the growth center depends on it incorporating a designated downtown, village center, or new town center. Village center designation can also potentially provide financial benefits to landowners and tenants, including tax credits for work on buildings, priority consideration for state facilities, grant opportunities, and flexibility in the use of special assessment district funds. These incentives can help maintain the historic character of the Village.

**3.6.1 Develop and Adopt a Village Master Plan.** The village planning process should aim to preserve the historic character and pedestrian friendliness of the village and consider the present town green, the possibility of connecting streets within the village to enhance traffic and pedestrian circulation, and appropriate improvements at the intersection of North Williston, Oak Hill, and Rt. 2, as well as limitations on development imposed by the wetlands and streams that are found throughout the Village. As of June, 2016 the town has begun the process of creating a Village Master Plan.

**3.6.2 Examine the Density Standards for Mixed-Use Development in the VZD.** The existing development standards for the VZD allow properties to have a mix of residential and some non-residential uses on the same property. The current standards do not address how the maximum allowable residential density might be affected by the location of non-residential uses on the same property. The town should consider developing standards for mixed use developments in the VZD. The Village Master plan process will include recommendations for changes to the bylaws that will address the density and intensity of development within the VZD. See Chapter 4, Community Design, for more discussion of this.

### **3.7 -- Explore the Creation, Definition, or Modification of other Land Use Areas**

#### **3.7.1 -- Refine Watershed Protection Buffers to Address Nonconforming Development.**

There are a number of existing houses built prior to the town's current development regulations that were built within what are now watershed protection areas or buffers. The town currently does not have a mechanism for allowing any flexibility for these properties to have any additional development on a limited basis. The town shall consider amending its current regulations to try to accommodate some of these properties.

#### **3.7.2 -- Consider changes to allowed uses in the Industrial Zoning District West adjacent to the Business Park and Mixed use commercial Districts.**

The town currently has some land zoned for industrial uses sandwiched between existing residential neighborhoods and the town's Business Park Zoning District, primarily in the area near Commerce Avenue and Williston Road. The town shall examine this area and consider making changes to the town's zoning map or development standards to minimize the existing conflicts between these disparate zoning districts.

**3.8 – Implement Land Use Policies Compatible with Neighboring Municipalities and the Regional ECOC Plan** – This goal describes how Williston will continue to implement land use policies in a manner that is compatible with the land use patterns of its neighbors, Essex, Essex Junction, Hinesburg, Jericho, Richmond and South Burlington and is consistent with the regional ECOC plan of the CCRPC.

## CHAPTER 4 – COMMUNITY DESIGN

This element in the town’s plan reflects the emphasis placed on design in Williston’s vision for the future. That vision calls for the use of design review in the historic village and commercial areas, and careful attention to details like landscaping, outdoor lighting, and signs throughout the town. The objectives listed below explain how the town is working to implement this part of its vision.

**4.1 – Village Design and Historic Preservation** – Maintaining the historic character of Williston Village has long been a town goal. This objective continues and enhances design review in the VZD.

**4.2 – Commercial Design** – This objective provides a foundation for design review in the town’s industrial and commercial zoning districts. It also calls for additional or improved performance standards for industrial and commercial development.

**4.3 - Mixed Use Design** – As pointed out in Policy 3.1.3, development in the Mixed Use Residential Zoning District is critical to the realization of the town’s vision. This objective calls for the further refinement of the specific design standards for mixed use projects adopted as part of the town’s *Unified Development Bylaw*.

**4.4 – Urban Parks** - include plazas, greens, and other spaces that provide shoppers and workers an opportunity to enjoy the out-of-doors in commercial areas. They are usually privately-owned and maintained. The town will continue to incentivize the creation of urban parks in the Growth Center and will refine the requirements for urban parks.

**4.5 - Neighborhood Parks** - are privately-owned parks that provide outdoor recreation in residential neighborhoods. They are usually privately-owned and maintained. The town will continue to require appropriately sized and developed neighborhood parks in new projects.

**4.6 – Signs and Outdoor Lighting** – This objective addresses two elements of design that have a major impact on traffic safety, neighboring properties, the town’s appearance, and the night sky.

**4.7 – Urban Forestry** – Trees are important assets in any park, neighborhood, or commercial development. These policies provide for their installation and maintenance.

**4.8 - Williston-in-Bloom** – This volunteer program, with some town support, provides landscaping of public spaces.

**4.9 – Gateways to Williston** - The Town of will work to enhance its major gateway areas by adopting further design standards and encouraging enhancement projects in its Gateway Zones.

**4.1 – Village Design and Historic Preservation - The Town of Williston will continue to use design review to protect the historic character of the Village Zoning District (VZD). The town will also consider ways to protect historic resources outside the VZD.**

Williston adopted design review guidelines for the VZD in 1999. These guidelines are available as a separate document: *Williston Village Historic District Design Review Guide*. They are also been referenced in the town’s bylaws, which require review of all exterior changes in the VZD by the Historic and Architectural Advisory Committee (HAAC). The HAAC reviews applications at its regular meetings, and then submits recommendations to the Development Review Board (DRB), which issues Certificates of Appropriateness for changes that comply.

As of June, 2016 the town is working on the Village Master Plan. It is anticipated that one of the work plan items in the Master Plan will be a review and revision of the requirements of the *Williston Village Historic District Design Review Guide*.

**4.1.1 Review the Design Review Guide. Revise as Necessary.** The HAAC will review the design review guide, with the goal of using the experience gained in its administration to make it more specific and, thus, more useful. The HAAC may propose merging the requirements of the guide with the requirements within the WDB to make the historic review process less complicated. As a part of the Williston Village Master Plan, the HAAC will also be receiving public input about the performance of the current guide and bylaws, and may recommend revisions to better realize the public's vision for the Village. This may also include an examination of setbacks as discussed in 4.2.6 below.

**4.1.2 Maintain the Character of Historic Properties Outside the VZD.** Not all historic properties in Williston are in the VZD. The town will continue to consider the presence of historic sites in subdivision and site plan review. The HAAC will be tasked with discussing and preparing recommendations for the designation and protection of historic landmarks outside the VZD.

#### **National and State Registers of Historic Places**

Both Vermont and the United States maintain lists of notable historic sites. Information on the State Register may be obtained at <http://www.historicvermont.org/programs/basic.html>. The National Register of Historic Places is maintained by the National Park Service. Check <http://www.cr.nps.gov/nr/> for information.

**4.2 – Commercial Design – The Town of Williston will continue to promote commercial site planning and architectural design that responds to the vision stated in Chapter 2. This will be accomplished via the existing design review process, with some additions and revisions.**

Williston's development regulations currently require design review for most commercial and many industrial projects. The areas where design review applies are delineated on Map7 – Design Review Districts. Design review is conducted by the HAAC. The HAAC's work is based on a list of design guidelines adopted in the town's *Unified Development Bylaw*. This process has been effective, but should continue to be refined.

**4.2.1 Continue to Require Landscaping.** The town's design guidelines require that applicants provide appropriate landscaping along property boundaries and streets, within parking lots, and around buildings and signs.

The design guidelines require ample landscaping that functions to buffer adjoining uses and public ways, maintain air quality, shade paved surfaces, and enhance the appearance of the proposed development by screening mechanical equipment, sign bases, dumpsters, and similar features. Landscaping plans are coordinated with erosion control and stormwater management plans, as required by stormwater management and watershed protection regulations.

**4.2.2 Encourage Use of Native Plants in Landscaping. Prohibit the Use of Invasive Plants.** Williston will continue to promote the use of native species in landscaping for commercial, industrial, and residential premises. It will also call landowners' attention to the Vermont Agency of Agriculture's quarantine of certain invasive exotics, like purple loosestrife, Russian olive,

European buckthorn, and Japanese honeysuckle as well as those invasive plant species identified in the town's *Unified Development Bylaw*.

**4.2.3 Minimize the Surface Area Devoted to Parking.** The town will continue to require adequate parking and to require shared parking where feasible. For both design and water quality reasons, the town will limit the number of spaces to no more than the number required.

**4.2.4 Continue to Minimize the Visual Impact of Parking.** Asphalt and automobiles should not dominate Williston streetscapes. The design guidelines will continue to require that parking be placed behind or beside buildings wherever the site permits. Landscaped buffers for parking areas will also be required.

**4.2.5 Avoid Dead Walls.** Long walls without doors, windows, or other variations kill pedestrian spaces. The design guidelines will continue to require that any wall along which there is a sidewalk or that faces a parking area have functional ground floor windows, which may be used to admit light or for display.

#### **4.3 Mixed Use Design. The Town of Williston will continue to apply guidelines for mixed use projects to its commercial design review process.**

The HAAC reviews industrial, commercial, and mixed use projects using a set of guidelines that are adopted in the *Unified Development Bylaw*. Some of the considerations in the bylaw include sound-proofing, the separation of commercial and residential entrances, and the need for resident parking. The town will also explore the development of standards to incentivize larger-scale, higher-density projects in the Growth Center.

#### **4.4 - Urban Parks - The Town of Williston will strongly encourage the provision of urban parks in commercial and mixed use developments and seek to enliven existing urban parks.**

Urban parks are small, intimate open spaces that allow for casual enjoyment of the out-of-doors by sitting on a park bench during a lunch hour, stretching out on the grass, or enjoying the flowers for a few minutes during an afternoon shopping trip. Urban Parks are usually privately-owned and maintained. Town-owned community and country parks, such as the Rossignol Park and Five Tree Hill Country Park, are described in Chapter 8 - Parks and Recreation.

Urban Parks offer residents, workers, and shoppers' opportunities both for movement and peaceful contemplation. Their benefits include stress reduction, an opportunity to connect with the seasons, and sense of vitality in commercial and mixed-use centers. Properly designed urban parks function both as destinations and safe, pleasant pedestrian linkages within a development.

**4.4.1 Work with Owners to Enliven Existing Urban Parks.** The town will work with owners to encourage ways to enliven existing urban parks. The Town may consider creating a modest, competitive parkland enhancement fund that will encourage further development of existing urban parks that lack pizzazz.

**4.4.2 Encourage Provision of Urban Parks in New Developments.** The location and design of proposed urban parks must be included in the plans submitted for review by the town. Every situation is different, but some guidelines can be offered.

**4.4.3 Refine the Requirements for Urban Parks. The town will examine the effectiveness of the current requirements for urban parks and will revise these requirements as necessary to achieve the following:**

- Urban parks should be sized appropriately and in proportion to the size and intensity of the development they are a part of.
- Urban parks should be located so as to provide employees, shoppers, and residents with easy pedestrian access to nature in the form of green grass, trees, and flowers. Water features may be appropriate.
- Urban parks should enliven and beautify commercial spaces, especially during the summer. There should be comfortable places to sit. Where possible, sun pockets should be created to lengthen the park’s useful season.
- Urban parks should contribute to the public enjoyment of scenic vistas, including views of the Adirondacks or Green Mountains.
- Urban parks may incorporate conservation features, such as streams or wetlands, and the required buffers. They may also incorporate stormwater management features.
- Urban parks should incorporate statuary, murals, or other forms of public art.

**4.4.4 Development and Maintenance of Urban Parks.** Urban Parks are one of several design options in Williston’s bylaw that may be required under the development standards for commercial areas. The maintenance of urban parks is the responsibility of the developer and future owners, including homeowners’ associations where residences are included in mixed-use projects. Required maintenance will include mowing and landscape maintenance, litter removal, and the regular upkeep and repair of facilities like benches and tables.

**4.5 Neighborhood Parks - The Town of Williston will encourage and, in some cases, require the provision of neighborhood parks in new residential developments. The town will also seek to provide neighborhood parks to existing neighborhoods where they are needed.**

A neighborhood park provides a breath of fresh air, a place to pause along a trail and watch the sky change, a place for children to romp that is bigger than the backyard, or a place to shoot a few baskets on Sunday afternoon. A small park near peoples’ homes also encourages outdoor socializing, provides a central gathering place for neighborhood activities, and builds a sense of community. Neighborhood Parks are usually privately-owned and maintained. Town-owned community and country parks, such as the Rossignol Park and Five Tree Hill Country Park, are described in Chapter 8 - Parks & Recreation.

Neighborhood parks are intended primarily to serve the residents within the development in which the park is located. These parks are typically created during the design of a new neighborhood. Wherever possible they should be connected to larger open spaces via public paths or trails. It may be appropriate to provide a handful of parking spaces, but automobile access should not be emphasized.

**4.5.1 Require Provision of Neighborhood Parks in New Developments** Every distinct residential neighborhood should have at least one neighborhood park or reasonable pedestrian access to an existing park. Small subdivisions, in which the provision of a useful park is not feasible, and subdivisions that have good pedestrian access to an existing park could be required to pay a park

development fee in-lieu of providing a neighborhood park. This fee will be in addition to the recreation impact fee, which supports facilities that serve the entire town. The location and design of proposed neighborhood parks must be included in the plans submitted for review by the town.

**4.4.3 Refine the Requirements for Neighborhood Parks. The town will examine the effectiveness of the current requirements for neighborhood parks and will revise these requirements as necessary to achieve the following:**

- Neighborhood parks should be sited on land suitable for development as parkland and reasonably central (preferably within ¼ mile) of the majority of homes they serve.
- Neighborhood parks may range from a few thousand square feet up to six or seven acres. There is no ideal size, but neighborhood parks should be sized in a way that is roughly proportional to the proposed development they will be a part of. The park should be large enough to complement the neighborhood's character and natural features. Where many children are expected, a larger park with play structures and an informal, unlighted playing field might be appropriate. In a neighborhood for older folks, a smaller park with a flower garden, sitting benches, game tables, and horseshoe pits might be more useful. Where a subdivision includes a stream corridor, a small neighborhood park might adjoin a much larger, undeveloped open space.
- Neighborhood parks should be connected to the town's system of paths and trails where that is possible. They should always be served by sidewalks or paths connecting them with the homes they serve.
- Neighborhood parks should be developed for recreational activities that are consistent with the neighborhood's character and size, but at a minimum should include turf, shade trees, walks, and basic recreational structures, such as swings or benches. Community gardens may be incorporated into a neighborhood park that serves a higher density development or homes whose yards are not suitable for gardening.
- The town will use the above criteria to refine the requirements for neighborhood parks as they are currently articulated in the WDB.
- The town will explore the possibility of requiring a neighborhood park fee for projects where a neighborhood park is not proposed.

**4.5.2 Development and Maintenance of Neighborhood Parks.** Neighborhood parks will initially be provided by developers, but in the long run will be privately-owned and managed by neighborhood associations. Developers are responsible, at a minimum, to grade the park and establish vegetation. They may, in their own interest, install facilities ranging from benches to swimming pools or sports courts. Developers may be required to create a park development fund for later use by the homeowners. After the project is complete, further development and maintenance will be the responsibility of the homeowners.

**4.5.3 Town Role in Neighborhood Parks.** Neighborhood parks are privately owned and thus routine mowing and landscape maintenance, litter removal, and similar tasks should be the responsibility of the homeowners. Beyond that, the Selectboard may choose to provide limited assistance. Perhaps the best way to do this would be for the Selectboard to make a modest sum available for competitive, matching grants for the enhancement of neighborhood (and, possibly,

urban) parks. Grant applications would be reviewed and prioritized by the Parks and Recreation Committee, with final decisions by the Selectboard.

- The town will explore the creation and administration of a fund for the development and enhancement of neighborhood parks. This may be coordinated with the fee-in-lieu discussed above.

**4.6 Signs and Outdoor Lighting – The Town of Williston will continue to require that on premise signs primarily identify uses. Off-premises advertising will continue to be prohibited. The town will also continue to regulate outdoor lighting to prevent traffic hazards and light trespass, and to protect the night sky.**

Quality signs and outdoor lighting make important contributions to the appearance, safety, and market appeal of the developments where they are installed, and to the larger community. Williston’s sign and outdoor lighting regulations have been reasonably effective. Some problems have arisen in the administration and enforcement of the sign regulations, however, and these are addressed by the objectives adopted here.

**4.7 Urban Forestry – The Town of Williston will continue to require installation of quality street trees in new developments and take responsibility for those trees when the road they line is accepted for town maintenance. The town will also continue to maintain trees in its parks and on the grounds of municipal buildings.**

The trees in Williston’s public spaces and along its roads are important community assets. Properly planted and maintained, they provide shade, beauty, and oxygen, and assist in traffic calming, energy conservation, and stormwater management. An inventory of the trees for which the town is responsible – street trees and those in parks and on other town lands – was completed in 2005. It showed that the town currently maintains 1,121 trees. Ninety-five percent of those trees are in good condition. The inventory has pinpointed the location of the five percent that need maintenance or replacement. The principal issue raised by the inventory is the lack of diversity in species being used as street trees. Nearly half are green ash. The town’s streetscapes and parks are highly vulnerable to any pest or disease that affects this species or the maples that comprise most of the rest of the trees counted.

**4.7.1 Continue to Require and Maintain Street Trees. Require a Greater Diversity of Tree Species.** Williston will continue to require the installation of street trees, and upon their acceptance, to maintain them. In 2010 the town updated and adopted the *Public Works Specifications*, which expanded the planting guidelines and defined tree protection strategies. A 2009 bylaw revision required a greater diversity of street tree species.

**4.7.2 Maintain the Tree Inventory.** The town will update the 2005 tree inventory as trees are accepted, and as public works crews or contractors maintain, remove, and replace trees.

**4.7.3 Implement the Urban Forestry Plan.** With the adoption of this plan, the Selectboard also adopted Williston’s first Community Forestry Plan. A copy of that plan is provided in Appendix C.

**4.7.4 Establish a Town Nursery.** In order to provide a diverse and affordable supply of trees for the replacement of street and park trees maintained by the town, Williston will consider establishing a nursery on a suitable parcel of town land.

**4.8 Williston-in-Bloom – The Town of Williston will continue to support the Williston-in-Bloom program.**

Williston-in-Bloom is a local version of the America-in-Bloom program (for information see <http://www.americainbloom.org/what.asp>). It provides volunteer landscaping of public street corners, medians, and other spaces.

#### **4.9 Gateways to Williston – The Town of Williston will work to enhance its major gateway areas.**

The town will integrate design elements that reinforce Williston's identity into public and private development projects near particular transitional gateways. These design elements will promote and encourage a distinct and attractive identity in each of our gateways. Any new design elements should also support and coordinate a link to other adjacent and important Williston locations.

## CHAPTER 5 - HOUSING & GROWTH MANAGEMENT

Williston’s population growth and change was documented in Chapter 2. As the town’s population has grown, that growth has expressed itself in the growth of the town’s housing supply as the number of housing units has grown steadily over the years. Table 5.A shows how that growth has translated into an increasing number of housing units since 1960, yielding a dramatic growth in the town’s housing supply.

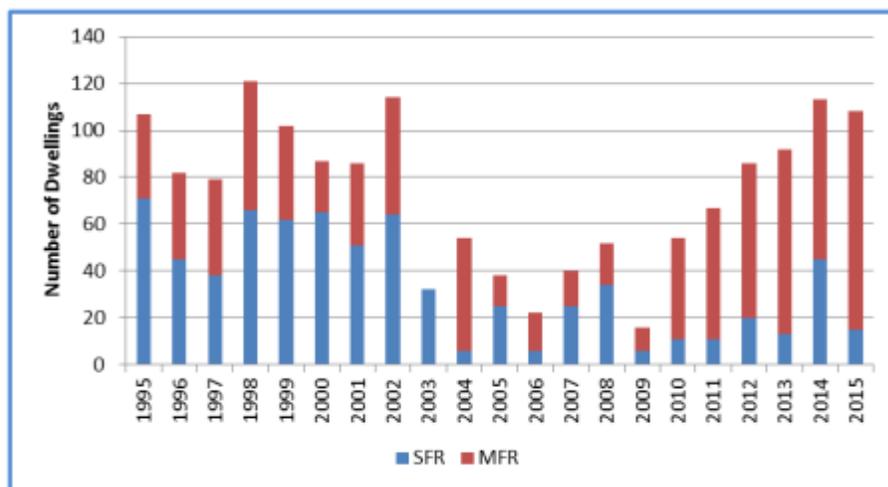
**Table 5.A – Housing Units in Williston, Chittenden County and Vermont, 1960-2010**

	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010
<b>Williston</b>	400	908	1,284	1,874	3,036	3,652
<b>- annual change</b>	--	12.7%	4.1%	4.6%	6.2%	2.0%
<b>- share of county housing</b>	1.8%	3.0%	3.1%	3.6%	5.2%	5.5%
<b>- share of county growth</b>	--	6.2%	3.5%	5.5%	17.2%	9.0%
<b>Chittenden County</b>	22,467	30,668	41,339	52,095	58,864	65,722
<b>- annual change</b>	--	3.7%	3.5%	2.6%	1.3%	1.2%
<b>Vermont</b>	136,307	165,068	223,199	271,214	294,382	322,539
<b>- annual change</b>	--	2.1%	3.5%	2.2%	0.9%	1.0%

Source: Bureau of the Census

The decade between 2000 and 2010 saw a continuation of strong growth in the number of new housing units built in Williston; with 616 new houses built during that time period. This resulted in an average annualized rate of growth of approximately 2% each year. In contrast, the housing supply in Chittenden County as a whole averaged 1.2% per year, and the state of Vermont had an average annual growth rate of just 1.0% per year. The additional housing units built in Williston accounted for approximately 9% of the county’s growth, and Williston now accounts for approximately 5.5% of the housing units in Chittenden County, up from 3.6% in 1990. While housing growth remained strong, this was significantly less than the 1,162 house build between 1990 and 2000. More recently, the town has added approximately 700 new dwellings over the last decade, an indicator or continued demand for new housing (see Figure 5.A).

**Figure 5.A – Williston New Housing Construction, 1995-2015**



Source: Town of Williston

The addition of almost 700 new housing units in Williston between 2005 and 2015 did not completely satisfy the demand for housing in Williston. The Census found that Williston had a vacancy rate of only 1.3% including camps and vacation homes, compared to 5.1% vacancy for Chittenden County which had the lowest county-wide vacancy rate in Vermont in 2014. In contrast, a healthy real estate market normally has a vacancy rate of four to five percent. It should also be noted that this low vacancy rate was measured during a recessionary period when vacancy rates might be expected to rise as people delayed the formation of new households during times of economic stress.

**Table 5.B Housing Occupancy and Vacancy Rates, 2014.**

	Population	Housing Units			
		Total	Occupied	Vacant	% Vacant
<b>Williston</b>	9,215	3,786	3,736	50	1.30%
<b>Chittenden County</b>	160,531	66,482	63,086	3,396	5.10%
<b>Vermont</b>	626,565	324,332	257,252	67,080	20.70%

Source: Bureau of the Census

This element of the plan addresses the dilemma of a rapidly changing community.

- Growth has at times exceeded the town’s ability to provide services, and managing the pace of growth continues to be a challenge for the town. Sewage treatment capacity has previously been in short supply would have been exhausted without the recent treatment plant expansion, and available sewer treatment capacity while better is still limited. The town’s schools currently have enough space for current enrollment levels, alleviating one significant limiting factor in the town’s capacity to serve new growth. The town recently built two major public safety buildings, a new public works garage, is improving highways, and extending sidewalks, all in an effort to catch up with growth. Fiscal realities, as well as a desire to maintain the community values stated in this plan, have led Williston to adopt the residential growth management system described in this chapter.
- Williston must also plan for an older and aging population. As described in Chapter 2, the population of Williston and the region is aging, and people of retirement age and older are expected to grow significantly for the foreseeable future. This older population will require housing that is located close to services, easily accessible to non-motorized transportation options and public transportation. New housing units will need to be designed to provide shelter for smaller households, with options for one-story living.

At the same time, the town recognizes that regulatory restraints on building contribute to the cost of housing. In 2004, the median household income in Chittenden County was approximately \$51,219, allowing the median household to reasonably purchase a home costing no more than about \$175,000, assuming a \$14,000 down payment. The median sale price of homes in Chittenden County in 2004 was approximately \$200,600. The small gap in housing affordability for the median family was rapidly magnified for those earning less. A household earning 80% of the median income can afford a home costing about \$182,000. The median price of a newly constructed home in Vermont was \$290,000 in 2010. A home buyer would need an income of \$86,000 and down payment and closing costs of \$24,000 to afford this home. In addition, recent local surveys have reported that the rental market in the Burlington area is extremely tight, with a vacancy rate of roughly 2%, a number found in only the tightest of housing markets.

The tight housing market limits people’s options in finding housing, and has been cited as a major limiting factor in businesses attracting workers. To help address this need, in June 2016, the Champlain

Housing Trust, Housing Vermont, and the CCRPC are currently undergoing a coordinated campaign to increase the housing supply in Chittenden County. This campaign is called Building Homes Together, and it calls for the construction of 3,500 new homes in Chittenden County over the next 5 years. This is an ambitious goal and one that will not be met without the participation of one of the region's fastest growing communities and key employment locations – Williston.

The shortage of affordable and workforce housing in Williston is described in Objective 5.2.

Two objectives are adopted here. Each addresses one horn of the dilemma Williston faces in trying to limit the pace of growth while encouraging diverse and affordable housing stock.

**Objective 5.1 - Residential Growth Management.** This objective provides the policy basis for Williston's residential growth management system, as it was recently revised. It also calls for minor improvements in the subdivision evaluation criteria.

**Objective 5.2 – Expand Housing Opportunities.** This objective calls for the town, within the limitations of the residential growth management system, to promote a variety of types of housing, including dwellings that are affordable for a wide range of Williston's residents and its workforce.

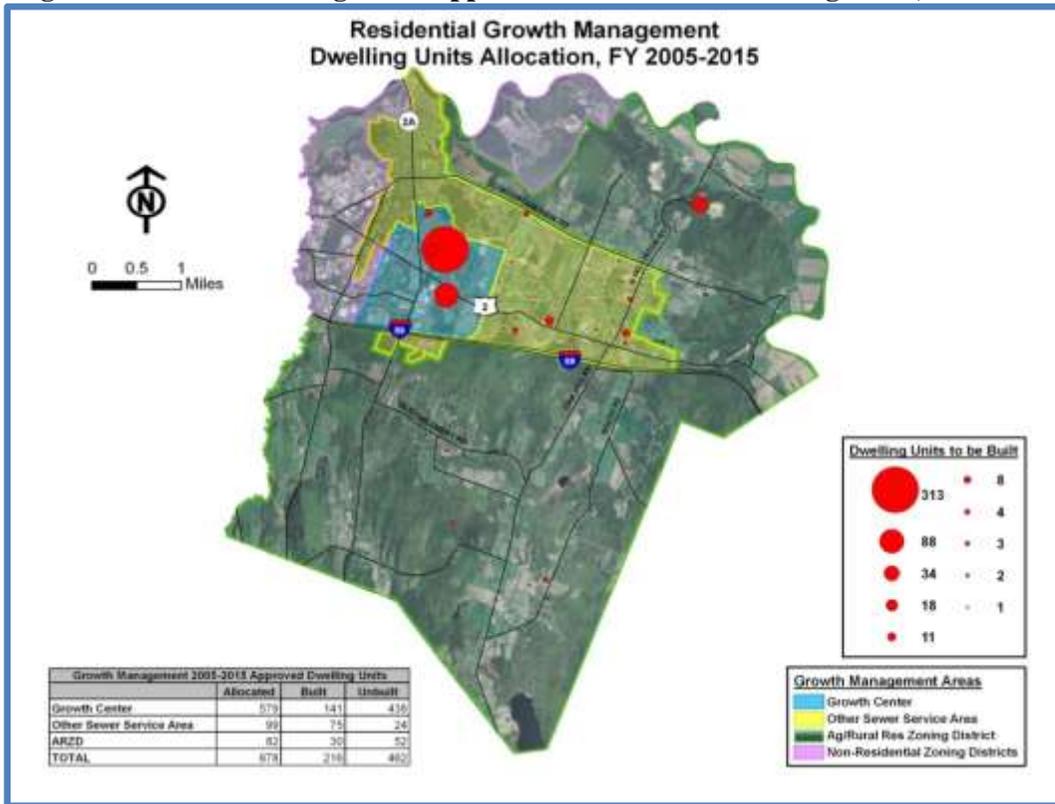
**5.1 Residential Growth Management - The Town of Williston will limit and manage the rate of new residential development to a rate at which adequate public facilities and services can be provided. In setting its residential growth target, the town will also consider the impacts of housing development on the environment and on the character of the community and its neighborhoods, as well as encouraging and supporting the provision of housing affordable to people from a wide range of income groups.**

Williston first established a residential growth management policy in 1990. The policies adopted here incorporate what has been learned in the administration of the current growth management system, which was adopted in 2015, as called for in the 2011-2016 Comprehensive Plan. This plan supports the continued implementation of the current system designed to be implemented through the end of FY 2025. The current growth management allocation system will further encourage the provision of affordable housing.

**5.1.1 Link the Residential Growth Target with the Allocation of Capacity in the Sewage Treatment Plant.** The DRB's power to approve dwelling units within the sewer service area (see Map 7 – Sewer Service Area) is now limited to the number of units for which capacity in the sewage treatment plant is available. 50,000 gallons per day were added to the plant's capacity from 2011-2015. This makes it possible to sustain the residential growth target set in 5.1.2 for the foreseeable future, while continuing to make wastewater treatment capacity available for future industrial and commercial development through the end of FY 2025

**5.1.2. Set the Residential Growth Target at 80 Units Each Year.** This plan continues the residential growth target of 80 new dwellings per year that was first established in 1998. Given the long term demographic trends and fiscal realities, the town's infrastructure, including the sewerage system, emergency services, transportation infrastructure, and schools can realistically absorb only this number of new dwellings each year, along with some modest additional industrial development. Experience has shown when the number of new dwelling exceeds this range by very much, the town has had difficulty in providing the necessary public infrastructure and services in a timely fashion to keep up with the demands of growth.

**Figure 5.B – New Dwelling Units Approved Under Growth Management, 2005-2015**



*Source: Town of Williston Planning*

**5.1.3 Assign Portions of the Growth Target Consistent with Other Goals of this Plan.** In order to ensure the realization of the goals of the town’s Growth Center, 56 of the 80 dwelling units permitted each year are now assigned to the zoning districts in the town’s Growth Center, MUCZD, MURZD, and TCZD. A dozen units are assigned to the remainder of the sewer service area which includes the Village Zoning District and the Residential Zoning District. The remaining twelve units are assigned to the Agriculture Rural/Residential Zoning District. There are three exceptions to these assignments. First, units that are not requested in one of the zoning districts outside of the Growth Center may be used in the zoning districts in the Growth Center. Second, as provided by Policy 3.6.2, proposed subdivisions in ARZD that meet certain criteria may compete for units that would ordinarily be assigned to the more intense zoning districts. The subdivision evaluation criteria have been revised to set separate criteria appropriate for each area.

**5.1.4 Adopt More Specific Growth Management Criteria.** Competition among subdivisions had been governed by six general criteria adopted into the subdivision regulations in 1998. More specific criteria that are tailored to each area identified in Policy 5.1.3 were adopted in 2005, and these were amended in the town’s current growth management system in 2015. They anticipate many objectives of this comprehensive plan, providing incentives for housing diversity and affordability, the provision of neighborhood parks, energy conservation, expanding the town’s trail system, and open space conservation. Experience implementing these criteria has also suggested further review and refinement of these criteria is warranted. Reviewing and further refining these criteria should be a top priority for the planning commission following to adoption of the town plan.

**5.1.5 Provide for Small Residential Developments.** Smaller residential subdivisions cannot compete successfully with larger developments under the revised subdivision evaluation criteria. Rather than sacrificing implementation of the town's goals to protect small landowners, the revised regulations allow up to four dwelling units per year to be allocated to small subdivisions outside the competitive review.

**5.1.6 Encourage Higher Density Residential Development in the Town's Approved Growth Center.** Consistent with the land use objectives of this plan (see Policy 3.1), the residential growth management system promotes housing development as part of mixed use development in the town's Growth Center near Taft Corners. The remaining development potential in the town's Growth Center is on large parcels and requires substantial infrastructure to achieve the town's long term goals. They include:

- ensuring that there is a reasonable mix of single versus multiple family dwellings over time using the subdivision evaluation criteria rather than an arbitrary annual cap
- providing suitable housing opportunities for the town's aging population

**5.1.7 Require Master Plans for Proposed Subdivisions.** Because only a limited number of residential zoning permits are available every year, regardless of parcel size, Williston's residential growth target has created an inadvertent incentive for the piecemeal development of larger parcels. The town's development regulations promote access management, neighborhood connectivity, stormwater management, open space conservation, and other objectives of this plan by requiring that subdivision review begin with a pre-application for the owner's entire contiguous holdings.

**5.1.8 Implement and Refine the Growth Management System.** The Town developed a new growth management system designed to run from FY 2016 through FY 2025, replacing the previous 10 year allocation system. The current growth management system is based on continued availability of adequate sewer capacity to support additional housing development, and a desire to direct the majority of new housing development in the town's designated growth center as discussed in Chapter 3 Land Use. At the same time, the town recognizes that the current system is very complicated, and often times places major constraints on proposed housing developments. Many of the development ideas embedded within the incentives of the current growth management system are either already addressed or could be addressed more readily in the town's *Unified Development Bylaw Standards*. A top priority within this plan is a serious examination and re-assessment of the town's growth management system. This examination will consider how the town's existing development regulations might be modified to address the town's development goals more simply, with the aim of streamlining the approval process for new residential developments that address all of the town's goals.

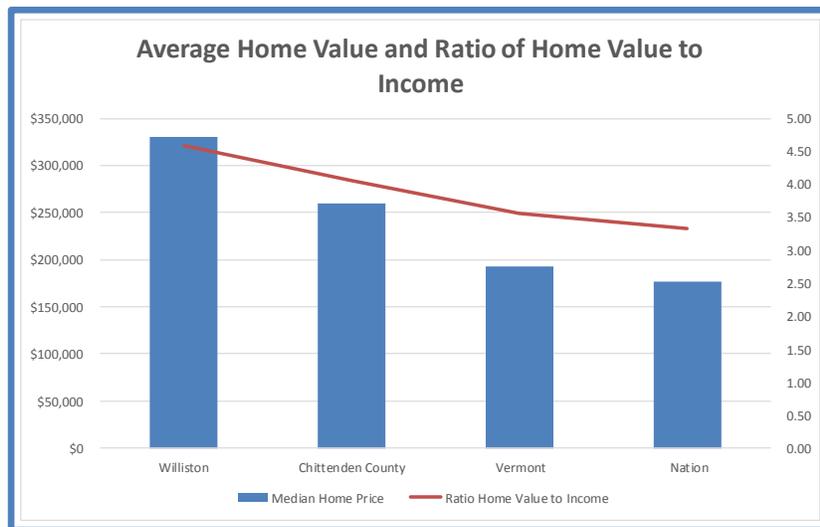
**5.2 Housing Opportunities - The Town of Williston will use its residential growth management system to encourage the provision of a range of housing choices, including choices among different locations and densities of dwellings, and housing that is affordable for residents and the workforce. The town will also explore other means of promoting the provision of more diverse, more affordable housing.**

A frequent topic of conversation over the past few years has been the high costs of housing in Williston and the difficulty in building new housing that can be considered affordable to people with incomes at or below the median income for households in the region. The 2000 Census found that more than 85% of Williston's housing stock consisted of detached and attached single-family dwellings, including mobile homes. Only about 10% of the town's dwellings had more than two units. Only 15% were rentals. The

overall comparison – between a median income of \$60,473 and a median home costing \$252,000 appeared in the introduction to this chapter. The list of incomes by occupation appears in Appendix D, which provides basic data about housing in Williston.

The 2016-2024 *Town Plan* included a number of objectives aimed at encouraging a wider range of housing types in Williston as well as incentives for increasing the number of housing units in new developments considered affordable by households with incomes at or below the regional income. This plan continues to support the development of a wide range of housing types in Williston, with incentives for building housing for households with low and moderate incomes.

**Figure 5.C – Housing Cost and Income Ratio**



**5.2.1 Use the Residential Growth Management System to Encourage Provision of Affordable Housing.** Williston has offered an incentive for affordable housing as part of its residential growth management system for several years. The subdivision evaluation criteria now encourage perpetually affordable housing that is integrated into neighborhoods, rather than isolated in “projects” and couple the allocation of housing units and sewage treatment plant capacity. The sewer allocation ordinance has also been changed to allow the Selectboard to set aside plant capacity specifically for affordable housing. The town’s development regulations encourage the development of affordable housing in the Growth Center by including it as one of the design elements in the zoning districts in the Growth Center, and through the use of incentives. In addition, the current growth management system reserves 25% of all of the potentially available allocation solely for new dwelling designated to be perpetually affordable to households with incomes at 100% of the regional median income or less. The town should also consider modifying the growth management system to offer additional incentives for the development of perpetually affordable housing. The planning commission will continue to monitor the building of workforce and affordable housing over the life of the town plan as part of the periodic reports on growth trends and developments in the town.

**5.2.2 Consider Using Inclusionary Zoning to Guarantee Provision of Affordable Housing in Appropriate Locations.** There is still debate about whether the incentive for affordable housing described in Policy 5.2.1 will be effective. This policy provides a basis for the adoption of inclusionary zoning if it is determined that the incentive in the residential growth management system is not strong enough.

**5.2.3 Continue to Encourage Housing Choice in the Residential Growth Management System.** While permit records and recent project approvals indicate that the housing mix is shifting to include more multiple-family dwellings and more potential rentals, housing variety will continue to be a separate criterion in the subdivision review criteria proposed.

**5.2.4 Lands Owned by the Town for Affordable Housing Potential.** The town will evaluate lands it owns to determine which, if any, might be suitable sites for the development of affordable housing. The town may work with not-for-profit or for-profit developers to prepare specific plans for affordable housing projects.

**5.2.5 Encourage Adaptive Reuse of Industrial and Commercial Buildings for Affordable Housing Use.** A decline in the demand for land for traditional industrial uses in Williston resulting in a number of under-utilized properties that have access to existing town infrastructure and services such as transportation, and municipal water and sewer services. The town will consider adding provisions to its development regulations to allow for the conversion of existing industrial and commercial buildings into affordable housing where appropriate.

**5.2.6 Explore Additional Affordable Housing Programs.** The town will continue to explore a wide variety of additional affordable housing programs and be prepared to incorporate those that might prove effective into an updated plan, the bylaws, and the budget. The town will also cooperate, as appropriate, with not-for-profit groups seeking to create affordable housing in Williston.

**5.2.7 Implement the Recommendation of the Affordable Housing Task Force** .The Selectboard created a task force to discuss ways in which the town could support the development on additional affordable housing in Williston. The task force's report and recommendations are contained in Appendix D. Some of the recommendations of the task force have already been implemented, such as establishing housing targets of affordability. The town should continue to implement the recommendations of the task force and should explore the adoption of additional incentives to build additional affordable housing.

**5.2.8 Create and Implement a Housing Trust Fund.** A key recommendation of the Affordable Housing Task Force was the establishment of a Housing Trust Fund that could be used to provide financial support to affordable housing developments and programs. The town is currently studying how such a trust fund might work and how the town might be able to utilize it. The town should continue to pursue the creation of a housing trust fund and fully explore the creation and implementation of a trust fund.

## CHAPTER 6 - TRANSPORTATION

Transportation has been at the heart of Williston’s history, shaping identity and pattern of the town from its earliest days. The Winooski River, later the railway lines, and more recently modern roads and highways with facilities for non-motorized travel and transit ridership have formed the major pathways and methods for moving into and through Williston over the years. This element of the plan establishes objectives and policies that address present and future transportation needs and goals of the town.

**Objective 6.1 – Master Transportation Plan.** The overall objective of the town is to develop a comprehensive approach to transportation that emphasizes the safe and efficient movement of people and goods utilizing a variety of transportation modes that includes transit, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, paths and trails, as well as roads and highways for the movement of cars and trucks. The town’s transportation goals and objectives are intended to foster and support the utilization of “complete street” principles as recently enacted by the Vermont State Legislature under Act 34 of 2011. A complete and well-rounded transportation strategy will enable the town to facilitate the movement of people and goods, protect public safety, promote healthy lifestyles, and foster community building through the town. The town’s transportation plan shall include four important elements and priorities:

- a) **Major Road Plan** - The functional classification map adopted here serves as a factual basis for the implementation of transportation and land use policies.
- b) **Sidewalks, Paths, and Trails** – A network of interconnected sidewalks, paths, and trails designed for serve the transportation and recreation needs of pedestrians and bicyclists.
- c) **Public Transportation Plan** – Transit routes designed to provide bus service connecting the town’s high intensity growth center in the Taft Corners area where employment and retail shopping opportunities are concentrated linking Williston with other communities in the region. This objective also calls for a transit center in the Taft Corners area.
- d) **Connectivity** - Ensuring good vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian circulation among neighborhoods is among the main themes of planning in Williston.

**Objective 6.2 - Access Management.** This objective provides a policy basis for existing and proposed regulations that control access to public roads.

**Objective 6.3 - Transportation Improvements: State.** This objective supports a number of transportation improvements on the state roads serving Williston.

**Objective 6.4 – Transportation Improvements: Town.** This objective provides a basis for the detailed planning, design, and capital budgeting of improvements that are needed to safely handle growing traffic volumes.

**Objective 6.5 – Freight.** This objective reflects Williston’s role as a trucking terminus.

**Objective 6.6 – Transportation Funding** Impact fees are a source of funding for some of the improvements listed in Objectives 6.3 and 6.4, above. This objective provides a policy basis for the continuing collection of these fees, as well as for other efforts to fund transportation improvements.

**Objective 6.7 – Regional Transportation Planning.** This objective calls for Williston’s continued participation in the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC), hopefully with greater representation.

**6.1 Master Transportation Plan - The overall objective of the town is to develop a comprehensive approach to transportation that emphasizes the safe and efficient movement of people and goods utilizing a variety of transportation modes that includes transit, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, paths and trails, as well as roads and highways for the movement of cars and trucks.**

**6.1.1 Major Road Plan** - The Town of Williston adopts the major road plan shown on Map8 to provide a basis for the land use and transportation policies of this plan, more detailed transportation planning, capital budgeting, and development review. In adopting this plan, the town points out that I-89 is a major regional arterial road, and U.S. Rt. 2 and VT Rt. 2A serve as both arterials (their official classification) and major collectors. This reality should be respected in transportation planning and improvements.

Map 9 – Major Road Plan shows the functional classification of existing and proposed roads in Williston. The legend for that map explains the functions the types of roads serve in the community. Functional classification helps decision makers set priorities for road maintenance and improvements. It also provides a basis for town bylaws and development review, including requirements for access management, as called for by Objective 6.2 – Access Management.

U.S. Route 2 and VT Rt. 2A are designated as arterials in the regional transportation plan. Route 2A, especially, does function as an arterial, linking Williston and points south with Essex Junction. U.S. Rt. 2 (Williston Road) functions as an arterial road through the Taft Corners area, but more as a collector road in the eastern portion of the town. Traffic on both roads is slowed by turning movements, however, and the number of curb cuts makes it clear that these roads also function as major collectors, serving residential neighborhoods and individual businesses. Route 2 also serves as the “main street” of Williston’s historic village. Improvements to these highways should reflect their dual role, providing for bicycle and pedestrian safety, and reasonable access to adjoining properties. High speed traffic should be directed to I-89 and away from the town’s more locally oriented streets ay (see Policy 6.3.1).

The town is committed to building “Complete Streets” whenever possible. Complete Streets are those that include design features for addressing the needs of all modes of transportation not just vehicles. New transportation facilities should incorporate complete street design principles to the maximum extent possible, and improvements to existing roadways should incorporate facilities for non-motorized transportation users whenever feasible.

**6.1.2 Sidewalks, Paths, and Trails** – Sidewalks, paths, and trails facilitating the movement of people by walking and bicycling is an essential element of the town’s transportation plan. The Town of Williston will seek funding for improvements that are needed to provide pedestrian and bicycle circulation throughout town, and to enhance cyclist and pedestrian safety.

Williston currently maintains more than 30 miles of sidewalks, paths, and trails. Sidewalks and paths are primarily used for transportation purposes. Sidewalks are for typically constructed as a part of neighborhoods and are designed for pedestrian uses such as walking, jogging, etc. Paths link neighborhoods and are designed to accommodate a broad range of non-motorized uses such as biking, roller blading, etc. Williston’s trails are low-maintenance and primitive in nature and while they may serve a transportation function they are primarily used for recreation. Trails are described in more detail in Chapter 8 - Parks and Recreation.

Map 17 – Sidewalks, Paths, and Trails show Williston’s primitive trail network in reference to the sidewalks and paths for the entire town. Map 11 – Sidewalks and Paths shows the existing and proposed sidewalks and paths north of the highway where most of these facilities exist.

The town’s existing network of multi-use paths and primitive trails is highly valued in the community, and often mentioned as the type of facility the town’s people would like to see more of. The people of the town have demonstrated their support for more bicycle and pedestrian circulation by approving a \$3.2 million bond issue for the construction of multi-use paths in 2003. These funds have been augmented through outside grants, developer construction, and transportation impact fees which have helped to accelerate the construction non-motorized facilities, especially in filling in missing links in the network.

Improvements to the town’s network of bicycle and multi-use paths should also include providing safe and effective links between Williston and neighboring communities such as South Burlington, Hinesburg, and Richmond.

**6.1.2.1 Build the Paths Supported by the Bond Issue.** The town has constructed paths along Route 2, from South Brownell to Helena Drive; along Mountain View Road, from Old Stage to North Williston Road; and along North Williston Road from Route 2 to Mountain View Road using bond funds. The town is currently working on right-of-way acquisition and engineering for the paths that will be constructed including Williston Road, and Rt. 2A among others. The bond also provides the local match needed to build paths along Route 2A. The town has been successful in obtaining roughly \$1 million in grants to help pay for the design and construction for the path along the northern portion of Rt. 2A in Williston. The town should continue to vigorously pursue grant opportunities to supplement these funds and continue to build out the town’s multi-use path network.

**6.1.2.2 Build Other Sidewalks and Paths, as Needed.** The provision of sidewalks, paths, and trails in new projects is the responsibility of the developer (see Policy 6.7.1 below), but the town may need to fill gaps in its bicycle and pedestrian circulation system. Paths that provide north-south and east-west transportation and recreation routes along or near heavily traveled roadways should be prioritized. A logical east-west route for a separated path development is along Mountain View Road. This could become the Williston section of the Cross Vermont Trail, an east-west alternative transportation and recreation corridor across the entire state. Other multi-use path priorities include:

- along Route 2A, south of Maple Tree Place and under I-89 to Hurricane Lane;
- the Village Bike Path north of the Southridge and Turtle Pond neighborhoods;
- an east-west connection along, or closely parallel to Route 2, from Williston village to Taft Corners;
- a safe pedestrian crossing of Route 2 farther west in the village than the present crossings; and
- a crossing of the Muddy Brook to provide for a safe bike path along Route 2 between South Burlington and Williston. A CCRPC scoping study is reviewing alternatives for this crossing.

**6.1.2.3 Provide Wide Shoulders Where There Are No Bike Paths.** Where feasible, and where no other way is available, road improvements should include shoulders wide enough for bicyclists and pedestrians.

**6.1.2.4 Provide Amenities Along Paths and Trails.** Simple improvements can enhance the experience of walking or cycling in Williston. Benches should be provided, especially near elder housing projects. Bike racks should be provided near logical destinations for cyclists.

**6.1.2.5 Link Recreation Paths and Trails to Sidewalk Network.** The town's recreation paths and trails should be tied to paths and trails in the town and region designed primarily for transportation.

**6.1.2.6 Public Works Specifications.** The town's public works specifications will be revised to provide better guidance for multi-use paths and primitive trails. See also Policy 7.10.

**6.1.2.7 Build Paths in New Developments.** *New development projects, especially those in the town's Growth Center, should continue to include requirements for pedestrian and non-motorized transportation facilities with these projects.*

**6.1.3 Public Transportation - The Town will continue to support local public transportation agencies, including SSTA (Special Services Transportation Agency) and Green Mountain Transit (GMT), in providing service to Williston.**

Williston currently has limited, fixed-route bus service provided by the GMT and on-demand special transportation services provided by the SSTA. Map 12 – Public Transportation shows the present bus route and stops. GMT now operates two different schedules of transit service to and from Williston. Regular bus service is currently available seven days each week connecting Williston with Burlington and Essex Junction at each end. A second commuter line was from Williston to Burlington was also started in June 2010. This second line offers service twice each morning and twice each afternoon during peak work travel times along with a mid-day run Monday through Friday to and from Williston Village and downtown Burlington.

As of September 2016 the upgraded Williston Road/US 2 corridor service has been operating for six years. GMT services along the corridor have been improved to include 15-minute weekday peak hour service, expanded operating hours, Sunday service to Williston (Taft Corners) and new weekday commuter service to Williston Village. These upgrades have provided better services to existing passengers and make GMT services more attractive to choice riders.

The current Williston (#1) route has averaged 1,266 daily weekday passenger boarding's, ranking second in system-wide ridership. The combined YTD ridership of the current Williston (#1), Williston- Essex (#1E) and South Burlington Circulator (#12) routes is 8.6% greater than the FY10 YTD ridership of the previous routes servicing the corridor. When including the YTD ridership of the Williston Village (#1V) route which has averaged nearly 11 boarding per roundtrip the total corridor ridership has been increased by 10.8%. While ridership is expected to grow as the corridor service matures the current ridership levels are in-line with the ridership projections used in the CMAQ grant application.

CCTA also provides on demand service for people eligible for special transportation services. In FY 2010 there were 4,383 ADA trips and 3,099 E&D trips at one or both trip ends in Williston.

**6.1.3.1 Continue to Support Both Fixed-Route and Special Transit.** Williston has supported the Special Service Transportation Agency for many years and recently took a major step in continuing fixed-route bus service. The town agreed to provide partial local funding for GMT's existing route in FY06. Federal funding for this route expired at the end of the '05 fiscal year, and the town has continued to provide funding for GMT service in Williston, providing over \$224,000 in funding FY 2017.

**6.1.3.2 Continue to Promote Construction of Ride Sharing Facilities.** The park-and-ride listed in 6.4.4 will help make public transportation a more viable alternative in Williston. When this facility is completed, the GMT should develop a plan for providing regular transit service to this facility so that users of this facility will have safe and convenient access to regional and local transit services.

**6.1.3.3 Build a Transit Center.** Williston is currently served by two major bus routes, along with a more limited service commuter line to the Williston village. The town is anticipating the completion of a regional park and ride facility near Exit 12 that should be served with both local bus service and by the regional Link service. The current place for transferring between these routes is at the Williston Walmart store on Harvest Lane. Williston requires a conveniently located, comprehensive, and central transfer station that would allow riders to easily connect between these various bus lines, provide options and facilities for riders from all transportation modes to access the center, and provide shelter for users during waiting periods. A comprehensive transit center such as this would best be located in the town's designated Growth Center in the Taft Corners area where high intensity development already exists and is anticipated in the future, and where the existing bus lines thought Williston intersect.

**6.1.3.4 Build Bus Pull Offs.** There are many locations where there are inadequate places for bus passengers to get on off busses along the major roads in Williston, especially Williston Road and Mt. View Road. The town shall work with GMT to identify and build appropriate locations for pull off locations for busses along these routes.

**6.1.4 Connectivity - The Town of Williston will require multiple points of access to most developments. It will also strongly encourage safe, functional connections between neighborhoods, and within residential and commercial areas and public places.**

Some benefits of insisting on safe, functional connections between neighborhoods via roads and sidewalks, paths, or trails include those listed here.

- Having multiple points of access to a neighborhood can be important during emergencies and major street or utility repairs.
- Facilitating movement from one part of the community to another via local roads, sidewalks, paths, and trails can reduce congestion on arterial roads and major collectors. It also encourages walking and cycling.
- Connecting neighborhoods promotes a sense of community throughout the town.

**6.1.4.1 Require Multiple Points of Access for Most Developments.** Williston's bylaws impose two limits on the number of homes that may be served by a single point of access. Private driveways may serve five units, private or town roads may serve up to 50. The bylaw revisions that follow adoption of this plan will include standards that are based on both distance and density. Also, experience shows that the emergency access roads that have been permitted as a second

point of access in the past have seldom been properly maintained. Where two points of access are required, they must be built to town standards and maintained.

**6.1.4.2 Require Connectivity as a Condition of Development Approval.** Commercial and residential developments must have safe, functional access for vehicles, pedestrians, and cyclists throughout the site. They should also have safe, functional connections with adjoining developments. Providing connections will ordinarily be the responsibility of the developer. The town may choose to invest in increasing connectivity where doing so will benefit the community. (For example, see for example Policies 6.4.1 and 6.4.5 below.)

## **6.2 Access Management - The Town of Williston will adopt and enforce access management standards that protect public safety, access to existing and future uses, and the public investment in town and state roads.**

Access management is the control of driveway and street connections to public roads. Effective access management has many benefits.

- It can reduce the need for additional public expenditures on road improvements by maintaining the capacity of existing highways.
- It can improve traffic safety and limit the potential for conflict between vehicles, pedestrians, and cyclists.
- It can reduce congestion and delays, while providing safe access to public roads from adjoining properties.

Access to state highways is controlled by the Vermont Agency of Transportation. Access to town roads is controlled by the town. Both agencies require a permit for a new point of access, as authorized by state law (see 19 V.S.A. § 1111).

These access management policies are based on the functional classification of roads established in Objective 6.1.1 – Major Road Plan. Functional classification provides a sound basis for balancing landowners’ needs for access with the community’s need for mobility.

**6.2.1. Limit New Points of Access.** Access to arterial roads will be from local roads (public or privately maintained), not directly from adjoining properties. Access to collector roads must be via local roads or, where practical, shared driveways. The town may also require shared driveways for access to local roads. Objective 6.2.3 - Connections encourages linkages between neighborhoods as another means of limiting the need for access to arterials and major collectors.

**6.2.2. Limit Access Directly from Parking.** Parking areas must be designed so that vehicles do not back directly onto an arterial or collector road. Parking areas must not rely on adjoining roads as part of their internal circulation pattern. The siting, size, and design of parking lots are covered in Objective 4.2.

**6.2.3. Consolidate Existing Points of Access.** Existing points of access to arterial and collector roads must, where practical, be consolidated when the uses they serve are changed or expanded.

**6.2.4. Locate Points of Access to Protect Public Safety and Minimize Congestion.** Points of access to public roads, including both driveways and new streets, must be properly aligned and

separated from each other, and from intersections. Specific alignment and spacing standards will be added to the town's bylaws or public works specifications.

**6.2.5. Require Turning Lanes, Medians, and Other Access Management Improvements, as Needed.** The town will require developers to provide acceleration, deceleration, and turning lanes; medians, and other access improvements, where needed. The need for these improvements may be established by a corridor study prepared by the town, the CCRPC, or VTrans, or by traffic studies required for proposed developments.

**6.2.6. Design and Build Points of Access to Protect Public Safety and Minimize Congestion.** Points of access, including both driveways and new streets, must comply with the town's design and construction standards. These standards, which are adopted either directly or by reference, into the town's bylaws or public works specifications, may include minimum sight distances, width, grade, curb radii, stacking or storage depth, and similar geometric requirements. They may also include signage and lighting.

**6.2.7. Protect Pedestrians and Bicyclists.** Access for pedestrians and bicyclists will be separated from access for vehicles where possible. Elsewhere, the potential for conflict between pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles will be minimized by the use of pavement markings and texturing; signage; wider shoulders; and similar techniques.

### **6.3 Transportation Improvements: State: The Town of Williston will support and encourage the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans) to make improvements that are needed to enhance traffic safety and traffic flow, and to safely provide for bicycle and pedestrian circulation.**

The Vermont Agency of Transportation plays a critical role in Williston. The town will work with VTrans to ensure the improvements listed here are made in a timely manner. See Map 9 – Proposed Transportation Improvements for the locations of these proposed improvements.

**6.3.1 Circ. Alternatives.** On May 20, 2011, Governor Shumlin announced that the State of Vermont would be abandoning its long anticipated plan to construct the Circumferential Highway. In its stead, the Governor directed the four communities anticipating the Circ., Williston Colchester, Essex and Essex Junction, to work with the state, the CCRPC, and other interest groups to come up with alternatives to the Circumferential Highway. The Circ. Alternatives Task Force regularly for almost two years, and developed a list of transportation projects and demand management techniques that would be implemented over an approximately 20 year period. The projects identified for Williston include the re-building of Exit 12, improvements along VT 2A, the intersection of VT 2A and Mt. View Road, and additional grid streets in the Taft Corners area. The completion of these projects is a high priority for the town, and they collectively are an important part of the town's transportation and land use plans for the future.

**6.3.2 Continue to support VTrans constructing a Williston Park-and-Ride.** Williston residents and commuters from surrounding communities need a park-and-ride facility near Exit 12 on I-89. VTrans reopened the scoping process for this facility in 2006. This regionally important facility has received local permitting and state (Act 250) approval in 2015 and 2016, and construction is anticipated in 2017. This park-and-ride proposed near the south side of Exit 10 on I-89 should support Williston's goal of creating a pedestrian and transit friendly commercial center in the Taft Corners area. The town continues to support the completion of this facility and supports the park and ride being served by local and regional GMT service, with bike and pedestrian connections under I-89 to the Taft Corners area.

**6.3.3 Improve the Intersection of Rt. 2 and Industrial Avenue.** This VTrans project will improve safety and circulation, especially for trucks, at this heavily traveled and often confusing intersection. The construction of the planned improvements is awaiting state funding, and may rise in priority if it is selected as a priority improvement in lieu of the construction of the Circ.

**6.3.4 Consider Improvements to the Intersection of Route 2 and North Williston Road.** This intersection is currently congested only at peak hours, but a roundabout or signal will soon be needed. A CCRPC scoping study for this intersection recommended construction of a roundabout. The Williston Planning Commission supports transportation improvements in Williston Village, including the improvement of the intersection of Route 2 and North Williston and Oak Hill Roads, as long as the following elements of any project are considered:

- Pedestrian safety is improved, including safety for pedestrians who may need extra time or may require vehicles to be completely stopped to cross vehicle lanes.
- The safety of cyclists is addressed for any proposed alternatives.
- Recent evidence, particularly accident data, which consider any new improvements (such as the flashing red light at the North Williston/ Route 2 Intersection).
- The compatibility of the improvement with the Williston Historic Village is considered in consultation with the Williston Historic and Architectural Advisory Committee.
- Intersection improvements that involve structural elements (large metal masts and beams, for example) that are incompatible with Williston Village will not be supported.

**6.3.5 Calm Traffic Throughout Williston Village.** The visual separation created by the hill west of Williston Village results in high speeds as vehicles come over the crest approaching the village. The passing lane exacerbates this problem, and is no longer relevant, as Route 2 carries little farm traffic and should be carrying only local truck traffic. Replacing the passing lane with a narrower road section or a boulevard would slow traffic entering the village and improve the quality of life for existing and future homes along this stretch of road. Consideration should be given to providing on-street parking in the village to slow traffic and provide a buffer to pedestrians using the sidewalks. The CCRC completed a scoping study of this section of highway, exploring the feasibility of eliminating this passing lane and building a pedestrian or multi-use path. This facility for non-motorized travel is a high priority for the town.

**6.4 Transportation Improvements: Town - The Town of Williston will seek funding for and make improvements that are needed to enhance traffic safety and vehicular circulation.**

The road improvements and studies listed here are assigned to either higher or lower priority. Higher priority projects should be included in the town's capital budget, meaning that they should be initiated within six years. Lower priority improvements may be added to the capital budget if the need becomes more urgent before this plan is updated or if funding becomes available.

**Higher Priority Improvements.** See Map 9 – Proposed Transportation Improvements for the locations of these proposed improvements.

**6.4.1 Connect Marshall Avenue and Williston Road (Trader Lane). Extend Wright Avenue West to Harvest Lane.** Working with landowners to build these grid streets in the Taft Corners (see Map 3 – Taft Corners Grid Streets) will provide better access and relieve congestion. It may also alleviate the need for improvements at the intersection of Route 2A and Marshall Avenue. Planning and design studies for this and other grid streets have been completed in 2010.

**6.4.2 Study the Need for Transportation Improvements at Mountain View and North Williston Road.** Changing traffic patterns through Williston at peak travel times have resulted in periods of congestion at this intersection. The town will examine the potential need for improvements at this intersection.

**6.4.3 Install a Traffic Signal and Geometric Improvements at James Brown Drive.** The Williston Police Department also lists this intersection as a safety concern due to the potential for high-speed collisions. This signal and accompanying improvements are also needed (at least until the public works shop is moved, as called for by 7.1.2) to protect traffic, including the town's snowplows, entering and leaving James Brown Drive. A study of this intersection was completed by the CCRPC in 2008, which called for signalization of this intersection along with the construction of turn lanes on Rt. 2A. This project is waiting state funding.

**6.4.4 Build a Williston Park-and-Ride.** VTrans has planned to construct a regional park and ride facility on the south side of I-89 at Exit 12. The town continues to support the completion of this regional facility. In addition, the town should consider working with interested developers to create a locally oriented park-and-ride facility designed to support ride sharing and transit oriented towards Williston residents. Possible locations for this facility could include the Williston village or within the Taft Corners area.

**6.4.5 Build a Road Connection between the Home Depot/Wal-Mart Area and Rt. 2A.** The town commissioned a study of this proposed roadway in 2006, and results have been shared with AOT and the CCRPC. This roadway would most likely be built in conjunction with a private development proposal, and the design interaction with the existing state highways in Taft Corners would have to be evaluated in conjunction with state transportation requirements.

**Lower Priority Improvements.** See Map 9 – Proposed Transportation Improvements for the locations of these proposed improvements.

**6.4.7 Build Other Taft Corners Grid Streets.** Extending Wright Avenue west toward Trader Lane (proposed) and connecting it to Marshall Avenue is a high priority (see Policy 6.5.1). Extending the grid from Harvest Lane, near the Home Depot (see Policy 6.4.5), to Route 2A may also be a priority depending on future development proposals in this area. Other grid streets in the Taft Corners area, including those linking the properties to the east to Maple Tree Place should be constructed as development proceeds.

**6.4.8 Study the Need for Improvements on North Williston Road.** Traffic on North Williston Road is growing as this narrow, winding, rural highway begins to serve part of the function originally projected for the Circumferential Highway: namely linking traffic from Route 15 and the existing portion of the Circ (VT 289) in Essex to I-89 to the south. The state and the CCRPC should conduct a corridor study that projects traffic volumes and identifies the need for possible improvements along this roadway in light of recent discussions by the state to not construct a bridge over the Winooski River as part of the Circ Highway in the foreseeable future. This study should also address the need for traffic calming along the more densely settled stretches of this road.

**6.4.9 Study the Need for Improvements on Oak Hill Road.** Like North Williston, Oak Hill Road is beginning to function as an arterial, carrying traffic from Hinesburg and other points south into rural residential areas. The town should fund a study that will project future traffic volumes, evaluate the need for improvements, and evaluate how traffic calming on Oak Hill could be used to divert drivers to Route 2A.

**6.5 Freight - The Town of Williston will consider freight movement in its planning, public investment, and development review decisions.**

As noted in the introduction to this element, Williston is a center of trucking and warehousing services. The New England Central Railroad passes through Williston, along the Winooski River, but provides little service to businesses located in the town.

**6.5.1 Designate Truck Routes.** Truck routes are designated on Map 9 – Major Road Plan. This designation supplements the functional classification map as a basis for planning transportation improvements and land use decisions.

**6.5.2 Promote Investment in Rail Services.** Williston supports the adoption and implementation of a state rail plan that would provide better freight service in Vermont. For information on state rail planning, see <http://www.aot.state.vt.us/Rail/SRP.htm>.

**6.6 Transportation Funding - The responsibility for the provision of local streets and bicycle and pedestrian ways will continue to be the developer's. The Town of Williston will continue to collect transportation impact fees to help fund the improvements that benefit the entire community.**

The roads serving Williston represent a major public investment. The town currently spends somewhat more than \$1,000,000 per year to maintain its roads.

**6.6.1 Continue to Require Developers to Provide Local Streets and Bicycle and Pedestrian Ways.** Williston will continue to require developers to provide local streets, sidewalks or multi-use paths, and primitive trails that serve their projects. Developers may also be required to make improvements to existing town, state, and federal highways, as provided by Objective 6.2 – Access Management, and to provide rights-of-way for the path and trail system shown in the *Open Space Plan*. Where the development itself will generate or attract bicycle and pedestrian traffic, the developer will be required to build the paths and trails. Developers may also be required to provide bike racks.

**6.6.2 Monitor and Evaluate the Transportation Impact Fee.** Williston has charged transportation impact fees since 1987, raising more than \$2 million. The current impact fee of \$700 per peak hour trip end was updated in 2008. The town will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the impact fee program and consider revising it to reflect current costs and match the priorities for improvements adopted in this plan.

**6.6.3 Pursue Additional Funding for Transportation Improvements.** The town has been successful in obtaining grants of roughly \$1 million in the past two years for the design and construction of paths and sidewalks that have helped the town to leverage its own funds. Town staff will continue to pursue grants and other funding sources for transportation improvements.

**6.7 Regional Transportation Planning - The Town of Williston will continue to participate in the regional planning transportation program of the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission, including the commission's Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) and Planning Advisory Committee (PAC). It will also pursue increased representation on the CCRPC board.**

Williston is a member of the CCRPC, the regional planning and transportation planning agency. CCRPC prepares a regional transportation plan board and a schedule of improvements that will be built with state and federal funds which is approved by the CCRPC board. Representation on the

CCRPC board is presently based on the population of the participating jurisdictions. Williston will advocate a new formula that reflects traffic volumes, employment, or other indicators that better reflect jurisdictions' relative needs for transportation improvements.

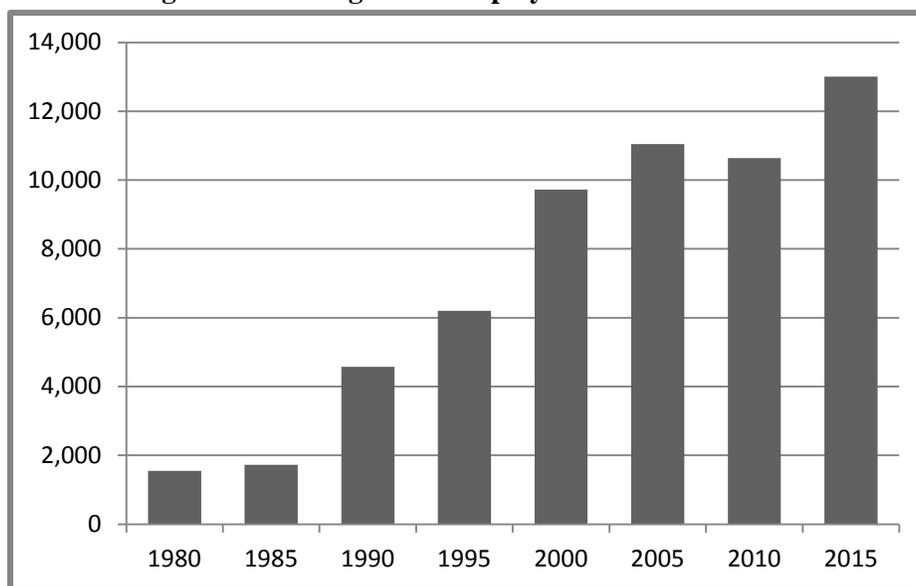
## CHAPTER 7 - ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Williston's vibrant and strong local economy has long been one of the defining characteristics of the town, and Williston today is a regionally important employment and commercial area. The town's central location in Chittenden County, close proximity to the Burlington International Airport, and ready access to I-89 which runs through the heart of the town, have created a number of important location advantages for Williston for supporting varied economic activity. Previous town plans have discussed the town's economic development goals primarily within its land use and transportation chapters. This marks the first time economic development has been discussed separately

After decades of employment and business growth, Williston has become an essential part of the regional economy in Chittenden County. Over the past 25 years, the number of people employed in Williston has tripled, increasing from approximately 4,000 jobs in 1990 to over 12,000 jobs in 2015 (Figure 7.A). The town has a diverse economy composed of a mix of large and small businesses, non-profits and government agency offices; ranging from manufacturing, retail sales, to government services. The town is well known as a retail commercial hub, with Wal Mart and the collective stores of Maple Tree Place located in the Taft Corners area. However, retail sales employment has declined somewhat in recent years, and employment levels in this sector have yet to revisit levels seen prior to the recent recession in the late 2000s. In contrast, business and government services have become more and more prevalent in recent years (Table 7.A).

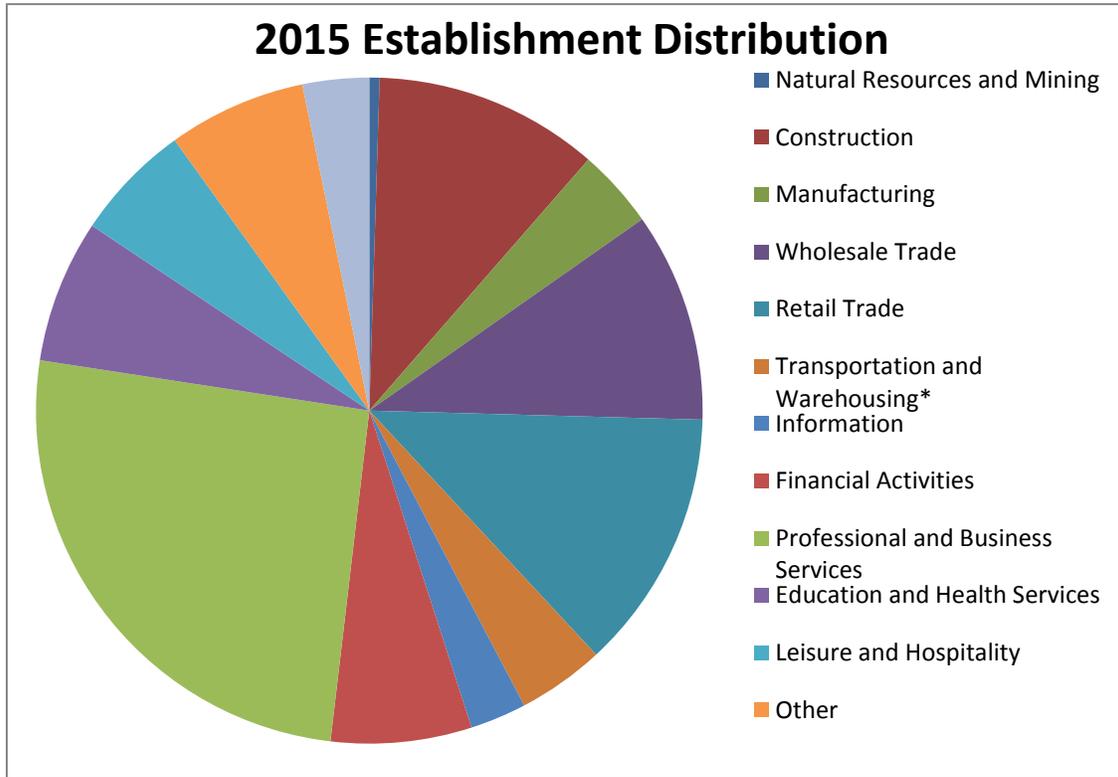
Williston is home to some of the largest and most well-known businesses in the state and region including Global Foundries (formerly IBM), Keurig Green Mountain Coffee, Wal Mart, S. D. Ireland, and Maple Tree Place. In addition, the town has a wide range of other businesses large and small. Williston continues to be one of the most important centers of retail trade in the region and state accounting for more taxable retail sales than any other community in the state.

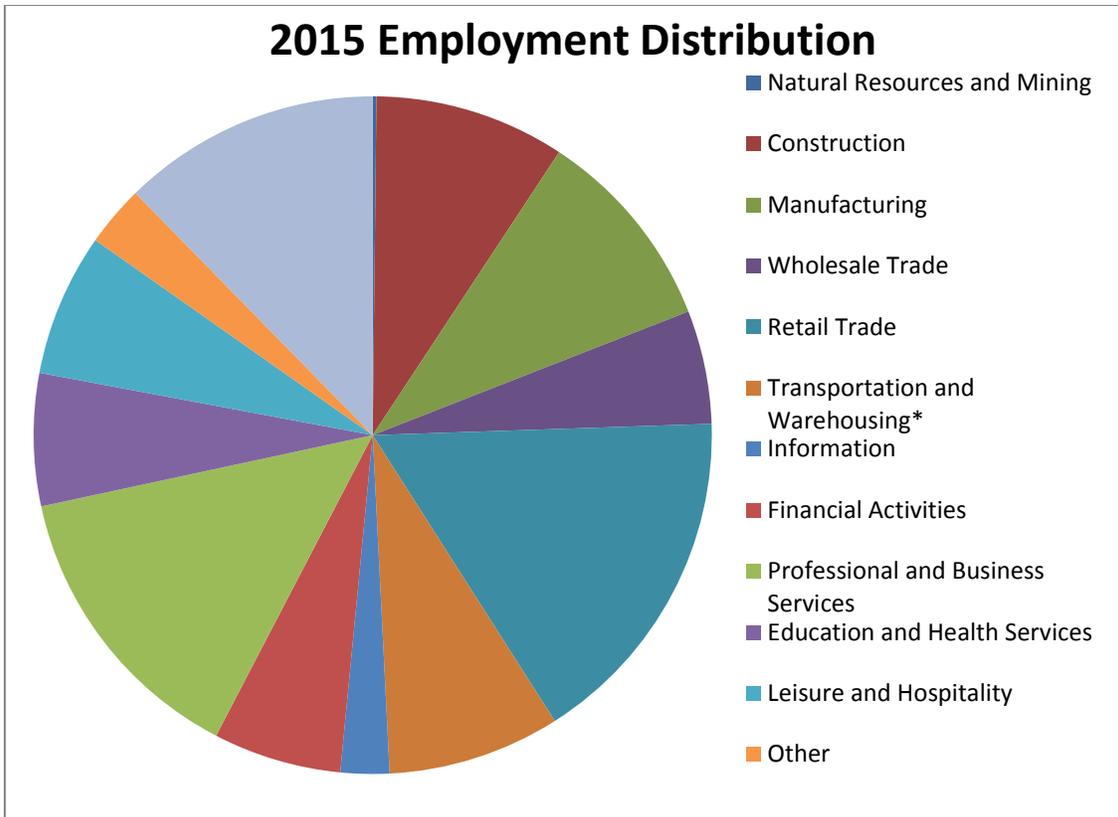
**Figure 7.A – Long Term Employment Trend in Williston**



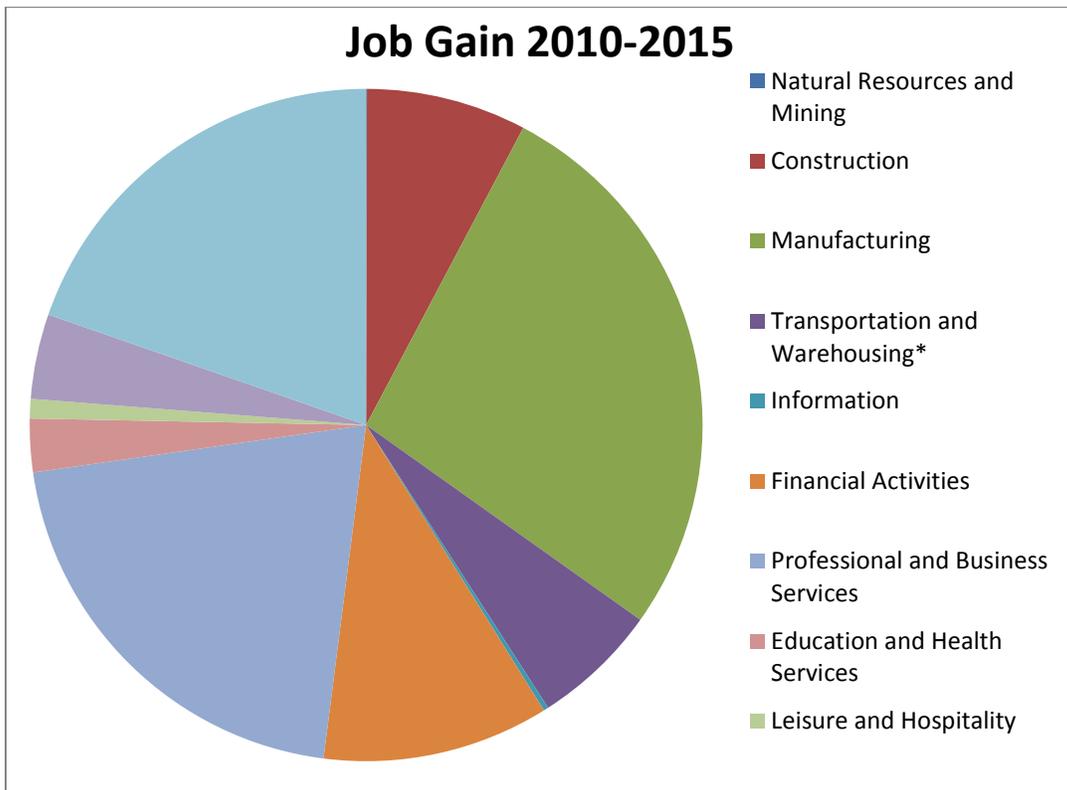
Source: Vermont Department of Labor

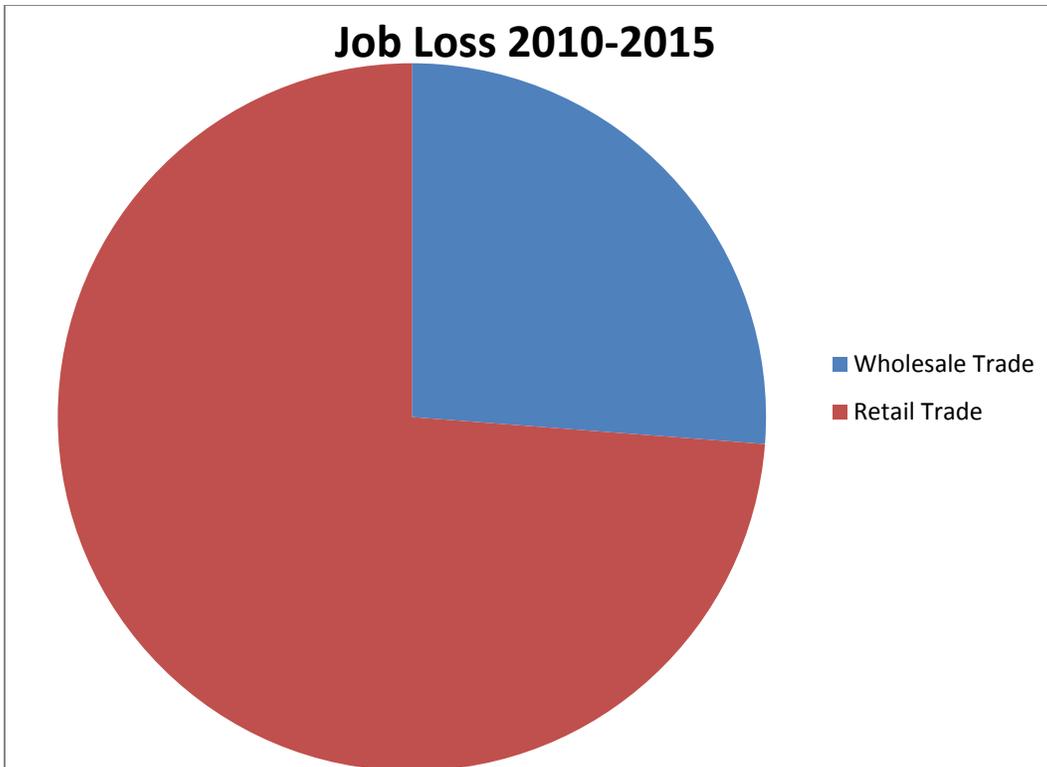
Figures 7.B and 7.C – Business Establishments and Employment





**Figures 7.D and 7.E – Employment Sectors Gaining and Losing Jobs**





**Table 7.A – Employment by Sector 2000-2015**

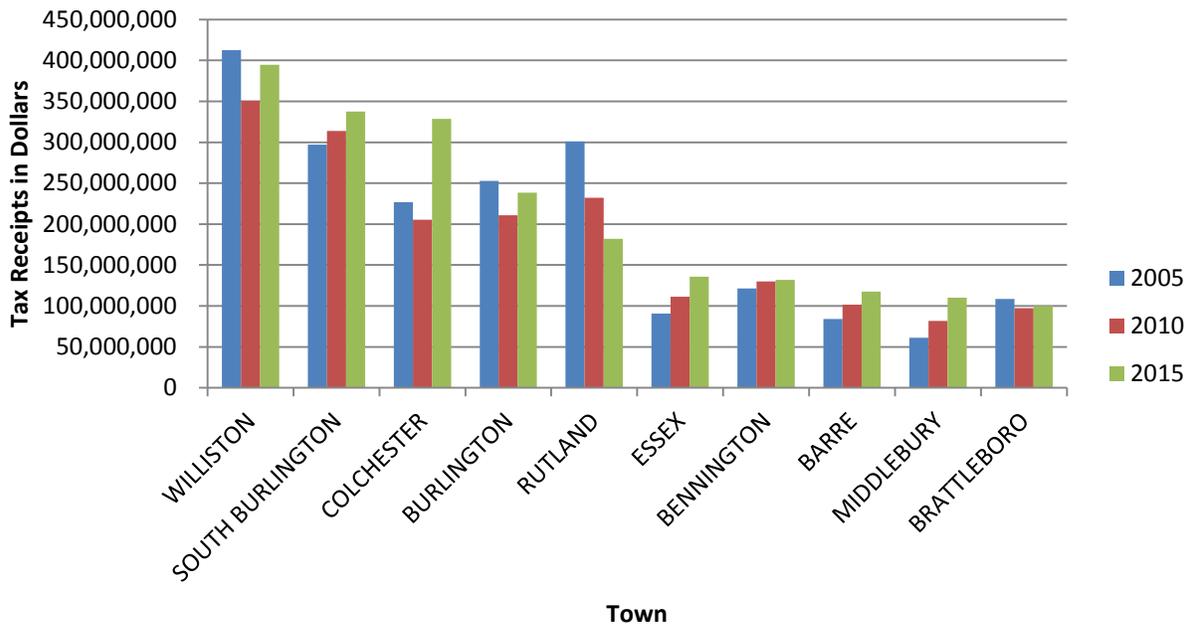
Employment by Sector, 2000-2015								
	Establishments				Employment			
	2000	2010	2015	% Change	2000	2010	2015	% Change
Natural Resources and Mining	3	5	4	33.3%	17	22	23	35.3%
Construction	75	86	88	17.3%	1,178	984	1,182	0.3%
Manufacturing	30	32	31	3.3%	1,115	576	1,273	14.2%
Wholesale Trade	67	88	82	22.4%	852	758	704	-17.4%
Retail Trade	96	106	102	6.3%	1,596	2,299	2,147	34.5%
Transportation and Warehousing*	25	33	34	36.0%	594	914	1,070	80.1%
Information	15	20	22	46.7%	479	296	302	-37.0%
Financial Activities	42	53	55	31.0%	488	515	795	62.9%
Professional and Business Services	117	160	206	76.1%	1,319	1,286	1,819	37.9%
Education and Health Services	53	50	56	5.7%	834	756	822	-1.4%
Leisure and Hospitality	23	40	46	100.0%	310	862	886	185.8%
Other	64	54	54	-15.6%	479	273	378	-21.1%
Government	20	20	26	30.0%	463	1,098	1,604	246.4%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>630</b>	<b>747</b>	<b>806</b>	<b>27.9%</b>	<b>9,724</b>	<b>10,639</b>	<b>13,005</b>	<b>33.7%</b>

Source: Vermont Department of Labor, Economic & Labor Market Information

\* Between 10-20 positions in this category were kept confidential in 2000

**Figure 7.F – Top Ten State Sales Tax Receipt Towns, 2005-2015**

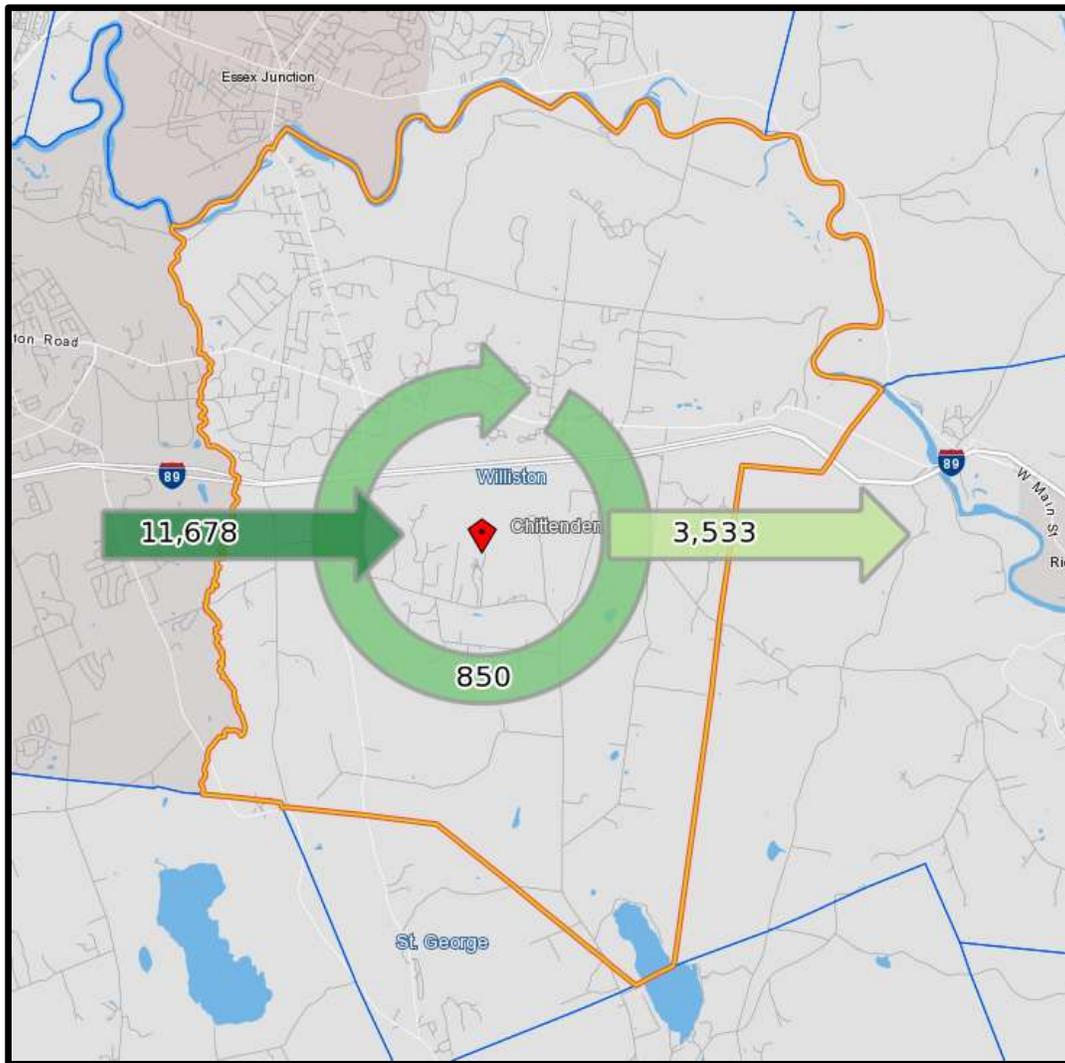
## Top Ten Tax Receipt Towns in Vermont



**Commuting patterns**

Williston, like the county as a whole, imports a large portion of its labor force. According to the U.S. Census, there were over 11,500 people commuting into Williston on a regular basis for employment in 2013, while only 850 of the town’s workforce lived in Williston. This illustrates the importance supporting vigorous efforts to increase the supply of housing in Williston, especially workforce housing. Because of this influx of workers into town, Williston’s daytime population is almost twice the size of its resident population (Figure 7.B)

**Figure 7.G – Flow of Workers to and from Williston**



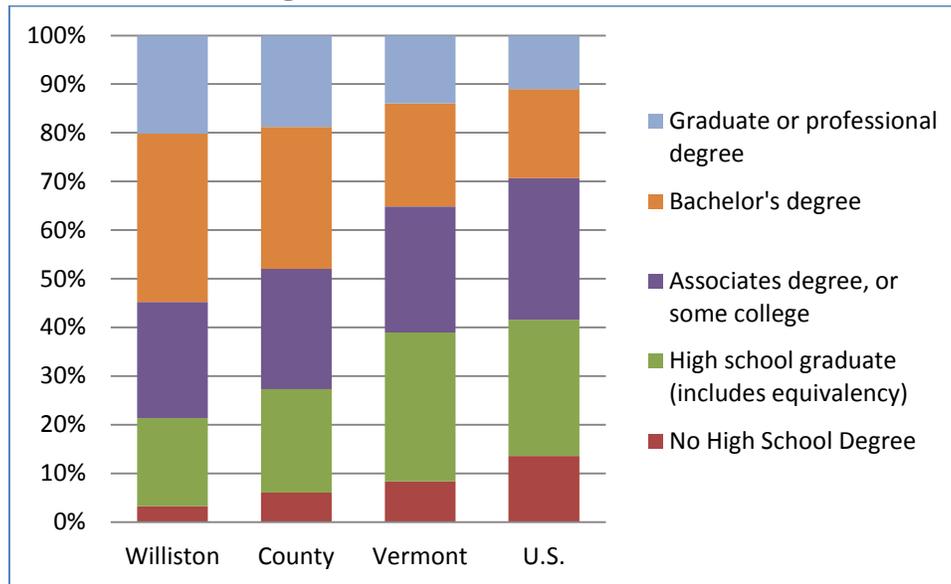
**Table 7.B - Williston Estimated Daytime Population, 2013**

Resident Population	9,014
Workers Commuting to Williston	+ 11,687
Williston Residents Commuting to Other Locals	-3,533
<b>Net Daytime Population</b>	<b>17,168</b>

## Educational Attainment

A strong economy relies upon many factors, including having an educated and trained workforce available to fill the needs of area employers. Williston's population boasts a very highly level of educational attainment by almost any standards, in a highly educated region. Recent estimates indicate that over 95% of Williston's population over age 25 has graduated from high school, and over 50% have a college degree or greater, levels well above the national and state-wide averages (Figure 7.H).

**Figure 7. H - Educational Attainment**



Source: American Community Survey (2014)

## Objectives

**7.1 – Implement the Town's Land Use Plan** – Chapter 3 Land Use identifies several land use objectives aimed at supporting the town's economic development. These include:

**3.1 Taft Corners and Growth Center.** Williston has emerged as a regional center of commerce, business, and employment. The town accounts for more retail sales than any other municipality in Vermont. This objective provides a basis for the town's continuing efforts to build a design-conscious, pedestrian-friendly, mixed-use town center in area of Taft Corners.

**3.3 Industrial Lands.** This objective maintaining the supply of industrially zoned land also calls for changes and refinement in the standards applied to uses of industrial lands to address the needs of an evolving economy.

**7.2 – Implement the Town's Transportation Plan** – Chapter 6 Transportation discusses the important role that the transportation network and services in Williston play in supporting the town's local and regional economy

**6.1.3 Public Transportation.** Most of the town's centers of economic activity have some access to public transportation, especially in the Taft Corners area, along Williston Road and Industrial Avenue. The town continues to support the provision and expansion of public transportation services in Williston, especially in those parts of town with high employment levels.

**6.3 Transportation Improvements: state.** This goal details a range of state provided transportation improvements to the town's arterial roads including I-89 (Exit 12), Williston Road and VT 2A. The town will continue to work diligently with VTrans to see these improvements get implemented.

**6.4 Transportation Improvements: Town.** Included in this goal is the expansion of the town's grid street network in the Taft Corners area, and

**6.5 Freight** The Town of Williston will continue to consider freight movement in its planning, public investment, and development review decisions.

**7.3 – Continue to Maintain Available Wastewater Treatment Capacity.** Chapter 8 discusses a range of local government services supplied by the town, including some forms of essential public infrastructure. This includes municipal water and sewerage service. Historically, having a supply of additional wastewater treatment capacity for new or expanding businesses in Williston has been a challenge. This has been less as recently as the town has added capacity, but it remains an important ingredient in supporting a healthy local economy.

**7.4 – Support Additional Affordable Housing.** Objective 5.2 Housing Opportunities calls for the town to use its residential growth management system to encourage the provision of a range of housing choices, including choices among different locations and densities of dwellings, and housing that is affordable for residents and the workforce. The town will also explore other means of promoting the provision of more diverse, more affordable housing.

**7.5 – Support the Development of VTC.** Vermont Technical College in Williston is an important resource for training and educating a technologically sophisticated workforce. Objective 10.3 calls for supporting the efforts by VTC to expand and evolve their Williston Campus.

## CHAPTER 8- PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES

As Williston has grown over the years keeping pace with the ever present demand for affordable public services for Williston's ever increasing number of residents, workers, commuters, and shoppers has been a challenge. While the town has made significant strides in addressing the demands for these services by investing in new facilities, the process of meeting the needs of the town is an ever evolving one. This chapter assesses the current capacity of each town service to continue to provide high quality municipal services to the town's residents and businesses, and to plan for the future growth of the town and provides policy direction for how capacity should, where necessary, be expanded.

**8.1 Administration** – This objective assesses the buildings and facilities that house town government. Now that the modern public safety buildings completed in 2007, and the public works garage completed in 2015 are in place, all existing town buildings are anticipated to meet the town's needs for many years to come.

**8.2 Cemeteries** – Williston has four cemeteries. Three are nearly full, but the new Deer View Cemetery on North Williston Road will have available plats for many years into the future.

**8.3 Fire and Rescue** – Williston's Fire Department is now housed in a modern, state-of-the-art fire station at the former Mahan Farm property on Williston Road. The Fire Department's challenges moving forward will be maintaining the staffing levels necessary to meet the demands of the expanding number of calls for service.

**8.4 Law Enforcement** – The Williston Police Department moved into new, modern quarters in 2007, designed to meet the facilities needs of the department well into the future. As with the Fire Department, the Police Department's attention has shifted to providing the needed personnel to meet the growing demands for police service in the town.

**8.5 Library** – Williston residents are served by the Dorothy Alling Memorial Library, which is anticipated will meet the community's needs for the foreseeable future.

**8.6 Sewerage** – Installation of central sewerage completed in 1985, combined with Williston's central location in the region set the stage for the rapid growth of the 1990's and 2000's. Even after an expansion of the plant's treatment capacity in 2005 and the purchase of addition plant capacity for Williston's use, the sewage treatment plant Williston shares with Essex and Essex Junction has a limited amount of capacity available for Williston to accommodate modest growth for the foreseeable future.

**8.7 Solid Waste** – This is not a municipal service - solid waste collection is provided by private haulers, and disposal and composting by the Chittenden Solid Waste District. The CSWD property is also the proposed location of a future regional landfill.

**8.8 Water** – The town provides municipal water service in those areas of Williston designated for moderate and higher intensity development. Rural areas rely on private wells for their water supply. The town's water system will, with planned improvements, be adequate for the next 10-15 years.

**8.9 Capital Budget** – Facilities' needs must be matched with financial resources. Williston accomplishes this through its capital budgeting process utilizing a five year Capital Improvement Plan as part of its annual budgeting process.

**8.10 Public Works Specifications** – The town’s public works specifications provide guidance to engineers and contractors working for the town and to developers.

**Public Facilities and Services Described in Other Chapters:**

- **Transportation** is discussed in Chapter 6 – Transportation. Numerous highway improvements needed to carry growing traffic volumes and complete the buildout of the town’s local transportation network. That chapter also addresses needs for sidewalks and paved paths that enable more active forms of transportation and mobility, and as an alternative to vehicular travel.
- **Recreation** is discussed in Chapter 9 – Parks and Recreation. Williston’s town-owned country parks, community parks, and primitive trail system are described in this chapter. This chapter also addressed the town’s recreation programs and the need for additional public recreation facilities.
- **Schools** are discussed in Chapter 10 – Education and Child Care. Current demographic and development trends suggest that the town’s existing school facilities will be sufficient for the next eight years and perhaps longer, but the town should monitor demographic and enrollment trends and be preparing plans for potential expansion in light of ongoing growth in the number of households and population.
- **Stormwater Management** is discussed on Chapter 12 – Watershed Health. Williston now finds itself with major stormwater management responsibilities as it prepares to maintain numerous residential stormwater facilities, and continues to meet the requirements of the federal MS4 stormwater management requirements

**8.1 Administration - The Town of Williston will strive to maintain adequate space and modern facilities for the administration of municipal services.**

Williston maintains seven principal buildings. The town’s administrative services are largely concentrated in Williston’s historic village center. Two exceptions are the fire station and the public works garage. These are shown on Map 13 – Public Facilities.

- The Thomas Chittenden Town Hall houses the Selectboard meeting room, which is also used for meetings of other town boards, and the town’s main administrative offices including those of the Town Manager and Town Clerk.
- The Town Hall Annex houses the public works office, recreation and parks department, and the planning and zoning office. This building was remodeled after the police department moved into their new facility in 2007. It now includes a conference room in addition to the public offices.
- The new fire station was completed in 2007 near the intersection of Talcott Road and Williston Road, providing a modern base for the town’s fire and rescue vehicles and personnel. The building also includes a room for training and public and community meetings.

- The new police station and headquarters completed in 2007 replaced the cramped and inadequate space occupied by the police department in the Town Hall Annex. The new facility also includes a public meeting room.
- The Old Brick Church, which is across Route 2 from the town hall is also a town owned building. This building is leased for events like weddings.
- The Dorothy Alling Memorial Library, which is also on the north side of Route 2 in the village center.
- The recently completed new public works shop and garage, which is located in northwestern Williston, off Avenue A.

With the completion of the new police and fire department buildings in 2007, the remodeling of the Town Hall Annex, and the completion of the public works garage in 2015, these buildings will enable the town to meet its facilities needs through the 2016-2024 planning period and into the future. The completion of the new police and fire department facilities and public works garage have prepared the town for addressing its emergency service facilities needs for decades to come.

***8.1.1 Renovate the older town facilities for energy efficiency and conservation.*** A series of energy audits of the Town Hall, Town Hall Annex, the Old Brick Church, and the Dorothy Alling Memorial Library were completed in 2009 and 2010. These audits recommended a number of measures for weatherizing and improving the energy efficiency of these older town buildings. The town should implement these recommendations in order to lower the town's energy costs and energy fuel consumption. These measures will not only result in savings to the town in future years, but will also set an example of good stewardship for town residents and businesses in meeting the state's energy efficiency goals and addressing climate change.

**8.2 – Cemeteries - The Cemetery Commission will continue to maintain the town's burial grounds. The Historic Architectural Advisory Committee will assist the Cemetery Commission in seeking funds to restore historic gravestones.**

Williston has four cemeteries, which are maintained by the Cemetery Commission using what remains of its endowment funds which are now supplemented by town funds. Three of the cemeteries – East, Morse, and Thomas Chittenden have historic grave sites and markers. They are nearly full. The fourth, Deer View Cemetery, was established in 2001. It adds the potential of approximately 4,000 lots. At this time, only 432 lots have been marked, and 177 of these have been sold.

***8.2.1 Enhance the appearance of the Deer View Cemetery.*** The Deer View Cemetery, while providing much needed space for the future, currently lacks much definition and is plain in appearance. The Cemetery Commission town should consider developing a beautification plan to enhance the appearance of the cemetery through landscaping and other design modifications.

**8.3 – Fire and Emergency Medical Services- The Town of Williston will strive to continue to provide a high quality level of Fire and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) services. Keeping pace with the town's growth may require additional investments in personnel during the 2016-2024 planning period as the demands for fire protection and EMS changes as the result of increased population and changing demographics.**

The Williston Fire Department responded to 1,801 total calls for service; 870 call for EMS and 931 fire calls in FY2014. In contrast, the Fire Department responded to only 1,566 calls for service during FY 2009. Williston currently ranks third in Chittenden County for responses to calls, and as reported by the Vermont Department of Fire Safety in 2013, eighth in fire and fifth in EMS responses across the state.

The need for the equipment and trained personnel necessary to respond to calls for fire protection and/or emergency medical services has grown as Williston has grown. The Fire Department moved into a new, modern facility in 2007 at the intersection of Williston Road and Talcott Road. The new fire station has provided the Fire Department with sufficient space to house all of their vehicles and equipment in one place. In addition, the new fire station has meeting space for training and community meetings and events, as well as a dormitory that enables the Fire Department to have staff at the facility 24 hours a day. The Fire Department operates with two people on duty at all times, and these people are aided by Call staff who responds to calls for service as needed. In 2010 the Fire Department began offering ambulance service for the first time, thereby filling out what had been a weak area of service response capacity. A list of the Fire Department’s apparatus is provided in Table 8.A below.

**Table 8.A Fire and Rescue Apparatus**

**Williston Fire / EMS Apparatus:**

<b>IDENTIFIER</b>	<b>YEAR BODY/ENGINE MAKE</b>	<b>MODEL</b>	<b>TYPE</b>
Engine 1	1997 Spartan/Smeal	1250/1000	Engine
Engine 2	2009 KME/KME	1500/750	Engine
Engine 3	2003 KME/KME	1250/1000	Engine
Tower 1	2001 KME/KME	2000/9000/95’	Tower/Ladder
Brush 1	1999 Dodge/Greenwood	250/250	Forestry
Car 1	2008 GMC Yukon	SUV	Chief’s Car
Car 2	2010 GMC Yukon	SUV	Duty Car
Utility 1	2011 GMC 2500	Pick-Up	Utility/Duty
Rescue 1	2010 Ford Osage	Type I	Ambulance
Rescue 2	2014 Ford Osage	Type I	Ambulance
Utility 2	2014 Polaris Ranger 800	Utility Vehicle	Search/Rescue
Tech Rescue 1	2014 Bravo Trailer	Tandem Trailer	Search/Rescue
Tech Rescue 2	2006 Pace Cargo Trailer	Utility Trailer	Search/Rescue

The completion of the fire station and the addition of several new pieces of fire suppression trucks and the two ambulances in 2010 have addressed the department’s immediate needs for facilities and equipment. Moving forward, the needs and priorities of the Fire Department will shift from providing facilities to providing the people necessary to respond to calls and deliver fire safety and emergency services.

**8.3.1 Level of Service: Firefighters/EMTs.** The Williston Fire Department is authorized to have 50 Firefighters and EMTs. Some of these are certified as Firefighter only (FF), some EMS only (EMT), and some are dual certified (FF/EMT). There are currently 42 staff members on the roster. Eleven of these are full-time employees comprised of Fire Chief, Training Captain, 8 career FF/EMT shift personnel, and an administrative assistant. The remaining 31 staff members are paid Call staff positions. The Fire Department operates with an average of 44 members on the roster. Meeting the personnel needs of the department is compounded by the frequent turnover in call staff as well as the challenges of serving an expanding resident population. The Fire Department is also anticipating the retirement of many of its upper management staff including both the chief and deputy chief. The town should continue to monitor the staffing needs of the Fire Department and look for ways of fully staffing the department and prepare for an anticipated transition of many of its key department management staff.

**8.3.2 Adopt and Enforce National Fire Codes.** The Vermont Division of Fire Safety enforces building codes for commercial construction throughout the state. Local adoption of the National Fire Codes would provide Williston’s fire and planning departments with independent authority to address basic life safety issues as development and redevelopment occur. Fire codes protect both the occupants of a building and the firefighters who may be called there. They also facilitate “pre-planning,” in which the department decides in advance how it will deal with a call at a particular location.

For information on the Vermont Division of Fire Safety go to [www.dps.state.vt.us/fire/](http://www.dps.state.vt.us/fire/). Information about the National Fire Codes may be obtained from the National Fire Protection Association <http://www.nfpa.org/index.asp>.

**8.3.3 Cooperate with the Williston Police Department in Studying Ways to Improve Dispatch.** The Williston Fire Department is currently dispatched by the Shelburne Fire Department. Previously, fire and EMS dispatch had been provided by the Essex Police Department and St. Michael’s College. See 7.4.2 for more on this issue. The town should consider the feasibility of providing its own coordinated emergency response dispatch for both police and fire department delivered services.

**8.4 - Law Enforcement - The Town of Williston will continue to provide law enforcement protection and services at a level that keeps pace with the town’s growth and demand for services. This will require attention to staffing levels and how call dispatch is administered during the 2016-2021 planning period.**

The Williston Police Department managed a total of 10,156 calls for service and traffic contacts and made 534 criminal arrests in FY 2010. In FY 2015, we had a combined response to calls for service and traffic contacts totaling 10,356 (up 2%) and made arrests for 520 offenses.

In 2007, the town completed the construction of a new, modern police station on Williston Road next to the Williston Town Hall. The new police station contains office space, a call dispatch area, holding areas, and interview rooms for police business, and has provided the town with sufficient space to accommodate the needs of the department for years to come. In addition the police station also has a meeting room for public meetings.

In the future, the primary needs of the police department will be in providing the necessary number of trained personnel to provide police protection.

- The Williston Police Department has been budgeted to have 17 sworn officers in FY 2017 including the chief and four sergeants, up from 15 officers in the fiscal year 2013. Because of vacancies, training, and job-related injuries, however, the number of officers available for patrol is often below that number. This results in increased workloads and overtime hours for many officers, and contributes to a reduction in services to the community.
- The Williston Police Department currently provides its own dispatch with two employees from 7:00 A.M. through 7:00 P.M., daily. Dispatch at other times is handled by the Vermont State Police, which services all state officers in Addison, Chittenden, and Lamoille Counties, as well as several police departments. The dispatch workload often affects traffic enforcement activities and can magnify officer safety concerns.

The town's capital budget provides for replacement of the department's five marked and three unmarked cars, but not until they have approximately 80-100,000 miles on them.

**8.4.1 Level of Service: Officers.** Williston should have a police force that is proportional to its effective workload and officer availability. The latest workload analysis conducted in 2012 determined that this agency should have a total of 17 uniformed police officers to respond to our calls for service and address our traffic safety issues. We currently budget for 17 total officers in the agency, of which 13 are assigned to a uniformed assignment.

**8.4.2 Level of Service: Dispatch.** The dispatching of emergency response services in Williston in an efficient and coordinated fashion remains a challenge for the town. Fire and EMS dispatch is handled separately from police, and police dispatch is provided during night and evening hours through the Vermont State Police. The Town of Williston does not realize the entire cost for dispatch services since we are not charged by the Vermont State Police and to properly address our challenges, it would entail budgeting for the needed services. Transitioning to a single dispatch resource is a critical need at this point and would require the financial support to hire additional staff or assume the full expense for another entity to provide dispatch services to the police department.

- In FY 2016, Williston Police began dispatching for the Chittenden County Sheriff's Department in exchange for using the Sheriff's equipment, which addresses shortcomings of communications equipment belonging to Williston.

**8.5 Library – The Town of Williston will continue to provide exemplary library services for its residents. The Library Board will prepare an updated facilities plan.**

The Dorothy Alling Memorial Library (DAML) is located in Williston's historic village. The 9,507 square foot building consists of the original structure donated to the town in 1959 and two additions, one made in 1986 and one in 1998. DAML holds more than 41,000 items, including books, magazines, videos, and audio recordings. The library also provides access to downloadable audio, eBooks, and several databases. It also houses the collection of the Williston Historical Society. Circulation in 2014-2015 was 121,651, with 60,944 visits and 4,451 cardholders from Williston and St. George. In addition, the DAML is a member of the HomeCard System which provides reciprocal borrowing privileges to residents of participating towns. The library also offers nine computers for public use, video conferencing equipment, and a Wi-Fi hotspot. The staff consists of three full-time, five part-time, four student assistants, and numerous volunteers. The library has a meeting room, and held 408 programs in 2014-2015, with a total attendance of 9,436 people. These included literacy programs for preschoolers and school age children, a monthly teen group, lectures, author visits, films, and other programs for youth

and adults. The library also offers extensive outreach services including the operation of a bookmobile to neighborhoods in the summer months, pre-schools during the school year, and senior communities year-round. Library staff also makes deliveries of library materials to homebound individuals.

In 2012-2013, a number of repairs and modifications were completed at the DAML to improve the energy efficiency, lighting and the overall comfort of the library's patrons. The library's immediate facilities plans are focused on improving the layout of the building to make areas for library study separate from areas for casual visiting, and to create a teen space. Expansion of the existing facility will need to be considered at some point as the population of the town and the demand for services increases. Library staff will continue to monitor new development and trends in technology and information services and incorporate them into the library's current offerings as appropriate.

**8.6 Sewerage Service – The Town of Williston will continue to provide municipal sewerage service, but only within the defined sewer service area, and within the limits imposed by treatment plant capacity. The town will continue seeking additional sewerage capacity in order to meet the town's long term growth needs.**

Williston provides sewerage in the service area shown on Map 8. The town's sewer service area is an expression of the town's land use plan to minimize sprawl and concentrate growth within its designated growth center. Sewage is collected through some 70 miles of mains and nine pump stations; it is then pumped under the Winooski River to a treatment plant in Essex Junction. The plant is jointly owned and operated by the Village of Essex Junction, the Town of Essex, and the Town of Williston. Additional areas served by municipal sewer service are identified on Map show locations outside of the designated Sewer Service Area. Properties in these locations were allowed to connect to the town's system either under the Pollution Abatement Provision of the town's *Sewer Service Ordinance*, or they pre-date the town's current policy.

Williston had less than 100 gallons per day of unallocated sewage treatment capacity remaining when a 200,000 gallon per day expansion came on line in 2005. The town recently completed the purchase of an additional 50,000 gallons per day of capacity in 2016. Those expansions will allow the town to meet the residential growth target set in Chapter 5 Housing and Growth Management, and permit additional industrial and commercial development through the end of FY 2025.

<p><b>Sewage Math?</b> How much sewage treatment capacity is needed for typical uses? Two-bedroom condominiums use an average of 135 gallons per day. A three-bedroom single-family home averages about 230 gallons per day (gpd). A busy restaurant can use more than 5,000 gpd.</p>
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**Table 8.C appears here.**

**8.6.1 Continue to Confine Central Sewerage to the Sewer Service Area.** This plan proposes no changes in the sewer service area shown on Map 7. Municipal sewer service will not be extended outside the defined sewer service area except in response to public health emergencies, as defined in the sewer allocation ordinance.

**8.6.2 Allocate Sewage Treatment Plant Capacity in Accord with This Plan.** Williston has linked the allocation of limited waste water treatment plant capacity and its planning goals for many years. Recent revisions to the sewer allocation ordinance and development regulations described in Chapter 5 of this plan have confirmed this policy. The projected ten-year allocation which runs through the end of FY 2025 is shown in Table 8.C. In addition, the town should also consider developing a longer range planning horizon for allocating sewer capacity

**8.6.3 Purchase additional sewer capacity.** Williston has recently completed the purchase of an additional 50,000 gallons per day of sewer capacity from the Village of Essex Junction from the remaining uncommitted sewer treatment capacity from Essex Junction. The town is aware that the wastewater treatment capacity of the Essex Junction plant is limited and future treatment capacity is unlikely. The town should consider purchasing additional sewer treatment capacity soon in order to meet the town's anticipated future needs.

**8.6.4 Implement the Facilities Plan for Sewerage.** The town completed a study of its wastewater facilities in 2008. This study examined the condition of the town's existing sewerage collection system, including pump stations and force mains, and resulted in a number of recommendations and a schedule of anticipated system improvements with estimated costs. This plan should be used as a guide in making future capital expenditure decision for improvements to the existing system to ensure its ongoing viability and safe operation.

**8.6.5 Develop a 20 year Plan for Sewer Service.** The town currently plans for and allocated sewer treatment capacity one decade at a time, consistent with the time horizon of the residential growth management allocation process. Given the town's limited available capacity at the Essex Junction treatment plant, the town should consider developing a 20 year plan for allocation sewer capacity to help insure the town has ample capacity to address the town's long term growth needs through 2036.

**8.6.6 Make Better Use of Existing Capacity.** The town allocated capacity in the sewage treatment plant to private landowners in 1990 and 1999. As Table 8.B shows, these individuals currently hold almost 95,000 gallons per day of unused plant capacity. Given the time required to add capacity, the town will continue efforts to reacquire it from landowners who are not expected to use it. The town will also permit transfers of privately-held capacity (the capacity committed to landowners was linked to specific parcels) that facilitate development without using new capacity.

**8.6.7 Continue to Assess Sewer Connection Fees. Update the Fees Upon Completion of the Current Studies.** The town will continue to collect fees for connection to the sewerage system. These fees should result in each new user making a fair, proportional contribution to the costs of expanding the system. They should be updated on a regular basis.

## **8.7 Solid Waste – The Town of Williston will collaborate with the Chittenden Solid Waste District in providing solid waste disposal, recycling, and composting for Williston and for the Chittenden County Region.**

The Town of Williston does not provide solid waste collection or disposal. Rather, these services are provided by private haulers and the Chittenden Solid Waste District (CSWD). Williston is, however, the

host community for a potential proposed regional landfill and a composting facility to be relocated from the Intervale in Burlington. The site, which includes a former town landfill that is now monitored by CSWD, also includes CSWD's headquarters, a solid waste and recycling drop-off center, and a planned regional composting facility is shown on Map 13 – Public Facilities. Construction of the regional landfill will go through a rigorous regulatory process that is not described here. More information may be obtained from CSWD. The potential future landfill does have transportation and land use implications that must be addressed.

For more on solid waste collection, including recycling and a list of private haulers, visit the CSWD website at: <http://www.cswd.net/>.

***8.7 Make Necessary Transportation Improvements with any Additional Solid Waste Facilities.***

The CSDW property has been discussed as a possible location for a future landfill. It is not clear at this time if this facility is likely to be built anytime soon. However, a potential landfill facility is likely to have implications for the town's transportation network. Currently haulers all find their way to one of the two private transfer stations in Williston. Waste is then trucked from those facilities to landfills in other counties. In the event that CSWD decides to pursue the location of a regional solid waste facility off Redmond Road, the town should only support such a proposal if there are transportation facilities necessary to support the levels of truck traffic generated by the facility. In the event that a landfill is proposed for the CSWD property on Redmond Road, the town should make sure that the necessary transportation facilities needed to support this facility are provided.

***8.7.2 Require Host Town Agreements for the Operation of All Solid Waste Disposal Facilities.***

CSWD is authorized to operate its solid waste facilities under the provisions of 10 V.S.A § 6604, also known as Act 78. Solid waste facilities operators are considered to be quasi-independent local government entities regulated by the State of Vermont. CSWD has operated its facilities under a Host Town Agreement that defines the nature and extent of CSWD operations and provides a mechanism for CSWD to make appropriate payments in lieu of taxes to pay its fair share for the costs of using town services and infrastructure. The town will continue to require CSWD or any other solid waste facilities operator to enter into a Host Town Agreement prior to locating or operating any new or expanded solid waste facilities in Williston, and ensure that that agreement is included as a condition of any solid waste certification. A Host Town Agreement shall define the maximum extent of the solid waste facility's operation, and include a payment schedule to the town for the use of town services, pursuant to Section 20 of the Williston Town Charter.

***8.7.3 Explore Recycling Requirements.*** The town will work with CSWD to explore the feasibility of requiring recycling by commercial uses and of requiring the use of recycled materials in construction projects. This task may be made part of the municipal energy planning effort called for by Objective 10.7. The town should also explore developing standards into its development regulations for meeting the state's future requirements for removing food waste from refuse stream through composting.

**8.8 Water – The Town of Williston will continue to provide a safe and reliable supply of potable water.**

Williston buys water wholesale from the Champlain Water District (CWD), which relies on surface water from the LaPlatte Watershed. The town distributes treated water through a system of storage reservoirs and mains that is divided into two pressure zones. The “high zone” is served by storage tanks in the village and just east of Route 2A, south of I-89. It lies mostly east of Route 2A. Water users along Route

2A and to the west are in the “low” pressure zone served by a tank at Maple Tree Place. The water system is one of the few town facilities that is adequate through the current planning period.

**7.8.1 Protect the Town’s Water Source.** Williston includes a small part of the LaPlatte River Watershed. See the source water protection objective adopted at 12.5.

For more information on Williston’s water supply visit the Champlain Water District’s home page at <http://www.cwd-h2o.org/>. Additional information on Shelburne Bay is also available at <http://www.shelburnebay.org/home/homeindex.html>. Williston includes a small portion of the LaPlatte Watershed, the CWD’s source water area. See Chapter 11 – Watershed Health for more on source water protection.

**8.8.2 Level of Service: Storage.** Maintaining one day’s consumption in storage is a typical level of service standard for public water systems. Williston currently has 1.1 million gallons of storage distributed among tanks on Tower Lane in the village, at Maple Tree Place, and just east of Route 2A, south of I-89. Given current peak demands of 700,000-800,000 gallons per day, water storage will be sufficient through the current planning period. The town is planning to construct a new 600,000 gpd storage tank near Mt. View Road and Old Stage Road during FY 2017-18. This will provide the town with sufficient water storage capacity throughout the planning period and beyond.

**8.8.3 Level of Service: Eliminate Dead-Ends.** No use should be served by a dead-end water main, which may not support adequate water pressure or fire flows, and raises water quality concerns. Rather, new connections to the town’s water lines will be made by a looping system. The town has been working to eliminate any existing dead-ends in its water system. The extension of a water main along Old Stage Road was completed in FY 2013 eliminating one of two major dead-ends in the water line system. The second is located along Rt. 2A near James Brown Drive. The town will be considering options for closing this dead-end in the system during the next eight years.

**8.8.4 Continue to Collect Water Connection Fees.** The town will continue to collect water system connection fees. These fees should result in each new user making a fair, proportional contribution to the costs of expanding the system. Connection fees should be updated on a regular basis.

**8.9 – Capital Budget – The Town of Williston will continue to use its capital budgeting process to help staff and decision-makers understand the need for, and costs of, additional or improved facilities. The fall 2011 revision of the capital budget will incorporate the general priorities and proposed improvements established by this plan.**

The amount and pace of spending on the capital improvements recommended in this plan will be guided by the town’s capital budget. That budget covers a six-year period, and is updated every fall for adoption by the Selectboard in January. The capital budget may be found on-line at <http://town.williston.vt.us/mgr/budget.htm>. The current year’s capital budget is summarized each year in the town’s annual report.

**8.10 Public Works Specifications – The Town of Williston will implement its recently adopted public works specifications and monitor their effectiveness in addressing the town’s infrastructure needs.** The town adopted a revised set of specifications for public infrastructure such as roads and other street standards in 2009. The town’s public works department will monitor these new standards for their effectiveness and will recommend revisions as necessary. The town’s public works specifications should include standards for the development of complete streets providing that provide facilities for all transportation modes including active transportation modes such as walking and bicycling.

## CHAPTER 9 – RECREATION AND PARK RESOURCES

The Town of Williston provides a variety of recreational opportunities that range from a diverse program offering to active and passive recreational facilities. Williston’s park network includes both public and private facilities that are managed and maintained according to ownership. This section includes the five-year plan for recreation programming and Town-owned facilities.

### Recreation Programming

- Recreation programming is fundamental to the quality of life for the community. The mission statement of the Recreation and Parks Department reflects this: “To enhance the lives of our citizens and visitors, by providing a variety of leisure opportunities that are safe and enjoyable, and in maintaining the parks so they are safe and physically attractive, while preserving and enhancing the natural resources”.
- The current offering of recreation programs range in age from pre-school to seniors. Currently over 150 programs are offered annually, in the areas of preschool, youth and teen programs, family programs, adult programs, senior programs, camps and special events.
- In addition, the Town works with area community groups, nonprofits, businesses, and the school district to enhance the program offerings.

### Recreational Facilities

- **Publicly-owned Recreational Facilities** include; **Community Parks**; Brennan Park, Rossignol Park, Williston Community Park and Allen Brook Park; **Country Parks**; Five Tree Hill, Mud Pond and Sucker Brook Hollow, and finally Williston’s **Primitive Trail Network**; Allen Brook Nature Trail and Oak View Hill Trail. While not entirely owned by the Town of Williston, the **Lake Iroquois Recreation District** also provides an important recreational opportunity for residents and therefore is included in this section.
- **Conservation Areas**, such as Brownell Mountain and the Mud Pond Conservation Area, are publicly-owned open space landscapes that are used recreationally, but are primarily managed to conserve the natural ecosystem. Information about Williston’s Conservation Areas is found in Chapter 13 – Open Space and Working Landscapes.
- **Neighborhood and Urban Parks** are privately-owned parks. Urban Parks include plazas, greens, and other spaces that provide shoppers and workers an opportunity to enjoy the outdoors in commercial areas. Neighborhood Parks are privately-owned parks that provide outdoor recreation in residential neighborhoods. The Town encourages and, in some cases, requires the provision of urban parks and neighborhood parks in new residential, commercial, and mixed-use developments. Information about Williston’s privately-owned urban parks and neighborhood parks is found in Chapter 4 – Community Design.
- **Sidewalks and Paths** are used recreationally but are primarily designed for transportation purposes. Sidewalks are typically constructed as part of neighborhoods and are designed for pedestrian uses such as walking and jogging. Paths link neighborhoods and are designed to

accommodate a broad range of non-motorized uses such as walking, jogging and biking. Information about Williston’s sidewalks and paths is found in Chapter 6 – Transportation.

## **Objectives:**

This plan identifies six objectives to provide a policy basis for the management and maintenance of Williston’s recreation and parks resources.

**9.1 – Recreation Programming** - This objective supports and plans for recreation programming to serve the community needs.

**9.2 – Recreational Facilities** – This objective supports the maintenance and improvements of current recreational facilities and identifies the need for future indoor and outdoor recreation facilities.

**9.3- Community Parks** – This objective supports the maintenance and improvement of the current community parks and identifies future needs. These Town-owned public parks provide active and passive recreation opportunities for the community.

**9.4 - Country Parks** – These Town-owned public parks offer access to the rural landscape. Recreational activities in the country parks include hiking and cross-country skiing.

**9.5 – Trails** – This low-maintenance primitive trail network provides hiking, skiing, and where appropriate, mountain biking opportunities in Williston’s rural landscape.

**9.6 - Lake Iroquois Natural Area** – This objective supports Williston’s role as a stakeholder in the Lake Iroquois Recreation District.

### **Objective 9.1 – Recreation Programming - The Town will continue to support and plan for recreation programs that benefit the community.**

The Recreation and Parks Department strives to offer a diverse offering of programs, to include; sports, fitness, the arts, camps and educational programs. In 2015 more than 150 programs were offered to the community of Williston and surrounding towns.

The Recreation Committee works with the department to identify new recreation programs and indoor and outdoor recreational needs.

**9.1.1 Develop a Process to Bring Stakeholders Together to Identify, Prioritize, and Implement Recreational Needs.** While the Recreation Committee sets priorities for recreation programs and facilities in Williston, a process should be developed where Williston’s other stakeholders, such as teens and the elderly community, are involved in the ongoing planning process. The outcome of this process should inform discussions of future recreation programs.

**9.1.2 Foster Volunteer Opportunities.** The Town will continue to recruit and maintain volunteer networks to assist with the various recreation programs and special events.

### **Objective 9.2 Recreational Facilities – The Town will continue to support and plan for indoor and outdoor recreational facilities that benefit the community**

While the Town now has a variety of outdoor recreational facilities to include, ball fields and sports courts. There remains a need for additional playing fields. The increase of youth and adult leagues has placed a huge demand on field spaces. In addition, many are used for multi-sports events, not allowing for proper maintenance and rehabilitation time.

The Town currently does not own any indoor recreation facilities. The department is largely dependent on the availability of space within the schools. It receives second priority for use, next to school activities. While this partnership is successful, there is the lack of availability, control in scheduling, and the time of a regular school day, prohibits providing programs for preschoolers and seniors, both significant needs that currently exist. Indoor space to provide these types of programs and others is essential.

A taskforce was appointed by the Select Board in 2007 to study the need for a community center. That taskforce reported in October of 2007 that there would definitely be a need for an indoor recreation facility within 5-10 years. Beyond accommodating recreation activities for senior citizens, teens, and preschoolers the taskforce found that a facility was needed for other indoor structured recreation programs and cultural events. The taskforce report can be found in Appendix G.

**9.2.1 Identify Recreation Facility Needs.** A process should be developed to assess the current recreational facilities and identify future needs and target those areas where the Town is falling short. The process should be developed to reflect the National Recreation and Parks Association Level of Service Standards (LOS), and create sufficient active recreation fields to enable restoration and maintenance.

**9.2.2 Meet the Need for Indoor Recreation Facilities.** Plans for accomplishing the taskforce's recommendations regarding indoor recreation space should be developed. All strategies to provide indoor recreation space for Williston residents should be considered, including but not limited to: acquiring or building a community center, partnering with private entities, and working to include an indoor community space in new development proposals.

**Objective 9.3- Community Parks - The Town will continue to maintain and enhance the existing community parks. The Town will also seek land and funding for additional community park development.**

Community parks are public open spaces. They are developed for intensive recreational uses that serve the entire town. To include; playgrounds, tennis and basketball courts, soccer/multi-use fields, baseball/softball diamonds, sand volleyball courts and skating rink/skate park. Support facilities may include benches, picnic tables, water fountains, emergency phones, outdoor lighting, equipment storage, picnic shelters, public restrooms, and paved parking lots.

Williston's existing community parks are described in Table 9.A and shown on Map 17. The parks are managed and maintained by the Recreation & Parks Department. With exception, as described in section 9.6, the Lake Iroquois Beach is managed by the Lake Iroquois Recreational District, which includes representatives of the Towns of Williston, Richmond, Hinesburg, and St. George.

**Table 9.A: Existing Community Parks**

<b>Park Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Recreational Uses/Facilities</b>	<b>Pedestrian Access</b>
Rossignol Park	Industrial Ave and North Brownell Rd	9	2 tennis courts, 1 little league baseball field, basketball court, playground	5' sidewalk
Brennan Park	Brennan Woods Dr. off Mt. View Rd	5	3 little league baseball/softball fields, toddler playground, community gardens	5' sidewalk
Williston Community Park	Williston Road, in the Village, behind Williston Central School	21	2 full-size multi-use fields, 3 small soccer fields, 1 full-size baseball field, 1 little league baseball field, 1 softball field, basketball court, 2 tennis courts, 4 volleyball courts, a multi-use skating rink/skate park, 12-hole disc golf course, multi-age and toddler playground, public bathrooms w/concession area and warming hut. Allen Brook Nature Trail (0.5 mi), Village Bike Path (1.3 mi)	10' bike path, 2' primitive nature trail, 5' concrete sidewalk on Rte. 2
Allen Brook Park	Talcott Drive off Rte. 2	2	2 full size irrigated multi-use fields	10' asphalt bike path, 5' concrete sidewalks
Lake Iroquois Recreational District	Beebe Lane off Oak Hill Rd	1	playground, beach, swimming, snack bar and changing building, primitive hiking loop (1.5 mi)	none

**9.3.1 Maintain Existing Community Parks.** The Town of Williston will continue to maintain and improve on the existing recreational facilities in the community parks to provide safe and enjoyable play spaces for all ages.

**9.3.2 Meet the Need for Additional Park Development.** Williston’s community parks include approximately 38 acres that are developed for recreational use (see Table 9.A above). To meet Level of Service Standards, the Town will need to pursue an additional 25-30 acres of parkland to fully accommodate the current need and future population growth. The National Recreation & Parks Association LOS Standards for developed recreation land is 7.5 acres per 1,000 persons.

**9.3.3 Consider the Distribution of Park Space.** Map 3 shows the approximate service areas of Williston’s existing community parks. The Town should explore ways to add community parks that are easily accessible for all residents. Possible locations for new community parks include:

1. The Chittenden Solid Waste District landfill on Redmond Road, when reclaimed. A portion of landfill tipping fees should be earmarked for the development and maintenance

of a park. This future park will be named the “Timothy Bradish Memorial Recreation Center,” in memory of a local ski jumper and the historic ski jump at this location.

2. The Town should seek other sites in the northwestern part of town, and other underserved areas, such as the residential community along Old Creamery Road. In addition, the Town is anticipating a significant amount of growth in Williston’s designated growth center where few recreational facilities exist today.

**Objective 9.4 – Country Parks - The Town of Williston, under the Conservation Commission, will continue to maintain its existing country parks, as directed by management plans that establish appropriate levels of development. The Town will add country parks both by developing suitable properties it already owns and, if resources permit, acquisition.**

Country parks provide public access to natural areas. They offer Williston residents opportunities for a hike in the woods, a quiet snowshoe walk, or a few minutes enjoying a scenic view. There are currently about 256 acres of designated country park land. As indicated in Section 9.4.2, the Town also owns a 107-acre parcel that is planned for a future Country park.

**9.4.1 Maintain Existing Country Parks.** Williston’s developed country parks are described in Table 8.A and shown in Map 18. The Conservation Commission has developed management plans that establish the levels of recreational use and development appropriate for the Sucker Brook Hollow, Five Tree Hill and Mud Pond country parks.

**9.4.2 Develop Additional Country Parks.** Williston acquired 20 acres of the former **Hill property**, located east of Route 2A along the Sucker Brook, in 2004. In 2013 the Town completed a parking area at the site of the former farmhouse, a pedestrian bridge across the Sucker Brook and a primitive trail to the Five Tree Hill lookout.

The Town owns the summit and north side of Brownell Mountain. A natural resource inventory of this property was completed in 1995. This property currently functions as a conservation area, with some informal trails. The Conservation Commission is currently drafting a management plan and taking steps to develop this area as a Country Park, with a small parking area on South Brownell Road and a formal trail to the summit. Selective clearing near the summit is being considered to create a west-facing scenic overlook with a sitting bench.

In addition to Town-owned sites, Williston holds a temporary easement for a public boat access and parking area adjacent to the North Williston Road Bridge over the Winooski River. Other potential country parks might include: Indian Lookout, a scenic east-facing overlook located on Governor Chittenden Road; Knoll Overlook off Coyote Run; Goose Hill; the slope behind Martell Hill; Square Woods; the park by the landfill; and a corridor along the Winooski River that might include boat access areas off River Cove and Governor Chittenden Roads.

**9.4.3 Prepare Management Plans for Country Parks.** The Conservation Commission will continue to develop and update management plans for the country parks. The goal of these plans will be to strike a balance between recreational use and conservation values.

- Forests should be managed to promote healthy stands and wildlife habitat, including diverse vertical structure. Selective logging may be appropriate in some places. Mowing may be required where a country park includes an open scenic vista.

- Wherever possible, country parks should be linked into the Town’s system of paths and trails (see Map ). Trails should be sited, designed, and built to minimize erosion. Trail networks should also minimize conflict among users and with adjoining properties. Permitted activities – hiking, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, horseback riding, mountain biking, snowmobiling – will vary with the terrain and surrounding land uses. Separate trails may be needed for different uses. Trails may be closed seasonally to prevent erosion, avoid flooding, or prevent user conflict with wildlife.
- Small gravel parking areas and informational kiosks may be provided at country park trailheads. At scenic overlooks, the installation of benches and picnic tables, and limited selective clearing may be acceptable. All facilities should be sited and designed to visually blend into the natural environment.
- A country park, or greenway, along the Winooski River would have to be sited so as to minimize conflict with farming operations and accommodate seasonal flooding. Boat access should minimize disturbance to the river bank, floodplain forests, wetlands, and other wildlife habitat.

**9.4.4 Consider Country Parks in Development Review.** Williston’s Open Space regulations require that subdivisions including more than 10 acres maintain 75% of the original parcel in open space. This gives developers whose land adjoins country parks an incentive to dedicate a portion of their open space to the Town, expanding park acreage. For more on this approach see Policy 3.2.1 of the Comprehensive Plan.

**Objective 9.5 – Trails - The Town of Williston will continue to maintain and expand its network of trails.**

The Town currently maintains over twelve miles of unpaved primitive trails. These trails are used primarily for recreational activities such as hiking, cross-country skiing, and snowshoeing, and in some cases, mountain biking or horseback riding. Over sixteen additional primitive trail easements exist through private properties in Williston, but have yet to be built. Information about Williston’s sidewalks and paths, which are designed primarily for transportation purposes, is found in Chapter 6 – Transportation.

**9.5.1 Maintain Existing Trails.** With the help of the Winooski Valley Park District, the Fellowship of the Wheel, and other volunteers, Williston Conservation Commission staff spends the summer months maintaining the existing trail system. As shown on Map 10, the Town currently maintains about twelve miles of primitive trails, including:

- the Allen Brook Nature Trail, located behind the Williston Central School on Route 2 in the Village Center;
- a trail between the Five Tree Hill and Mud Pond Country Parks;
- trails within existing country parks, including Five Tree Hill, Mud Pond, and the Lake Iroquois Uplands;

- a primitive trail loop at the Isham Farm, located on Oak Hill Road north of Lake Iroquois; and
- the trail through the Sucker Brook Hollow country park to the Five Tree Hill look-out.

**9.5.2 Expand the Trail System.** Existing and proposed trails are shown on Map 17. The Town currently holds public trail easements on the following parcels identified as priorities for primitive trail development: those in and around the Village; along the Allen Brook paralleling South Road; along the ridgeline between Route 2A and Bradley Lane; and on the Town property on Brownell Mountain. The exact location of these trails and permitted uses will be determined by the terrain, proximity to water features, and surrounding land uses. The impact on natural resources and adjoining land uses, particularly agriculture, should be minimized. The Town should adopt the Greenway Acquisition Policy, which was revised by the Conservation Commission in 2009, or a similar tool to consistently obtain these links from private landowners.

**9.5.3 Require Dedication and Construction of Proposed Trails in New Developments.** Where development will benefit from access to trails, dedication of the necessary rights-of-way will be required. The Town may also require construction of the portion of a proposed trail that serves a project, depending on how much demand for trails that development will generate. The Town will develop standards and guidelines to help determine project-specific requirements for trail easement dedication and trail construction. Where proposed trails pass through developed areas or through rural lands, the Town will work with landowners, including homeowner’s associations, to encourage the voluntary donation of easements for proposed paths and trails. Developers who include the dedication of trails in their proposals will receive incentive points through the Town’s growth management system.

**Objective 9.6 - Lake Iroquois Natural Area**

Lake Iroquois (formerly known as Hinesburg Pond) is a small lake located in the towns of Williston, St. George, Richmond, and Hinesburg. These four towns jointly manage the beach, trail system, and recreation facilities as the Lake Iroquois Recreation District (LIRD). The State of Vermont owns the public fishing access on the northwest shore of the lake. Volunteers and paid staff managed by the Lake Iroquois Association act as greeters at the access. The Town will continue to play an active role in the management of recreational facilities along the lake. See Chapter 10 for more information about Lake Iroquois.

To be considered by the Conservation committee

**Continue to Encourage Volunteer Involvement in Enhancing and Maintaining Recreational Facilities.** The Town should continue to encourage volunteer involvement in park (country parks, and conservation areas) and trail development and maintenance through an Adopt-A-Park or Adopt-A-Trail program. Potential volunteer groups would include local churches, schools, scouts, service clubs, and recreational organizations such as the Fellowship of the Wheel (a regional mountain bike group), the Winooski Valley Park District, and the Williston Hill Hawks (the local chapter of the Vermont Association of Snow Travelers).

## CHAPTER 10 – EDUCATION AND CHILD CARE

Schools are among the most important public facilities in Williston. They are focal points of activity for children and adults, a role that is reinforced by the location of school buildings and playgrounds in close proximity to the town's public parks and recreation facilities, as well as to the town library. For many people, the town's schools are one of the primary reasons for living in Williston. The funding of public schools accounts for roughly 75% of all local government expenditures, thus careful planning for the future needs of the school system are essential to sound fiscal management.

The schools are not operated by the town government. They have separate, elected boards which are responsible for operation of their facilities and programming. Williston's school board is responsible for the Allen Brook and Central Schools, which provides grades K-8 education for Williston and St. George children. For the location of these buildings see Map 13 – Public Facilities. Williston high school students attend Champlain Valley Union High School in Hinesburg, which is a regional school serving children from the towns of Williston, Charlotte, Hinesburg, Shelburne, and St. George.

This plan element explains how the town will consider the needs of the schools when making land use and infrastructure decisions. It also covers child care.

**Objective 10.1 – Schools** – This objective and its supporting policies call for the town to manage growth in a way that is consistent with the capacity of the schools.

**Objective 10.2 - Child Care** - Vermont law was recently amended to require towns to address child care in comprehensive plans.

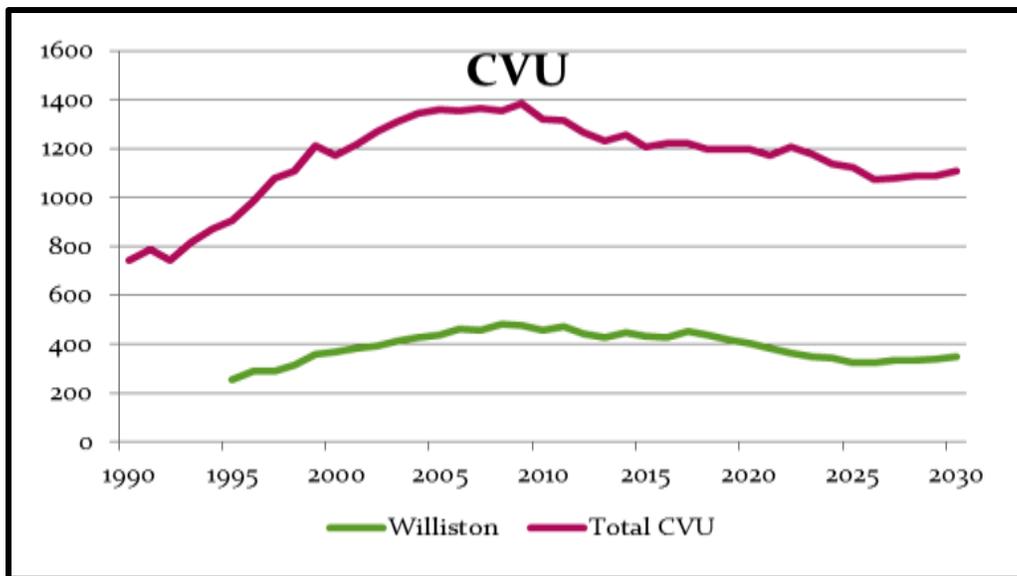
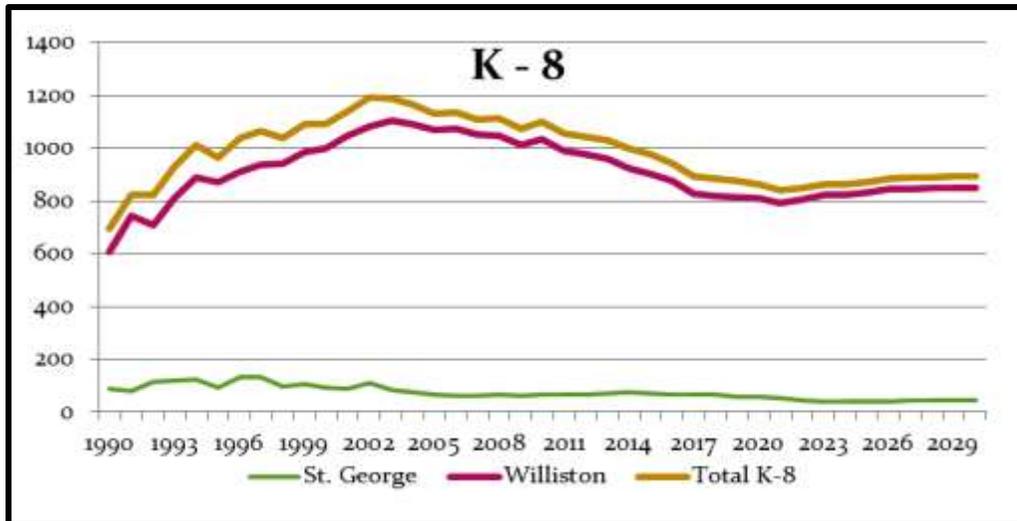
**Objective 10.3 – Higher Education** – The Vermont Technical College's (VTC) Chittenden County campus is Williston's only institution of higher education at this time. The town will facilitate VTC's expansion and welcome other institutions of learning.

### **10.1 Schools - The Town will continue to consider the capacity and needs of the schools serving Williston as it makes land use and capital budget decisions.**

At the dawn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, there was great concern about rising school enrollment levels and the ability of the town to ensure that school facilities could keep pace with the needs of the projected student population. The 2000 plan projected that the local schools would begin to exceed the capacity of the school system's facilities in the 2006-07 school year, and modular classroom facilities were installed at the Allen Brook School. Over the last decade, however has seen a slow but steady drop in school enrollment numbers. These declining enrollment numbers allowed the Williston School System to remove the modular classroom buildings from the Allen Brook School campus in 2010 after a reorganization of programming at the town's two elementary schools. An analysis of changing enrollments by grade and the number of births to Williston residents suggests that this pattern of small but steady declining enrollment levels before stabilizing will continue through the 2061-2416 time frame of this plan. The school board's is not currently proposing a new or expanded facility at this time, but will likely look to expand the Allen Brook School should school enrollment patterns change course and point to the need for additional classroom space.

The newly renovated and expanded Champlain Valley Union High School has a capacity of approximately 1,460 students. The October 1 SY 2010-2011 enrollment was 1,363 students, or 97% of the high school's capacity. Enrollment levels at CVU have varied slightly in recent years, having reached its highest level of 1,418 during the 2009-2010 school. However, moving forward, the school system is projecting the student population at CVU to decline during the planning period, and thus staying well

within the design capacity of the existing school building. Over the time frame of this plan, no new or expanded facilities are contemplated at this time at CVU.



**10.1.1 Continue to Charge a School Impact Fee.** The town currently collects a school impact fee for every new dwelling. These fees change each year, reflecting their use in paying debt service on the Allen Brook School and the improvements at CVU. The school impact fees were assessed and revised in 2013. The impact fees used to pay for the bonds financing the construction of the Allen Brook School were discontinued at the end of June 2015. The impact fees used to help finance improvements at CVU were updated as part of the 2013 revision, and these fees will continue to be collected through the end of FY 2025.

**Private Schools.** Private schools play a significant role in educating Williston residents. The 2000 Census found that roughly 18% of the town's elementary and middle school students and some 30% of its high school students attended private schools.

**10.1.2 Prepare a Facilities Plan.** To the extent that Williston's growth management decisions - which include both the annual cap on residential construction and the collection of impact fees - are based on the capacity of the schools, the school boards must be willing to provide the town with the facts it needs to defend those decisions. A facilities plan must be prepared by, or for, the school boards. That plan should include enrollment projections, a clear explanation of the capacity of the school buildings and bus routes, and action steps for providing any new facilities that increasing enrollments may require.

**10.1.3 Meet Regularly to Discuss School Needs.** The Selectboard, school boards, and the planning commission should meet at least once a year.

**10.2 Child Care – The Town of Williston recognizes the importance of child care in community life, and will ensure that its planning and development review process do not place unreasonable limitations on child care facilities.**

The private sector provides child care services in Williston. In 2016 there were 11 licensed child care centers and 8 registered child care homes in Williston, offering 614 slots for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers. There were also 281 slots for after-school child care for school-age children. There were a few vacancies in each category, with only three total vacancies for infants and six for toddlers, town-wide.

**10.2.1 Permit Child Care Centers Wherever Schools are Permitted.** Williston brought its bylaws into compliance with the state law (24 V.S.A. § 4412(5)) allowing home child care in residential zoning districts in September 2005. In 2008 the town's bylaws were amended to allow child care centers in all zoning districts where elementary schools are permitted by right.

**10.2.2 Permit Child Care Centers in Employment Generating Zoning Districts.** Child care centers are currently allowed in many of the zoning districts allowing employment generating uses. This enables parents to access child care services in areas close to their jobs. The town shall continue to allow child care centers in employment generating zoning districts as appropriate.

**10.2.23 Permit Child Care Centers as Accessory Uses.** The bylaws have also been revised to make it clear that child care is a permitted accessory uses for educational institutions, churches, and places of employment.

**10.3 Higher Education – The Town of Williston will encourage and facilitate the location and expansion of institutions of higher education within the town. Specifically, the town will facilitate the expansion of Vermont Technical College at its new location in Blair Park.**

Williston residents have access to many opportunities for higher education. The University of Vermont and several private colleges are nearby in the greater Burlington region. The Vermont Technical College (VTC) is the only college located in Williston, and offers a number of engineering and technical degree programs, as well as an array of other vocational and technical training programs. Based in Randolph, VTC has been expanding its presence in Chittenden County with the acquisition of a building in Blair Park (see Map 13 – Public Facilities). Enrollment has grown from roughly 350 students in SY 2004-05 to approximately 660 students in 2015. Enrollment growth at VTC has slowed in recent years; however,

VTC continues to have a long range goal of expanding its operations in Williston. VTC has also started housing a limited number of students on campus, and currently offers dormitory space for roughly 45 students. The town will continue to work with Vermont Tech to ensure that adequate infrastructure is available for its expansion, and that the change from commercial space to an educational institution complies with relevant bylaws. You can learn more about VTC at <http://www.vtc.vsc.edu/>.

## CHAPTER 11 – ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND CONSERVATION

The availability and cost of energy, especially electricity, is an important element in maintaining the health and vigor of the Town's local economy. High energy costs can restrict business activity and development. Energy imported into the region from distant places depletes the local and state economies of capital that would otherwise remain in circulation within the local economy. Energy costs also affect the ongoing, operating expenses of housing for Williston residents.

While the cost of electricity and petroleum are limiting factors to Williston's operations, these costs can be mitigated by conserving and optimizing existing energy resources, and by harvesting energy from local renewable sources. This may increase the pressure to increase electric rates. In light of the global crisis of climate change, new sources of power will be needed that do not increase the carbon footprint of Vermont. Renewable energy and energy efficiency will be critical elements of the new power mix. Williston will need to adapt its energy use and renewable energy utilization to minimize these impacts.

The State of Vermont recently completed a Comprehensive Energy Plan in 2016 for the state. This plan established goals of reducing total energy consumption by 15% by 2025, and by more than one third by 2050. The plan also established goals of the state obtaining 25% of its energy needs from renewable energy sources by 2025, 40% by 2035, and 90% by 2050. Taken together, the goals of the state's energy plan will require concerted and sustained efforts by the town, its residents and businesses in order to help reach or exceed these goals.

Information on energy consumption and costs in Vermont can be found in the plans and reports prepared by the Vermont Department of Public Service. These documents are available on-line at <http://publicservice.vermont.gov/pub/pub.html>.

[https://outside.vermont.gov/sov/webservices/Shared%20Documents/2016CEP\\_Final.pdf](https://outside.vermont.gov/sov/webservices/Shared%20Documents/2016CEP_Final.pdf)

The Town of Williston will take a leadership role in promoting energy efficiency and conservation by implementing the objectives adopted here.

**11.1 – Renewable Energy** - The local development and use of renewable energy resources will support state-level efforts for electric energy resource diversification. This objective encourages the development and use of these resources.

**11.2 – Future Utility Siting** - Williston anticipates the siting of more utility lines and associated facilities. This objective provides a basis for the Town's response to the siting of these facilities, which is generally regulated by the State. This objective also addresses the siting of telecommunications facilities.

**11.3 – Municipal Energy Efficiency and Conservation** - Williston will work to implement energy efficiency and conservation measures in existing and new municipal buildings, the purchasing of new and replacement vehicles, and in day-to-day operations of the town.

**11.4 – Energy Conservation and Efficiency Through Land Use** - Incorporating energy efficiency and conservation measures into new development will reduce energy consumption, decrease greenhouse gas emissions, and yield financial savings. This objective provides a policy basis for incentives and regulations that promote energy efficiency and conservation in new and existing residences and businesses, decreasing the number of motor vehicle miles traveled, and increasing the use of more active transportation modes such as walking and biking, and the use of transit services.

**11.5 - Municipal Energy Plan** – This objective calls for the development of a municipal energy plan.

**11.6 - Sustainable Foods Systems** - The development of local and sustainable food systems and support for the distribution of local products within the Town will reduce energy expenditures while supporting the local economy and working landscape.

**11.7 - Waste Reduction, Recycling, and Composting** - Careful management of organic and non-organic resources reduces energy requirements for extraction, manufacturing, packaging, and transportation of goods. Diverting organic substances out of the waste stream reduces greenhouse gasses emitted by landfills.

**Energy Definitions** - Energy Conservation means using less energy. A simple example is turning off the lights in a room that is not being used, or turning down the thermostat when you leave home for work. Energy Efficiency involves reducing the amount of energy used for a given service or activity while producing the same end-use service or activity. Improvements in energy efficiency are most often achieved by adopting a more efficient technology or production process. An example would be installing a fuel-efficient furnace to provide the same amount of heat with less fuel. Efficiency and conservation can both result in savings to consumers. They can also reduce the demand for energy and the environmental impacts that accompany its production and distribution.

**11.1 – Renewable Energy Resources - The Town of Williston will encourage the development of renewable energy resources to support the diversification of Vermont’s electric resources portfolio, as well as local and regional energy stability and independence.**

According to the Vermont Department of Public Service, almost 40% of Vermont’s electric power is supplied by renewable resources, including hydroelectric plants, the Sears burg wind facility, Hydro Québec, and the wood-fired McNeil Station, as of 2010. Additionally, there are a number of independent power producers supplying renewable energy from small hydroelectric plants, biomass generating plants, landfill gas recovery, and methane conversion from farm waste. Renewable energy resources provide insurance against fuel and electricity price shocks as well as the closing of outdated generation sources (i.e. Vermont Yankee). They can also reduce air emissions, greenhouse gas emissions, and other impacts of energy generation and distribution.

**11.1.1 Explore Green-Pricing Programs.** The Town should explore the use of renewable energy resources by participating in green-pricing programs, such as Green Mountain Power’s “Choose 2B Green” program, which supports various renewable energy sources with the premium paid by consumers. Conceptually, the consumer pays a premium to demonstrate support for renewables. Other utilities serving Williston, such as the Vermont Electric Co-op, are considering similar programs.

**11.1.2. Encourage Renewable Energy Generation.** Williston’s *Unified Development Bylaw* will be reviewed and revised, as necessary, to encourage the use of solar, wind, biomass, and hydropower while carefully weighing the benefits of such installations against their impacts on water, wildlife, scenic, forest, and historic resources. The town shall develop criteria for identifying preferred locations for large scale renewal energy generating projects, as well as those areas to be avoided by industrial scale energy generating developments. Support for installations of renewable energy technologies at the neighborhood scale (solar access, shading, height restrictions, etc.) plus larger scale renewable energy projects such as ‘solar farms’, community-scale wind turbines, and district heating biomass plants should be taken into account when considering bylaw revisions. Large scale solar facilities and wind turbines should not be located in primary viewshed areas identified in Map 20

Visual Assessment and discussed in section 13.2.2 of this plan. This task will be part of the municipal energy planning effort called for in 11.5. Also, the use of renewables will be added, in combination with energy conservation, to the incentives offered in the Town's residential growth management system. Bylaw revisions shall include revised standards for energy efficiency and renewable energy generation.

**11.1.3 Demonstrate Renewable Energy Projects.** The Town can take the lead and install renewable energy systems to Town buildings and operations. Examples might include a biomass fueled district heating system for the village offices and school, methane recovery from the sewage treatment plant operated in Essex Junction, and photovoltaic panels for the school or Town offices. When price of natural gas exceeds \$2/ccf (hundred cubic feet) then the Town should initiate planning for long-term improvement measures including major building renovations, solar installations, shared pellet boiler, etc. When the price of natural gas exceeds \$3/ccf then the Town should consider those measures because at that point the cost to make those large scale improvements will be comparable to the cost of natural gas based on a cost benefit analysis.

**11.1.4 Prohibit Residential Property Assessment Increases for Renewable Energy Equipment.** Under Vermont law, a town can vote to exclude certain renewable energy systems from local property tax. This means that renewable energy improvements to the home will not increase the property assessment. By applying this policy, the Town of Williston will both promote and enable the use of renewable energy.

**11.1.5 Provide E.V Charging Stations.** The town shall develop standards for allowing and encouraging E.V. charging stations is both newly proposed and existing development. E.V. charging stations should be incorporated into the town's parking standards, and E.V. charging stations should be added to existing development whenever feasible.

**11.1.6 Update Energy Efficiency Incentives in the town's Residential Growth Management System.** The town's residential growth management allocation system has incentives for developments incorporating energy efficiency design. The current incentives are outdated and need to be updated. The town should consider adopting the "stretch codes" developed by Efficiency Vermont in order to reward those developments providing the highest level of energy efficiency.

**11.2 – Future Utilities Siting - The Town of Williston will continue to require that utility lines serving new developments be underground, will continue to regulate the siting of telecommunication facilities, and will urge the Vermont Public Service Board to ensure that new regional transmission lines, substations, and similar support facilities are located within existing utility corridors, minimizing impacts to natural, scenic, and historic resources.**

The Vermont Public Service Board has jurisdiction over the permitting of major utility installations. Towns may regulate telecommunications facilities, but local control is limited by federal law. Renewable energy projects that are tied to the electric grid will be regulated under the net metering provisions of the Vermont Public Service Board.

**11.2.1 Place Local Utilities Underground.** Utilities serving new developments, including natural gas, power, telephone, and cable television lines, etc. must ordinarily be placed underground. Installation above ground will be considered only where the presence of bedrock or other environmental constraints makes underground installation prohibitively expensive. Careful siting and screening will be required for above ground utility lines.

**11.2.2 Place Regional Transmission Lines in Existing Corridors.** The Public Service Board should confine new transmission lines and associated facilities to existing utility corridors, and require that they be placed underground where feasible. Utility line and pole placements, and substation siting or expansion should minimize disturbance to wetlands, streams, wildlife habitat, the viewshed, and other natural and historic resources.

**11.2.3 Limit the Impact of Telecommunication Installations.** The Town will continue to regulate telecommunication facilities, including cell, radio, and microwave towers, as provided by the current Town bylaws. Such installations should be co-located or creatively hidden in existing structures where possible. Abandoned facilities must be removed immediately.

**11.2.4 Encourage Utility Scale Cogeneration Projects.** The Town should seek opportunities to facilitate the use of cogeneration projects to better utilize the heat and electrical energy generation from fuels. Cogeneration projects capture waste energy and convert this energy into clean power and processed heat. For example, an on-site combined heat and power (CHP) plant provides electricity and heat to industrial facilities and other large institutions. These plants typically run on natural gas, biomass, or other fuels. As they produce electricity, the plants recycle excess heat emitted in the process, generating power twice as efficiently as large, centralized plants. Institutions that use CHP generally pay substantially less for energy.

**11.2.5 Encourage Utility-Scale Renewable Energy Projects.** Farm methane plants, solar orchards, and ridgeline wind farms are examples of large-scale renewable energy projects that will likely have a significant impact on regional energy production in the years to come. The Town of Williston should support these utility-scale technologies as clean energy sources continue to develop. Permitting these projects should consider the renewable energy benefits along with environmental and aesthetic impacts.

### **11.3 – Municipal Energy Efficiency - Town government and local schools will lead by example, incorporating cost-effective energy efficiency and conservation measures into existing facilities and operations, as well as into plans for new buildings, additions, and renovations.**

At the 2003 town meeting, Williston voters agreed to join the 10% Challenge, an effort to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases. The following policies are derived from this support.

**11.3.1 Review and Improve the Energy Performance of Existing Buildings and other Town Operations.** The town completed energy audits on its existing municipal buildings in 2010 and 2011. As a result of these audits, a number of energy efficiency upgrades were undertaken at the Town Hall, the Town Hall Annex, and the Dorothy Alling Library. The town should continue to monitor energy usage in all town facilities and utilize additional energy conservation strategies whenever feasible

**11.3.2 Use “Green Building” Technology, as Feasible.** The Town and schools should consider “green building” technology for new buildings, additions, and renovations. Town and school administrations should work with architects, engineers, and contractors to document the long-term savings gained by adhering to “green building” standards like those established by Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED).

**11.3.3 Consider Energy Consumption When Purchasing.** Energy efficiency and conservation should be considered in decisions to purchase everything from traffic signals (which should continue to have energy-efficient LED indicators) to copiers (which should have a double-sided printing feature). The Town and schools should buy Energy Star rated appliances, heating equipment, and office equipment.

The purchase of recycled paper materials and environmentally-friendly office products should be considered.

**11.3.4 Use Fuel-Efficient Low or Zero -Emission Vehicles.** The Town and schools should work to improve the fuel efficiency of their vehicles. Minimum fuel efficiency standards should be established for new vehicles, including police cars, light trucks, and buses (fire engines and heavy machinery would be excluded). A program for the early retirement of the least efficient vehicles should be implemented. The feasibility of using alternative vehicles and fuels, including hybrids, should also be explored. Regular maintenance will promote fuel economy and reduce emissions. When evaluating for new purchases, the Town should consider vehicles with zero or low emissions (electric, hybrid, etc.), and should evaluate the vehicle's energy efficiency against other possible alternatives by consulting informational resources such as [www.fuelefficiency.gov](http://www.fuelefficiency.gov).

**11.3.5 Encourage Walking, Cycling, Ride-Sharing and the Use of Public Transportation.** The Town encourages people to walk, cycle, or rides the bus. See Element 6 - Transportation of this plan for more information on Williston's efforts to provide the infrastructure needed to support pedestrians, cyclists, and public transportation. Planning objectives should support grid streets and pedestrian friendly developments. The permitting and construction of a 'Park and Ride' lot in Williston should continue to be a priority.

**11.3.6. Prepare Annual Energy Reports.** The Town should publish a summary of energy used by Town and school buildings and vehicles in their respective annual reports, as well as the estimated or calculated impact of efficiency measures already taken. The report should describe the progress the town is making towards the goals of the state's Comprehensive Energy Plan of 2016. The energy consumed (gallons of oil, kilowatt hours of electricity used, etc.) can be easily summarized along with costs. Taxpayers should be informed of possible energy savings to enable them to support measures to reduce energy consumption and see progress in energy savings.

**11.3.7 Designate a Town Energy Coordinator.** The State legislature has enabled Vermont towns to appoint someone to monitor energy use and help coordinate long range planning that saves the town energy and money. The Town of Williston should designate an Energy Coordinator to monitor energy use and coordinate long range planning that helps the town conserve energy and saves money, and helps the town implement the goals of the state's Comprehensive Energy Plan meeting 90% of its energy needs from renewable sources. This individual should possess the expertise necessary to assist department heads in managing their energy use and should prepare a plan to achieve that goal for the town's government, businesses, and residents

#### **11.4 – Energy Conservation and Efficiency through Land Use - The Town of Williston will continue to pursue a land use and transportation strategy centered on mixed-use, compact development in the Town's Growth Center.**

The Town's land use policies and development regulations provide a powerful mechanism for promoting the development and use of land in ways to ensure that energy resources are used wisely and efficiently. To this end, the Town will continue to support the development of high-intensity land uses within the Town's designated Growth Center to result in a compact development pattern that supports and encourages driving fewer miles, the use of transit, ride-sharing walking, more active modes of transportation, and other non-motorized modes of transportation. The Town can also encourage energy conservation and efficiency through development regulations. Williston recently revised its subdivision regulations to make 5-Star or LEED certification a factor in the competitive evaluation of residential subdivisions. The Town has also encourages and requires, in some instances, the clustering of homes. Developments in the Agriculture/Rural Zoning District must leave 75% of the parcel in open space and

the evaluation criteria for residential subdivisions provide an incentive for clustering in the Residential and Village zoning districts. This high density development pattern should help reduce energy consumption by reducing the energy cost of building roads and utility lines. The need for automobile travel may also be diminished.

**State Energy Codes** - The *Vermont Residential Building Energy Standard* was upgraded by the Vermont Energy Act of 2009 and passed by the State legislature in May 2010. The new code adopts the International Energy Conservation Code of 2009 as the State code effective January 2011. The State does not have a commercial building energy code, but has published the *2001 Vermont Guidelines for Energy Efficient Commercial Construction*. These guidelines are based on the *2000 International Energy Conservation Code*, with amendments to suit Vermont's climate. The Vermont Department of Public Service also reviews and comments on energy efficiency in proposed developments that are subject to Act 250.

Williston does not currently enforce a building code that sets standards for energy efficiency and conservation in new construction projects. The State of Vermont does have an updated energy code for residential buildings, and is developing one for commercial buildings.

**11.4.1 Include Energy Efficiency and Conservation in Development Review Criteria.** Beyond the existing measures described above, the Town will explore additional incentives for “green building” and performance standards that would encourage site planning for energy conservation. Such standards might include maximizing southern glazing, protecting solar access to south facing walls and roofs, and providing windbreaks.

**11.4.2 Direct Residents to Energy Efficiency and Conservation Programs.** Williston will expand the information about energy use that is available on its website. New links will direct residents and businesses to programs that offer professional advice, tax and financial incentives for energy efficiency and conservation, including Efficiency Vermont, the Vermont Gas Energy Extenders Program, the Vermont Energy Investment Corporation, and the Champlain Valley Weatherization Service.

**11.4.3 Pursue a Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) Financing Program.** The State legislature passed a law allowing Vermont towns to create PACE programs. PACE enables local governments to finance renewable energy and energy efficiency projects on private property, including residential, commercial, and industrial properties through the issuance of bonds. The bonds give homeowners the opportunity to obtain low interest loans to purchase renewable energy and energy efficient technologies, such as solar panels and high efficiency furnaces. The homeowner pays back the loan through property tax bills over 15 to 20 years. The model eliminates the chief barrier to clean energy installations: the large upfront cost. When the mechanics of these programs are worked out and a working system is available for study, Williston should consider its adoption.

**11.4.4 Require Electric Vehicle (E.V.) Charging Facilities in New Developments.** The town should update its development regulations to require E.V. charging stations in new developments. E.V. charging stations should also be allowed within existing developments and projects as part of the required vehicle parking for the development.

**11.5 – Municipal Energy Plan - The Town of Williston will appoint a task force to prepare a municipal energy plan as a supplement to this comprehensive plan.**

The Williston Planning Commission will convene an *ad hoc* task force that includes interested citizens of Williston and representatives of local energy providers to develop a Town energy plan. This effort will provide more information about energy resources and consumption, assess progress toward implementation of the objectives and policies adopted in this plan, and update these objectives and policies for the 2016 comprehensive plan. The Town Energy Coordinator, as described in 11.3.7, should oversee this effort.

### **11.6 Sustainable Foods Systems – The Town of Williston will support the production and sales of locally-produced foods and value-added products.**

The current US food system requires intense energy inputs in the forms of fuel (on-farm), fertilizer, pesticide and herbicide application, transportation, and storage. Organic and local production and preservation of food reduces energy requirements at all levels.

**11.6.1 Home Gardens, Small Animal Husbandry, and Home Food Preservation.** Home production and preservation of food reduces many of the energy inputs required for food production, transportation and storage. Gardening and small animal husbandry, specifically chickens and bees, is on the rise among non-farming homesteads due to increased desire for self-sufficiency and concerns about the economy, nutrition and food safety. The Town’s regulations currently allow livestock on parcels greater than one acre in all zoning districts. The Town should consider revising this regulation to allow for greater flexibility in the keeping of livestock, such as keeping small flocks of chickens and bees, in the Residential, Village, and Mixed Use zoning districts.

**11.6.2 Support Farmers’ Markets, Local Farms, and CSAs.** Direct sales from local farms to consumers through farmers markets, farm stands, and community supported agriculture (CSA) greatly reduces the miles that food must travel from farm to plate, thus lowering the energy required for transportation. Direct farm sales supports local farms and keeps food dollars in our community. The Town should investigate options for a municipally-supported “Current Use” program for small acreage in high active production and promote local products through mapping of farm stands, CSAs, and farmers markets on the Town website. The Town should also foster partnerships and opportunities for local gardeners and farms to provide food to Williston schools.

**11.6.3 Support Community Gardens.** Many Williston residents do not have space to garden unless community gardens are provided. Installation of garden plots in developments and on municipal land provides residents with the opportunity to garden while conserving energy and increasing food security. The Town should require the inclusion of community gardens into development proposals, provide incentives for community gardens in the Town’s growth management system, make Town land available for community gardens that support both perennial (i.e., asparagus) and annual (i.e. tomato) food producing plants, and encourage and support gardens within the school system.

### **11.7 - Waste Reduction, Recycling, and Composting. Waste Reduction and recycling reduce the energy requirement needed for materials extraction, manufacturing of goods and packaging, and transportation. Diverting organics from landfill to composting reduces greenhouse gasses, typically reduces transportation distances, and results in a useful and valuable product, which can be used to support plant growth and reduce synthetic fertilizer requirements.**

**11.7.1 Manage Our Resources to Reduce the Amount of Waste Generated by the Williston Community.** The extraction, transportation, and manufacturing of new raw materials is an energy-intensive process. Energy savings can be made when communities reduce their use of materials, reuse existing materials, and recycle unwanted materials. The Town should explore development of a recycling ordinance to promote recycling by business operators. The Town will continue to implement

recycling, composting, and solid waste reduction strategies, including the recycling requirements proposed for study in Policy 7.7.3. The Town will also continue to pursue environmentally-friendly purchasing policies and adopt environmentally-friendly purchasing guidelines that encourage the use of products such as paper containing post-consumer recycled content.

***11.7.2 Maximize the Recovery of Recyclable Materials.*** Valuable resources, including food scraps, aluminum cans, and paper products, are discarded into the trash and sent to the landfill every day. Diverting resources that can be recycled or composted reduces energy inputs needed for transportation of these materials to the landfill. Organic materials produce less greenhouse gasses when composted than when placed in a landfill. Compost can be used as an energy source in growing food and can replace energy-intensive synthetic fertilizers. To maximize the recovery of recyclable materials the Town will; 1) develop a mechanism to ensure that demolition, construction, or renovation projects adhere to a waste management plan the addresses recyclables; 2) require special event applicants to include a waste management and recycling plan prior to permit approval; 3) require that all municipal parks and public spaces have recycling bins next to waste receptacles; and 4) support a commercial scale composting facility in the community.

## CHAPTER 12 – WATERSHED HEALTH

Williston lies within the 8,249 square mile Lake Champlain watershed. This watershed includes portions of Vermont, Quebec, and New York. Runoff from the Town eventually finds its way into Lake Champlain by one of several paths, which are shown on Map 14 – Williston Watersheds. Williston's watersheds are summarized below:

- The **Muddy Brook** runs along Williston's western border forming the boundary to South Burlington. This 20.8 square mile watershed includes the **Sucker Brook** tributary and occupies approximately 6,300 acres in Williston. The Muddy Brook watershed includes the retail centers in Taft Corners and Maple Tree Place and a portion of the industrial/commercial facilities in the north-west corner of the Town. The Muddy Brook fails State water quality standards for toxics, nutrients, and temperature for the last seven miles of the tributary.
- The **Allen Brook** originates above Mud Pond and flows northwest to join the Muddy Brook just before the confluence with the Winooski River. The Allen Brook watershed falls entirely within the Town and is Williston's largest watershed, encompassing roughly 6,900 acres. The Allen Brook watershed includes agricultural and forested lands, residential development and a portion of the industrial/commercial facilities near the confluence with Muddy Brook. This tributary currently fails State water quality standards for stormwater and *E. coli* from the headwaters down to Industrial Avenue.
- Several small tributaries flow directly into the **Winooski River**, draining approximately 5,400 acres in total.
- **Lake Iroquois** and the surrounding lands are part of the **LaPlatte River** watershed, ultimately draining into Shelburne Bay. Lake Iroquois drains into Patrick Brook, which joins the LaPlatte River in Hinesburg. This watershed includes about 1,100 acres in Williston.
- Finally, less than one hundred acres each of the **Johnnie Brook** and **Shelburne Pond** watersheds are within the Town.

Vermont Agency of Natural Resources Watershed Management Division approaches watershed-specific management planning through a Tactical Planning Process. Basin planning is required by both federal and state law. Section 303(e) of the federal Clean Water Act (Public Law 92-500) requires that states engage in water quality planning. 40 CFR 130, in part, directs state agencies to prepare basin plans, to focus on priority issues and geographic areas, to identify priority point and nonpoint water quality problems, consider alternatives and recommend control solutions and funding sources. 10 V.S.A. §1253(d) provides that basin plans must be developed on a five year rotational basis. The Winooski Basin Plan, which includes Williston's surface waters, was last updated in 2012. For more information on Basin Planning, visit the Watershed Management Division website at [http://www.watershedmanagement.vt.gov/planning/htm/pl\\_basins.htm](http://www.watershedmanagement.vt.gov/planning/htm/pl_basins.htm).

Land development has well-documented impacts on the volume, velocity, and quality of surface runoff. Changes in these parameters have a direct impact on the stability of a stream's channel; the health of the aquatic, wetland, and riparian communities associated with the stream; and the land uses along it. These impacts, along with State and Federal mandates, have propelled Williston into a major role in watershed management. This plan element adopts seven objectives to provide a policy basis for the Town's efforts to maintain and restore the health of its watersheds:

**12.1 - Stormwater Management** – This objective provides a basis in the comprehensive plan for Williston's stormwater management plan.

**12.2 - Stream Restoration** – The town has completed major restoration efforts on the Sucker Brook and the Allen Brook, and is working to expand restoration efforts to Muddy Brook.

**12.3 - Water Quality Monitoring** - The town will continue to gather baseline water quality data for the Allen Brook and work to expand this effort to other streams in Williston as funding allows

**12.4 - Lake Iroquois** – This objective calls for Williston to develop partnerships with other organizations to identify and alleviate problem areas affecting the quality of the lake.

**12.5 - Source Water Protection** – This objective calls for Williston to work with water suppliers to protect public drinking water sources.

**12.6 - Groundwater** – This objective calls for Williston to work with the State to ensure that development does not result in groundwater supply deficiencies, or in groundwater contamination.

**12.7 – Stewardship** - The Town will take an active leadership role in land stewardship efforts.

**12.8 - Flood Resilience** – The Town will continue to develop and implement strategies to build flood resilience. This includes identifying areas vulnerable to flooding or fluvial erosion; designating those areas to be protected to mitigate risks to public safety, critical infrastructure, historic structures, and municipal investments; and encouraging flood emergency preparedness and response planning.

**12.1 Stormwater Management - The Town of Williston will continue to operate as a Municipal Small Separate Stormwater System (MS4) within the framework established by the Clean Water Act, under the General Permit for MS4s issued by the State of Vermont, and the State’s stormwater legislation.**

**12.1.1 Implement the Stormwater Management Plan.** Williston updated the Stormwater Management Plan in 2013. That plan reflects the requirements of General Permit 3-9014 by explaining how the town will implement six minimum control measures: 1) Public Education and Outreach, 2) Public Participation, 3) Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination, 4) Construction Site Runoff Control, 5) Post Construction Runoff Control, and 6) Pollution Prevention/Good Housekeeping. The Stormwater Management Plan and subsequent annual reports on its implementation can be found on the Town’s website. The policies adopted here support Williston’s stormwater management efforts.

**12.1.2 Continue to Participate Regionally to meet Minimum Control Measures 1 and 2.** . As of July 1st, 2016 The Regional Stormwater Education Program (RSEP) and Chittenden County Stream Team (CCST) have been consolidated into the Clean Water Advisory Committee (CWAC). The CWAC, formed under requirements put forth in the Vermont Water Quality Act (Act 64), is a collaborative effort of Williston, other Chittenden County municipalities, the Burlington International Airport, the Vermont Agency of Transportation, and the University of Vermont. The Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission coordinates the CWAC, which promotes public awareness of stormwater issues through an annual media campaign and educational programs.

The Clean Water Advisory Committee’s web site is [www.smartwaterways.org](http://www.smartwaterways.org). You may also link to this site from the Town’s web page. A good general source of information on the hydrologic impacts of land development and stormwater management is the Center for Watershed Protection [www.cwp.org](http://www.cwp.org).

**12.1.3 Enforce and Strengthen Regulations that Limit the Impact of Land Development on Water Quality.** Williston revised and strengthened stormwater and watershed protection regulations in 2009. These regulations strengthened requirements for vegetated buffers between development activity and streams, lakes, and wetlands. They also set performance standards for runoff and erosion control

during the construction and occupancy of developments. The Town should continue to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of these standards and consider utilizing new technologies and stormwater management strategies as they are developed. The Town should continue to modify and develop standards to further minimize impervious cover limitations. Developing and codifying low impact development standards and ranking criteria can strengthen regulations and improve the development review process. The Town should also develop a mechanism to enforce regulations and conditions of approval, such as by withholding the Certificate of Occupancy until compliance is reached.

**12.1.4 Implement a Town-Administered Management Plan for Existing Residential Stormwater Facilities.** In 2015, the town began implementing a stormwater utility program for managing stormwater across the entire town as part of the MS 4 Permit (see below). This new program calls for the town to work with the land owners of existing residential stormwater facilities to bring those facilities into compliance with the state’s current regulations. Once these facilities have been upgraded to the new standards, the town will take over the ongoing maintenance of these facilities.

**12.1.4.1 Implement the Allen Brook Flow Restoration Plan.** As a Municipally Separate Storm Sewer (MS4) Community containing a stormwater impaired waterbody the Town of Williston is required to implement a flow restoration plan (FRP). The ultimate goal of a FRP is to identify stormwater treatment practices (including retrofits to existing systems) which when implemented will work towards removing an impaired waterbody from the States List of Impaired Waters.

To incentivize compliance with the FRP, the Town of Williston has offered to assume control of the expired residential stormwater permits in the Allen Brook Watershed as put forth in the Residential Expired Permit Policy (adopted 5/18/2015).

**12.1.5 Plan and Implement Stormwater Improvements using Stormwater Program Funding.** The Town of Williston adopted the Ordinance Regulating the Use of Public and Private Stormwater Systems on 4/21/2015 officially creating the Town’s Stormwater Program. The fee based Program was formed to facilitate the ongoing maintenance and upkeep of the town-wide stormwater drainage network, address increasingly stringent state and federal permitting requirements and to support local water quality initiatives.

The Town has opted to generate the money needed to provide these services through the stormwater fee. The stormwater fee is based on the amount of a property’s impervious surfaces as the stormwater runoff generated from these surfaces flows through the public stormwater system, and therefore “places a demand” on the system. A property with a high amount of impervious surface generates more stormwater runoff, and therefore places a relatively high demand on the public stormwater system. So, a property that has a large amount of impervious area will have a higher stormwater fee than a property with less impervious surface. These fees, which contribute to a dedicated Stormwater Program budget, will be used to maintain and improve town-wide stormwater related infrastructure.

**12.1.6 Regularly Update the Stormwater Management Plan.** The Stormwater Management Plan was updated in 2013 to reflect Williston’s new watershed health regulations. Given the Town’s active role in stream restoration, this update should be made part of an overall watershed health plan appended to the comprehensive plan.

**12.1.7 Snow Management.** The Town should develop a regulation that subjects snow, including plowed snow, stored snow, and snow melt, to the same standards as stormwater. Landscaping plans and stormwater management plans for proposed development projects should continue to illustrate how snow will be managed on-site.

**12.1.8 Address Stormwater Issues in Older Developments.** Most development in Williston includes a State-permitted stormwater management system. A few older developments, including Williston Hills, Lamplight Acres, Oneida Acres, and Meadow Brook do not. Untreated stormwater from these subdivisions reaches receiving water bodies and accelerated runoff is causing erosion where it crosses steep slopes. To address these issues, in 2008, the town worked with affected landowners, the Winooski Natural Resources Conservation District, the Agency of Natural Resources, and other partners to successfully arrest the erosion of three major gullies in the Williston Hills development. In 2009, Public Works constructed a stormwater pond to detain stormwater runoff from the Meadow Brook development, generating offset credits in the process. In 2014 the Town installed an infiltration trench and a series of check dams in the Oneida Acres neighborhood. In 2015 the Town installed a bio-retention system off of Palmer Court and an infiltration trench with complimentary sub-surface storage in the Lamplite Acres neighborhood. The monitoring and maintenance of these sites should remain ongoing as well as efforts to address stormwater runoff problems in the other neighborhoods. Solving these issues through offset should always be explored.

**12.1.9 Encourage Residents to Disconnect Roof Runoff.** A relatively easy way to reduce the amount of stormwater that reaches our streams is to educate homeowners on the harmful effect of roof runoff. In 2015, through a partnership with RSEP and the Winooski River Natural Resources Conservation District, Williston was the host of the third annual Connecting the Drops (CTD). CTD raised awareness in Williston and Chittenden County on the importance of capturing and reusing roof top runoff through the use of rain barrels. Through CTD residents were able to attend rain barrel building workshops and a raffle for professionally painted rain barrels. Williston should consider developing a volunteer program to redirect rooftop downspouts in residential developments from pavement to lawn and continue to participate in programs that encourage the installation of rain barrels and rain gardens.

**12.2 Stream Restoration - The Town of Williston will continue to monitor the effects of the Sucker Brook restoration project, continue efforts to remove the Allen Brook from Vermont’s list of impaired waters, and begin efforts to restore the Muddy Brook.**

The Allen Brook and the Muddy Brook both appear on the State 303(d) list of impaired waters. It is therefore Williston’s responsibility restore these streams to their attainment levels. A large-scale restoration project was successfully completed along the Sucker Brook in 2008 and the Allen Brook in 2012. . Planning efforts have just begun to address the toxics, nutrients, and temperature impairment on the Muddy Brook.

**12.2.1 Monitor Ongoing or Completed Restoration Projects on the Sucker Brook.** The Sucker Brook – a tributary to the Muddy Brook - changed course as a result of a storm approximately 20 years ago. The Sucker Brook abandoned a 30-foot waterfall to travel over easily-eroded glacial till. This erosion carved a large, unstable canyon, sending an estimated 30,000 cubic yards of sediment and 40,000 pounds of phosphorus downstream. From 2001 – 2008 the Town successfully stabilized the Sucker Brook and monitoring of the restoration site will remain ongoing.

***Data on the Sucker Brook can be found in:***

***Evan Fitzgerald, Fitzgerald Environmental Associates. Sucker Brook Phase 1 and 2 Stream Geomorphic Assessment Summary. October 11, 2007.***

**12.2.2 Continue Corridor Protection and Restoration Efforts on the Allen Brook.** The Allen Brook appears on Vermont’s 303(d) list for stormwater. The stormwater impairment is due to an overabundance of sediment, which is caused by accelerated surface runoff, flash flooding, and channel erosion associated with the urbanization and increased acreage of impervious surfaces within the

watershed. To address this issue, Williston has developed a strategy of acquiring and reforesting portions of the riparian corridor along the Allen Brook and its tributaries. Wide, forested buffers will intercept, detain, and treat sheet flow to the Brook and its tributaries. Tributaries can also overflow into these buffers, attenuating peak flows into the Allen Brook without causing property damage. . From 2004 - 2012 a substantial restoration project was completed on the Allen Brook. A comprehensive decision matrix was developed to assess 158 parcels along the Allen Brook and its tributaries to identify properties where restoration efforts were expected to have the greatest impact. Acquisitions or conservation easements on high priority parcels permanently protected 37 acres of land along the Allen Brook and its tributaries, and 18 acres within stream buffers were planted with native trees and shrubs. Steep and highly erosive stream banks were strategically cut back and gradually sloped in many locations, resulting in the removal of 228 cubic yards of sediment. The Town will continue to expand this corridor protection strategy along additional privately owned and Town owned parcels within the Allen Brook watershed. Monitoring the restoration sites will continue.

***Data on the Allen Brook can be found in:***

**Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation, Water Quality Division. *Biological and Aquatic Life use Attainment Assessment of Allen Brook*. February 11, 2004.**

**Lori Barg, Kari Dolan, Cully Hession, Chris Cianfrani, and Bob Kort. *Watershed Improvement Plan and Recommendations for a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) for Sediment: Allen Brook, Williston, Vermont*. Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation, Water Quality Division March 30, 2003.**

**Evan Fitzgerald. *Allen Brook Watershed Departure Analysis and Project Identification Summary*. April 11, 2008**

**Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation, Water Quality Division. *Total Maximum Daily Load to Address Biological Impairment in Allen Brook (VT08-02), Chittenden County, Vermont*. September 2008.**

**12.2.3 *Begin Efforts to Restore the Muddy Brook*.** The Muddy Brook also appears on the 303(d) list of impaired waters for toxics, nutrients, and temperature. The Town has just begun efforts to identify specific problem areas in the watershed, such as the head-cut near Harvest Lane. The Town should initiate dialog with South Burlington to plan for and fund targeted restoration projects.

***Data on the Muddy Brook can be found in:***

**Evan Fitzgerald and Samuel Parker, Fitzgerald Environmental Associates. *Muddy Brook Phase 1 and 2 Stream Geomorphic Assessment Summary*. February 2, 2009.**

**12.3 Water Quality Monitoring – The Town of Williston will continue to monitor the water quality of Williston’s streams and use the data to inform mitigation efforts.**

In 2007, the Planning Office was awarded a Vermont DEC LaRosa Partnership grant for the first time to begin baseline water quality monitoring along the Allen Brook. The monitoring parameters originally included nitrogen, phosphorous, and E. coli. Chloride and turbidity were added to this list in 2010.

**12.3.1 *Continue to Collect and Process Data*.** Water quality monitoring data currently exists for 2007 – 2015 (except for 2009, because the Larosa grant program was not available) for eight sites along the

Allen Brook. The Town will continue to collect data along the Allen Brook and should consider expanding the monitoring effort to include the Muddy Brook. These data will provide a valuable benchmark as restoration projects are completed and development pressure continues to increase in these impaired watersheds.

**12.3.2 Analyze Existing Monitoring Data to Prioritize Implementation Efforts.** The town should utilize assistance from University students and other partners to analyze the existing water quality monitoring data. The data analysis should identify specific problem areas, recommend remediation strategies, and fine-tune the location of the collection sites to optimize the sampling effort to the goals of the monitoring program.

**12.3.3 Explore Technologies and Methods Available to Identify Sources of *E. coli* along the Allen Brook.** Based on three years of monitoring data, the levels of *E. coli* in the Allen Brook have failed to meet both State and Federal standards at all eleven sampling sites. The Town should begin to explore technologies and methods available to identify sources of *E. coli* to allow the Town to target and mitigate these pollution sources prior to the release of the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) guidance for the Brook.

#### **12.4 Lake Iroquois – The Town will participate in partnerships to improve the Lake Iroquois ecosystem.**

The Vermont Agency of Natural Resources has classified Lake Iroquois as eutrophic, meaning that the Lake's waters are rich in nutrients (i.e. phosphorous, nitrogen) that promote the proliferation of plant life, especially algae, which in turn reduces the dissolved oxygen content that fish and other aquatic species rely on for survival. Furthermore, the elevated nutrient levels in the Lake have contributed to the spread of the invasive aquatic plant, Eurasian Watermilfoil (*Myriophyllum spicatum*). Studies done on the Lake by lay monitors (volunteers) and by the State since 1979 indicate that Lake Iroquois has one of the highest average levels of phosphorus of all the lakes in the State. In a survey conducted during the summer of 2010 by volunteers of the Lake Iroquois Association and staff of the State Department of Environmental Conservation, ten areas of concern were identified along the lakeshore as potential input points for nutrients and stormwater.

A second concern is pollution. The Public Works Department monitors *E. coli* at the designated swimming area at the northern end of the lake and results to-date has been below the State and federal limits; however lakeside residents are concerned that the aging septic systems surrounding the lake will lead to *E. coli* and nutrient problems in the future. The expense of new alternative septic systems on shore land property, particularly for seasonal residents, is exorbitant. Incentives and assistance should be considered to promote acceptable solutions.

Lake Iroquois is surrounded by over 90 camps, many of which were within the former 150-foot shoreline buffer. Most of the camps are seasonal but a few have been converted to year-round residences. To better address the issue of non-conforming structures on the Lake Iroquois shoreline and to attain consistency with the recently passed state Shoreland Protection Act, in 2014 Williston developed and incorporated a Lake Iroquois Shoreland Protection Area (LISPA) into the Bylaw. LISPA includes all lands within 250 feet of the mean high water level of the lake, and establishes standards for land clearings, amount of impervious surface, and location of buildings consistent with newly adopted state standards. Applications for town permits are now be required to provide documentation of compliance with Vermont Shoreland Protection requirements in 10 V.S.A. § 1441-1545

**12.4.1 Support the Efforts of the Lake Iroquois Association.** While the Lake Iroquois Recreation District (LIRD) primarily manages the recreational uses surrounding the lake, the Lake Iroquois

Association (LIA) has become the advocate for habitat rehabilitation and water quality improvement. The LIA is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation whose sole purpose is to maintain and enhance the Lake Iroquois ecosystem. The LIA aims to encourage and guide appropriate public uses of the lake and its watershed for the purpose of protecting and preserving the lake's overall well-being. These goals are achieved through monitoring, preventive and management initiatives, research, education, advocacy and other actions, involving the cooperative efforts of property owners, Town, State and Federal officials, and other interested parties. The LIA is a non-regulatory group with a vested interest in the lake's health. The Town should support the efforts of the LIA in any way possible, through direct funding and in-kind contributions, to help them achieve their mission to restore the lake.

**What is the Lake Iroquois Recreation District?** The 157-acres that make-up the northern portion of Lake Iroquois is not owned by the Town but is rather owned and operated by the Lake Iroquois Recreation District (LIRD). The LIRD is a Union Municipal District made up of 4 Towns: Richmond, Williston, Hinesburg and St. George. Each community appoints a representative to serve on the Board of Commissioners for varied terms. The District primarily manages seasonal permits for recreational use (non-motorized boating, swimming, parking, etc.). The Board usually meets once per month and the Williston's Director of Public Works serves as the staff person for the Board.

The Town should also establish a cooperative link with the other three towns within the lake's watershed to consider establishing plans, objectives and actions that complement each other.

**12.5 Source Water Protection - The Town of Williston will help protect both water quality and quantity in drinking water Source Protection Areas by referring development proposals to any applicable water suppliers.**

Williston residents and businesses receive their drinking water from one of three sources: a private well, which is managed by the landowner; the Lake Iroquois Source Protection Area, which is supplied by the Champlain Water District (CWD); or the Porterwood Source Protection Area, which is supplied by the Williston Fire District #1 (FD1). Williston's two Source Protection Areas (SPAs) are shown on Map 14. Water suppliers who manage SPAs are responsible for developing and updating Source Protection Plans (SPPs), which are designed to maintain the integrity of the SPA. These Plans must comply with State and Federal Rules governing water supply protection. This section of the plan calls for Williston to ensure that all development activities within the designated SPAs are consistent with the SPPs; therefore development proposals within SPAs will be referred to their water suppliers for comment prior to the issuance of a permit.

**12.5.1 Refer Development Proposals Within the Lake Iroquois Source Protection Area to the Champlain Water District.** Since 1995, the Champlain Water District (CWD) has implemented a Source Protection Plan (SPP) to protect the Source Protection Area (SPA) for Lake Champlain's Shelburne Bay, which provides drinking water to approximately 68,000 people in Chittenden County, including parts of Williston. The SPA includes Shelburne Bay and the LaPlatte River watershed, which feeds the bay. Since Lake Iroquois is located at the headwaters of the LaPlatte River, this waterbody is included in the SPA and therefore development in and around the lake falls within the purview of the CWD.

As stated in the SPP, the town will forward any significant development projects, such as those that disturb one acre or greater within the Lake Iroquois watershed and especially those within the lake's 250-foot buffer, to the CWD for comment prior to issuing any permits. However, as stated in Chapter 29 of Williston's *Unified Development Bylaw*, CWD review may be sought at the discretion of the planning Administrator regardless of project size.

To learn more about the LaPlatte Watershed as a source water area see: Highland Geographic, Inc. *Shelburne Bay Subwatersheds Source Assessment Delineation Mapping: Summary Report*. Champlain Water District. 2004. The Champlain Water District's web site is <http://www.cwd-h2o.org/>.

**12.5.2 Refer Development Proposals Within the Porterwood Source Protection Area to Williston Fire District #1.** Williston Fire District #1 (FD1) supplies drinking water to the Porterwood neighborhood, which serves over 70 homes. FD1 protects and maintains the water quality and quantity of the Porterwood Source Protection Area (SPA) by implementing a Source Protection Plan (SPP) and updating that Plan every three years.

The Town will forward development projects within the Porterwood SPA to FD1 for comment prior to issuing any permits. The Town should coordinate with FD1 to better define what type of development projects are appropriate or exempt from FD1 review.

## **12.6 Groundwater – The Town of Williston will work with the State to help protect both groundwater quality and quantity.**

Groundwater in Williston is protected under the jurisdiction of the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation Drinking Water and Groundwater Protection Division. The Regional Office Program issues water/wastewater permits (WW Permits) for soil based wastewater systems with flows of less than 6500 gallons per day, for potable water supplies (water supplies that are not public water supplies), and for municipal water and sewer connections.

The Vermont Wastewater System and Potable Water Supply Rules (adopted June 30, 2007) supersede existing municipal ordinances and zoning bylaws that regulate potable water supplies and wastewater systems. Municipalities may continue to have ordinances and/or bylaws that:

- (1) only regulate the use and/or operation of municipally owned water and/or sewage treatment plants;
- (2) require submission of copies of plans and documents used to obtain a state permit under these Rules to the municipality;
- (3) require a certificate of occupancy that is based on full compliance with a state permit issued under these Rules;
- (4) require notice of, and have the option to observe, any soil testing such as the digging of test pits; and
- (5) require time of sale inspections.

Similar to the objectives outlined under **12.5 Source Water Protection**, but in light of its limited authority to regulate water supplies and wastewater systems, Williston will work with the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation to further the goals of protecting groundwater quality and quantity.

**12.6.1 Continue to Refer to Hydrogeologic Studies.** The Vermont Geological Survey (VGS) conducted a basic hydrogeologic study of selected areas in 2005. The results include the well-yield data shown on Map 15 - Hydrogeology and cross-sections showing the depth and yield of wells in relation to the depth of surficial materials and known geologic features. The VGS also completed an in-depth study of groundwater resources throughout the entire town in 2008. A poster presentation titled *Groundwater Resources in the Town of Williston; Northeast Vermont* contains valuable information regarding bedrock and surficial geology, well yield and depth information, and an

evaluation of bedrock aquifer recharge potential. Williston will continue to work with VGS to make effective use of this information.

***12.6.2 Develop and Adopt a Protocol for Measuring Adequate Water Supply.*** *The Town will use the extensive data compiled by the VGS to help provide sound information regarding specific instances of proposed development. The Town will advocate for the Water Supply Division of the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation to develop and adopt a protocol for measuring adequate water supply where nearby well-log data and VGS research indicate historical low yields. A protocol for benchmark testing of existing wells should also be developed as a tool for monitoring water quantity impacts before and after development.*

***12.6.3 Require compliance with State Wastewater System and Potable Water Supply Rules.*** Williston currently requires applicants for new development to submit plans for an on-site wastewater disposal system and a copy of their Wastewater and Water Supply (WW) Permit to the Town prior to obtaining a Zoning Permit. To ensure that a wastewater system has been installed as designed, as-built plans must be filed with the Zoning Administrator prior to issuance of a certificate of compliance. The Town should maintain this requirement.

**12.7 Stewardship – While State and Federal government entities are ultimately responsible for protecting our local waterways, the Town of Williston will strive to keep those waterways free and clear of contamination.**

Quality of life is linked to a healthy environment. In recognizing this mainstay, the Town will strive to become a sustainable community of citizens and businesses motivated to conserve and enhance natural resources through policies, programs, and outreach activities. The Town’s stewardship objective is intended to create long-term environmental benefits and to conserve natural resources.

***12.7.1 Develop and Adopt a Protocol for Addressing Potentially Hazardous Land Use Activities.*** The goal of this policy is to address potentially hazardous land use activities that are currently exempted from the Town’s zoning regulations. Where an existing land use contributes to watershed contamination and poses a potential risk or potential of becoming a public nuisance, the Town should develop a strategy to identify that risk and encourage the landowner or operator to develop, implement, and monitor best management practices to assure good stewardship and reduce risk of contamination.

***12.7.2 Develop Appropriate Land Use Regulations Where Contamination is Present.*** The Commerce Street plume is a documented Superfund site where groundwater has been contaminated with volatile organic compounds (VOCs) including tetrachloroethylene (or perchloroethylene, PCE) and trichloroethylene (TCE). Cadmium and chromium have also been detected in the groundwater plume. The Town should continue to work with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to understand the evolution of the plume, and in this case or others where significant contamination is present, the Town should consider land use regulations that address the existing conditions to provide flexibility in determining appropriate uses for these parcels. In the case of the Commerce Street Plume, this is addressed by land use Policy 3.7.3.

***12.7.3 Provide Incentives and Increase Education for Water Conservation.*** The Town should take a proactive role in demonstrating to homeowners, the business community, and developers that water conservation strategies can save money and protect this limited resource. This could be achieved by developing a means to incentivize and enforce the use of water saving technologies in development and redevelopment projects. Since Williston does not have a building or plumbing code, compliance to an incentives program would likely best be measured prior to the issuance of a Certificate of

Compliance. The Town should also develop education and outreach materials that address water conservation and provide them to the public in hard copy or on the Town website.

**12.7.4 Continue to Omit Wetlands, Rivers, and Buffers from Density Calculations.** In 2008, the Conservation Commission, Planning Commission, and Selectboard supported and adopted a policy to omit wetlands, rivers, and watershed protection buffers from density calculations for new development projects. As a result, developable landscapes are no longer subject to proposals that inherently overburden the landscape's natural capacity to overcome stormwater and pollution loading. This practice is a true demonstration of stewardship and should continue to guide development projects in Williston.

**12.7.5 Discourage the Use of Phosphorous Fertilizer.** Phosphorous pollution is the number one threat to the health and stability of Lake Champlain. The primary sources of phosphorous are from fecal matter, fertilizers and soil erosion. For many years now the Town has committed to using phosphorous-free fertilizers on Town-owned land in an effort to minimize the amount of phosphorous that enters our waterways. In 2012, Vermont banned the use of phosphorus fertilizer on lawns. The Town should at minimum expand upon this stewardship role and develop an educational program that deters the indiscriminant use of phosphorous fertilizers and educates homeowners on alternative lawn and yard care practices.

**12.8 Flood Resilience – The Town of Williston has developed strategies to build flood resilience. This includes identifying areas vulnerable to flooding or fluvial erosion; designating those areas to be protected to mitigate risks to public safety, critical infrastructure, historic structures, and municipal investments; locating new development in safer areas; using sound stormwater management techniques to reduce flooding; conserving floodplains and upland forested areas that attenuate flooding; and encouraging flood emergency preparedness and response planning. The Town will continue to implement these strategies.**

**12.8.1: Avoid development and protect land in particularly vulnerable areas such as floodplains and river corridors.** Williston's regulations include "watershed protection buffers" for all streams, ponds, lakes and for certain wetlands. These include:

- A shoreline buffer of at least 150 feet for all ponds and lakes exceeding an area of a half-acre;
- A shoreline buffer of 250 feet for Lake Iroquois;
- A buffer of at least 150 feet for the Allen Brook, Muddy Brook, Sucker Brook and Winooski River;
- A 50-foot buffer for all unnamed streams;
- A 50-foot buffer around all Class 2 Wetlands and certain Class 3 Wetlands, and
- Special Flood Hazard Areas

Table 1 and Figure 1 at the end of this chapter further clarify Town and state designated protection buffers. The Town's regulations stipulate that land within these buffers shall remain undeveloped and in native vegetation. In total, the watershed protection areas generally provide greater protection than the statewide river corridors recently published by Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, and very little land area is within the river corridors that are not already under the Town's watershed protection buffers (see Map 14 – Watershed Protection Buffers). Nonetheless, to assure consistency with State statute and with surrounding towns, the Town should consider incorporating the ANR river corridors into the flood hazard protection standards in the Bylaw. Similar to the Special Flood Hazard Areas discussed in Chapter 28, the River Corridors could become part of the watershed protection buffers.

***12.8.2 New development shall be planned for and encouraged in areas that are less vulnerable to future flooding events.*** Williston Development Bylaws Chapter 28 regulates development in Special Flood Hazard Areas. All new development, with minor exceptions, is prohibited in the SFHA. The Town should consider the incorporation of river corridors into Chapter 28, in order to assure consistency with State statute and with surrounding towns, and to insure that the Town retains the maximum level of Emergency Relief Assistance Funding.

***12.8.3 Where development already exists in vulnerable areas, measures shall be taken to protect people, buildings and facilities to reduce future flooding risk.*** Under the standards of Williston Development Bylaws Chapter 28, any permitted development including nonconforming uses and structures currently located in the SFHA must be reasonably safe from flooding and designed to prevent floatation, collapse or lateral movement during the occurrence of the base flood. This includes, using materials resistant to flood damage and using construction practices that minimize flood damage; protecting utilities from flood damage, flood proofing basements, and protecting water supply and wastewater systems. These standards could be strengthened by adopting river corridors into the Bylaw's flood protection areas.

***12.8.4 Stormwater management techniques shall be used to slow spread and sink floodwater.*** Williston has an aggressive and detailed stormwater management program, outlined in Section 11.1 of this chapter. It should be noted that stormwater treatment standards required under Vermont law are designed to capture 90% of the annual storm events and to safely "pass" a 100-year storm event, meaning that even well-designed stormwater infrastructure won't prevent flooding in an extreme event.

***12.8.5 The protection and restoration of floodplains and upland forested areas that attenuate and moderate flooding and fluvial erosion should be encouraged.*** As outlined in Section 11.2 of this chapter, Williston has completed several major restoration projects on the Sucker Brook and the Allen Brook. The Town will continue to monitor these projects and begin efforts to restore the Muddy Brook. The Town has implemented a comprehensive strategy, using regulatory and non-regulatory tools, to conserve natural resource assets across all areas of Town. Using its Environmental Reserve Fund and leveraging other funding, the Town has conserved over 1791 acres, including many forested upland areas.

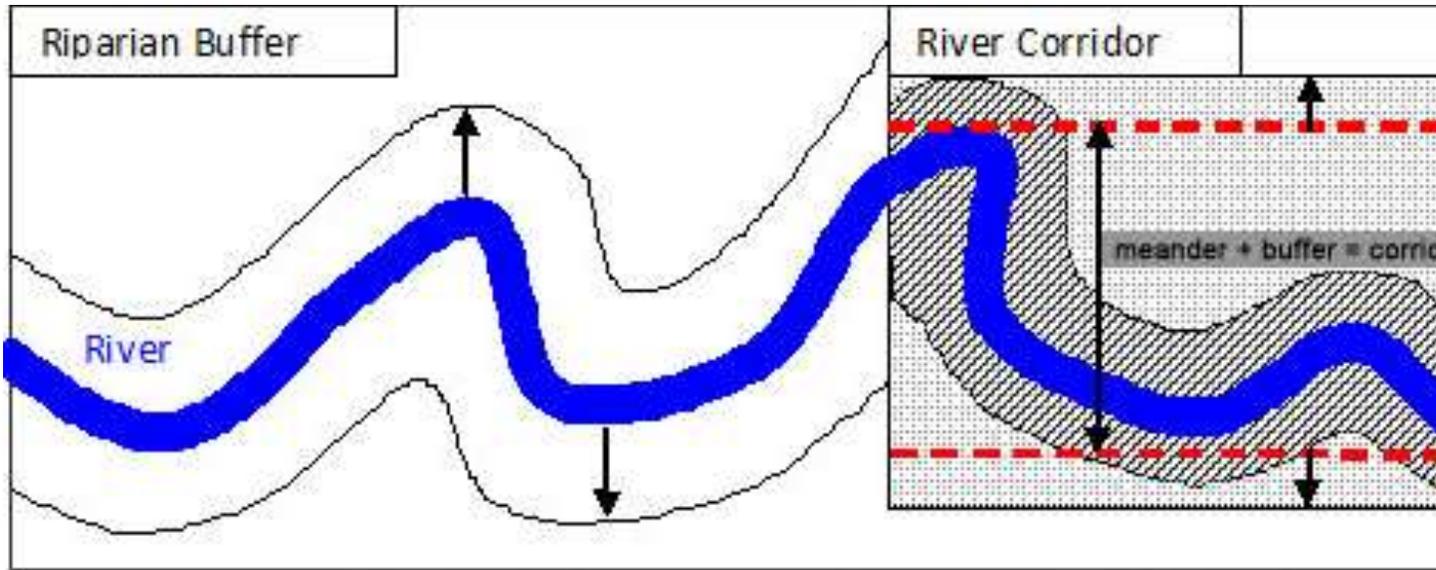
***12.8.6 Support flood emergency preparedness and response planning.*** Williston has adopted and regularly updates a Local Emergency Response Plan to support emergency operations during disasters. To further prepare for emergencies, Williston works with the Local Emergency Planning Committee to conduct and participate in trainings and exercises. Williston has also adopted an All-Hazards Mitigation Plan that identifies flooding as a significant hazard. As part of the development of the plan, a risk and vulnerability assessment was conducted that discusses the level of risk and identifies particular areas or facilities in town that are most vulnerable. The heart of the plan is the development of specific mitigation strategies to reduce the loss of life and property damages from flooding.

*Table 1: Watershed and Flood Protection Areas*

<b>Category</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Definition/Purpose</b>	<b>Distance (ft.)</b>	<b>Jurisdiction</b>
Watershed Protection Area	Lake Iroquois Shoreland Protection Area	All land located within 250 feet of the mean water level of Lake Iroquois, all development must comply with the Vermont Lake Shoreland Protection Standards.	250	Town/State
	Lakes and Ponds	Buffer of at least 150 feet above the ordinary high water mark of all lakes and ponds with an area greater than half-acre (except for Lake Iroquois), must remain undeveloped.	150	Town
	Named Streams	Buffer of at least 150 feet above the ordinary high water mark of the Allen Brook, Muddy Brook, Sucker Brook, and the Winooski River, which must remain undeveloped.	150	Town
	Other Streams	Buffer of at least 50 feet above the ordinary high water mark of all perennial or intermittent unnamed streams, which must remain undeveloped.	50	Town
	Class 2 Wetlands	Buffer of at least 50 feet above the delineated boundary of any Class 2 wetland. Class 2 wetlands are protected by Town Bylaw, State Law and Federal Law.	50	State/Town/Federal - Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE)
	Class 3 Wetlands	The DRB may, upon recommendation of the Conservation Commission, require a buffer above Class 3 wetlands that have important functional values. Class 3 wetlands are generally not protected by State Law, but are regulated by the Army Corps of Engineers.	varies	Town/Federal (ACOE)

Category	Name	Definition/Purpose	Distance (ft.)	Jurisdiction
Flood Protection	Special Flood Hazard Area	All lands identified as Special Flood Hazard Areas (SFHA) on the most current flood insurance maps and studies published by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). SFHAs include area of floodplain subject to a one percent (1%) chance of flooding in any given year.	varies	Federal (FEMA)
	Fluvial Erosion Hazard Area*	Fluvial Erosion Hazard Areas (FEH) have been delineated for some communities based on studies of particular stream and river reaches. An FEH, otherwise referred to as River Corridor Protection Area (RCPA), delineates the extent of the meander belt.	varies	State
	River Corridor*	A River Corridor includes the meander belt and the area to maintain a riparian buffer. The Statewide River Corridor (SRC) includes rivers and streams with watersheds over two square miles. For small streams, with watersheds less than two square miles, the extent of the River Corridor is measured on the ground as fifty (50) feet from the top of the stream bank. The SRC was developed using map-based data on watershed catchments, stream gradient, reference channel width, meander belt widths, valley walls, and major transportation features.	varies	State

\* Refer to illustrations below.



*Figure 1: Comparing a buffer setback to a river corridor. Source: Adapted from Ohio DNR, Rainwater and Land Development Manual, 2006.*

## CHAPTER 13 – OPEN SPACE AND WORKING LANDSCAPES

Maintaining open space and scenic, working landscapes are among Williston’s most important goals for the future. The vision statement presented in Chapter 2 states that the Town will:

- sustain rural landscapes by requiring an open space pattern for subdivisions, conserving lands identified as high priority through acquisitions or easements, and supporting continued stewardship of working lands ; and
- use regulatory and non-regulatory tools, including funding for the acquisition of development rights or land to protect water quality, wildlife habitat, scenic views, and other natural and cultural resources.

This chapter expands on the vision statement in Chapter 2 by presenting a long-range strategy for preserving and protecting Williston’s conservation areas, scenic viewsheds and working landscapes:

**13.1 Conservation Areas** protect important natural resources, including wetlands, streams, and wildlife habitat, from incompatible development. Public access is limited.

**13.2 Scenic Viewsheds** are identified through a detailed visual assessment. They include open fields and meadows, and wooded slopes and ridgelines.

**13.3 Working Landscapes** include farms and other lands that are managed for the production of agricultural, forest, and earth products. They also include lands used for outdoor recreation, such as golf courses or fee-based trail systems. Public access is not necessary, and may be undesirable.

The goals and objectives provided in this chapter account for the changes in land use and development patterns that have taken place since Williston adopted its first Open Space Plan in 1989. In 2005, the Open Space Plan was broadened and became Appendix C to the *2006 Comprehensive Plan*. In 2010, the Town decided that Williston’s Open Space Plan is in no way ancillary to the way that Williston is managed, Appendix C was divided into two chapters in this plan: Chapter 8 - Recreation & Parks and Chapter 12 - Open Space and Working Landscapes, and incorporated into the main body of this Plan.

### From Foothills to the Valley Floor: Williston’s Landscape

Williston runs east to west from the foothills of the Green Mountains to the lowlands that surround Lake Champlain (Map 1). The broad contours of the town’s landscape date back to a collision of continents 340 million years ago. That distant event influences current realities, like domestic well yields, but the terrain we see and the soils on which we build mostly reflect the less ancient passage of glaciers, the formation of a glacial lake, and even an incursion of the ocean, which briefly made parts of Williston beachfront property. Those events, which explain everything from why there is sand mining in north Williston to why it is difficult to locate a good site for wastewater disposal south of I-89, set the stage for the town’s development and this plan.

In recent times, Williston’s landscape has experienced rapid change. Agriculture has yielded to rural residential and suburban development. Natural cover has actually increased, as abandoned pastures and fallow fields mature into forests, but residential, commercial, and industrial uses have also expanded, replacing fields and forests with parking lots, buildings, and other uses. This change is documented in Chapter 3 of the Comprehensive Plan (see Table 3.A) and on Map 17, which shows the overall extent of productive agricultural soils in Williston and the farms that were evaluated for long term agricultural viability using the Town’s Land Evaluation, Site Assessment (LESA) system in 1988. At that time (when

some farmland had already been lost to development), there were about 9,700 acres of active or potential farmland in Williston. Roughly 2,600 more acres of farmland have been developed or taken out of production since 1998. Most of the remaining active farmland is located along the Winooski River in the Floodplain and Agricultural/Rural Residential zoning districts.

**13.1 - Conservation Areas - The Town of Williston will protect conservation areas that provide significant benefits for soil conservation, water quality, groundwater recharge, and biological diversity.**

There are seven distinct types of Conservation Areas in Williston:

- 1) significant wildlife habitat areas, including core habitat and travel corridors;
- 2) areas containing uncommon, rare, threatened, or endangered species;
- 3) unique natural communities;
- 4) farmlands of local importance;
- 5) scenic viewsheds;
- 6) special flood hazard areas; and
- 7) streams, wetlands, lakes and ponds.

The Williston Development Bylaw Chapter 27 *Conservation Areas* defines these areas in detail.

Incompatible development would impair the ecological functions of these areas and reduce the benefits they naturally provide to humans and wildlife. For example, wetlands and vegetated stream buffers protect water quality and healthy aquatic habitat by filtering stormwater runoff and slowing downstream flooding. Conservation of forested uplands will reduce soil erosion, attenuate flooding and fluvial erosion, and provide valuable wildlife habitat. Limited recreation (hiking, cross-country skiing, birding), environmental education, and scientific research are acceptable in conservation areas as long as they are compatible with the goal of protecting the physical features, ecological functions, and biodiversity they provide.

**13.1.1 Maintain Existing Conservation Areas.** Williston has protected conservation areas through a mix of land acquisition, the purchase of development rights (PDR), the transfer of development rights (TDR), the designation of open space within planned developments, and its land use bylaws. Map 18 shows the location of the existing protected areas. Conservation properties that are owned by the Town or the Lake Iroquois Recreational District include:

- Mud Pond and a majority of the surrounding bog and wetlands within the upper reach of Allen Brook (158 acres);
- approximately half of the headwater wetlands north of Lake Iroquois (about 53 acres), which are also part of the Champlain Water District's source water protection area (see Section 11.5 of this plan);
- approximately half of the forested slopes of Brownell Mountain (107 acres), which will also function as a country park, as described in Chapter 9 - Recreation and Parks;
- the former Hill property, located along the Sucker Brook off Route 2A (20 acres), which also functions as a country park, as described in Chapter 9 - Recreation and Parks;
- the 14-acre red maple/blueberry swamp on Marshall Avenue that the Town acquired when it extended Marshall Avenue, along with adjoining areas of the O'Brien Brothers development on which use is restricted due to the presence of wetlands;
- the forested slopes of the former Burnett property south of I-89 (91 acres); and
- the former Senecal property located between the Chatham Woods development and the Town-owned Allen Brook Nature Trail property (14 acres).

Conservation areas that have been protected by the purchase of development rights include 70 acres on the northern part of Gramma Ridge, which is located southwest of the Five Tree Hill overlook and portions of the conserved farms and woodlots listed in section 12.3 below. Numerous acres of streams and wetland buffers have been protected as a result of the Town’s development review process.

**The Benefits of Protecting River Corridors.** Vegetated buffers along the banks of rivers, streams, lakes, ponds, and wetlands help prevent water pollution, attenuate floods, protect development from stream bank erosion, and provide important wildlife habitat. Williston’s Watershed Protection regulations require a 150-foot buffer adjacent to major streams (Allen Brook, Sucker Brook, Muddy Brook), the Winooski River, and major ponds and wetlands, and a 50-foot buffer along tributary streams. More information on river corridors is available in some of the publications available on-line at [http://www.anr.state.vt.us/dec/waterq/cfm/ref/Ref\\_Rivers.cfm](http://www.anr.state.vt.us/dec/waterq/cfm/ref/Ref_Rivers.cfm).

**13.1.2 Continue to Protect Conservation Areas in Development Review.** Development of conservation areas is subject to the Town’s bylaws, including the stormwater management and watershed health regulations that apply throughout Williston and the specific requirements of the zoning districts. Depending on their location and scale, projects that include conservation areas may be asked to set at least some portion of those areas aside as open space. This is required for most developments in the ARZD (see Policy 3.2.1) and encouraged in the RZD (see Policies 3.5 and 5.1.4).

Subdivision name	Zoning District	Open Space (acres)
Brownell	ARZD	15
Gardner	ARZD	91
Tangalos	ARZD	16
Hayes	ARZD	24
Reardon, Beers and Connelly	ARZD	34
Goldman	ARZD	10
Miller	ARZD	32
Brownell	ARZD	10
New England Theological Seminary	ARZD	42
River Hill Farm	ARZD	111
<b>TOTAL ARZD</b>		<b>384</b>
Wood Lily	RZD	14
Brennan Woods	RZD	101
Bittersweet Village	RZD	14
Pinecrest Village	RZD	36
Pleasant Acres	RZD	10
Old Stage Estates	RZD	46
Southridge	RZD	79
Coyote Run	RZD	14
Chelsea Commons	TCZD	2
Finney Crossing	TCZD	66
The Commons	VZD	44
<b>TOTAL OTHER ZONING DISTRICTS</b>		<b>433</b>
<b>TOTAL OPEN SPACE</b>		<b>818</b>

Approximately 818 acres of open space have been protected through Williston's development review requirements. As summarized in the table below, 384 acres of open space has been protected by Williston's 75% open space requirement in the Agriculture/Rural Zoning District (ARZD) and an additional 433 acres of open space has been protected in all other zoning districts.

**13.1.3 Develop Conservation Area Management Plans.** The Conservation Commission should continue to develop and update management plans for the conservation areas owned by the Town, as it does for the country parks. The commission should also work with the landowners and the Vermont Land Trust in developing management plans for the conservation areas that are under easement. These plans should emphasize the maintenance of water quality, biodiversity, and other conservation values. Currently there are management plans for Mud Pond, Five Tree Hill and Sucker Brook Hollow Country Parks, and for the former Lyon property. The Conservation Commission is currently developing a management plan for Brownell Mountain and updating the Mud Pond Country Park management plan.

**13.1.4 Protect Significant Wetland and Riparian Conservation Areas.** The Town has identified several important wetland and riparian conservation areas including:

- the Griswold Farm and adjacent wetlands and riparian forests, located off River Cove Road at the confluence of the Muddy Brook, Allen Brook, and Winooski River;
- the floodplain forests, tributary confluences, and wetlands along the Winooski River;
- several wetlands south of I-89, including the glacial spillway, located south of Old Creamery Road; the remainder of the wetlands north of Lake Iroquois; and the remainder of the wetlands and forested uplands surrounding Mud Pond;
- the Allen Brook tributaries, wetlands, and riparian areas;
- the remaining hemlock woodlands and wetlands, located south of Mountain View Road;
- the remaining wetlands in the Industrial Zoning District, specifically including those along Marshall Avenue and south of the intersection of Industrial Avenue and Rt. 2; and
- Johnson Falls off Governor Chittenden Road.

Wetlands and riparian corridors are partially protected from incompatible development by the Town's stormwater management and watershed health regulations, the Special Flood Hazard Area (in some cases), and other state and federal regulations. As part of a multi-year streambank restoration project, the Town acquired six conservation easements totaling 26 acres along the Allen Brook. Permanent protection via conservation easements or acquisitions should continue to be pursued as funding opportunities allow.

**13.1.5 Protect Significant Upland Conservation Areas.** Upland conservation areas are partially protected from incompatible development by the Town's regulations; nonetheless uplands are more likely to be developed than wetlands or riparian corridors and should have priority in Williston's land conservation efforts. Upland conservation areas include:

- the remaining undeveloped lands on Brownell Mountain, where conservation and trail easements or strategic acquisitions would complement the Town's existing conservation area/country park;
- the unprotected portion of Gramma Ridge, north of Butternut Road, where the Town has already obtained one easement; and
- the remainder of the Bur Oaks knoll (the town already owns the water tank) east of Maple Tree Place. This conservation area was set aside to protect the only regional stand of bur oaks.

This list may be expanded as the Town's conservation and planning commissions identify other parcels that have significant conservation value.

**13.1.6 Protect Significant Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas.** Despite past development patterns that have fragmented wildlife habitats in Williston and surrounding communities, significant areas of habitat remain that are essential for a variety of plant and animal species, that contribute to local biological diversity and ecological integrity, and that support traditional activities such as hunting and fishing. Maintaining connectivity through the protection of wildlife habitat and travel corridors is critical to the long-term survival of several wildlife species.

Utilizing a Lake Champlain Basin Grant, several objectives stated in the 2011-2016 Williston Comprehensive Plan were accomplished, including 1) Identification of significant wildlife habitat and travel corridors, 2) Development of a mechanism to protect significant wildlife habitat, and 3) Development of standards to protect significant wildlife habitat in development review. As the first step, several areas characterized as significant habitat were identified in *An Assessment of Wildlife Habitat in Williston, VT, 2005*. This University of Vermont study, copies of which are available from Williston Planning, identifies seven wildlife habitat "units" – blocks of land characterized by relatively low development densities - that comprise functional habitat for many identified wildlife species.

A follow-up study, *An Assessment of Wildlife Habitat in Williston: Expanded Land Cover Mapping and Corridor Modeling*, was completed in 2011. This assessment completed the land-cover mapping of the entire town; revised the potential habitat maps for the previously-used set of representative species; and 3) identified possible wildlife migration corridors or landscape connections between important habitat blocks.

A clear and unambiguous definition of significant wildlife habitat was developed based on the data from the studies. The definition of significant wildlife habitat and associated map was incorporated in the Town's *Unified Development Bylaw* together with appropriate habitat protection standards as an overlay district. These standards facilitate the protection of areas characterized as significant wildlife habitat (i.e., located within one of the defined wildlife areas, or encompassing an identified wildlife travel corridor or other identifiable significant habitat feature).

The Town should continue to implement these standards. For these areas to retain their ecological functions for wildlife, it is important that future development be carefully located and designed to avoid habitat fragmentation and adverse impacts (i.e., impacts that would demonstrably reduce the ecological function of habitat on a particular parcel).

**13.1.7 Monitor and Assess the Significant Wildlife Habitat Area Modeled Data for its Continued Relevance.** The Town will continue to monitor and assess the modeled data on which the significant wildlife habitat area is based. This can be accomplished through field surveys by Town staff, hired consultants and/or trained citizen science volunteers. The resulting data will be used to further refine the significant wildlife habitat area maps.

**13.1.8 Utilize Environmental Reserve Funds and Other Non-Regulatory Strategies to Protect Conservation Areas.** Because conservation areas are especially sensitive to impacts from not only development but also land management techniques (e.g., clearing) that are not easily covered by development regulations, the Town should employ appropriate non-regulatory strategies in addition to regulatory standards to protect significant wildlife habitat and other conservation areas. In 2013 the Town used Geographic Information Systems (GIS) technology and scoring criteria to develop a prioritization matrix to identify and prioritize key areas for long-term protection through the use of the Town's Environmental Reserve Fund. Total parcel scores were used to classify parcels as high,

medium or low priority. This prioritization matrix serves as an important tool to guide decisions about funding future conservation easements or land acquisitions, and should be updated periodically. Other non-regulatory strategies should be promoted, such as encouraging landowner involvement in the wetlands reserve program, habitat improvement programs, and conservation easements and/or current use if applicable. The Town will continue to fund its Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) program, and to work with other organizations including the Vermont Land Trust and the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board to leverage funds. While many landowners are uncomfortable with permanent restrictions on their rights, the Town should always be ready to assist those who are willing to commit to conservation.

**13.1.9 Promote Private Stewardship of Conservation Areas.** Listing private lands as a conservation area will not affect their continued use for farming, forest management, or fee-based recreation. In fact, the Town supports private stewardship and encourages sound land management practices (for example, maintaining a forest structure – including snags, downed trees, and understory vegetation – that supports diverse wildlife). The Town is also proactive in educating landowners about the current regulations designed to protect conservation areas, such as watershed protection buffer requirements, and encourages them to take steps that bring them closer to compliance with all applicable laws.

**13.1.10 Ensure Compliance With Conditions of Approval.** In many cases, conditions of approval for new developments include required actions that are designed to protect Williston’s natural resources. For example, as a condition of approval, a Class III wetland may require a 25-foot buffer and permanent demarcation on the ground, such as a fence or a tree line, to memorialize its location. The Town will work to ensure ongoing compliance with conditions of approval. Compliance with pre-existing conditions of approval is required prior to issuing any new permits. When a property changes ownership, the buyer usually requests verification that no outstanding zoning violations exist on the seller’s property.

**13.1.11 Improve the Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) Program to Better Protect Open Space Resources.** Transferring the development rights from one piece of land to another can be an effective tool for preserving important agricultural lands and other environmentally sensitive landscapes. The town has used this mechanism to a limited degree but the process for doing this has been defined only in outline form. The town should consider developing a more robust set of standards for transferring development rights from land areas that the town wishes to preserve to those portions of town where the town wishes to encourage development, such as the Growth Center. Such standards might include the establishment of a “Land Bank,” where the town purchases development rights, “banks” those rights and then later sells them to developers who wish to increase the density of their projects.

**13.2 - Scenic Viewsheds - The Town will protect and maintain the visual character that defines Williston, including open fields and meadows, wooded slopes and ridgelines, and scenic viewpoints.**

When driving, bicycling, or hiking through Williston - especially the rural areas - one enjoys views of rolling fields framed by a background of wooded slopes, nearby ridgelines, and distant mountains. These views are central to the sense of place the residents of Williston treasure. To help maintain that sense of place, the Town undertook a detailed assessment that systematically evaluated the visual character and quality of the local landscape in 1989. The results of that analysis are provided on Map 19. The accompanying report is available from the Town planning office. Briefly, Williston’s visual character is created by open fields and meadows, wooded hillsides, and ridgelines. These features, and the contrast between them, create a visually satisfying mosaic that is especially appealing where it includes long views to dramatic landforms, such as the Camel’s Hump or Mt. Mansfield.

Some of the most important visual resources illustrated on Map 19 are listed below. This list does not include scenic farmlands, which are listed separately in section 13.3 below. Note the substantial overlap with other open space types. Scenic viewsheds that are at least partially protected from incompatible development include:

- the Brennan field, south of Mountain View Road, part of which was designated as open space when the Brennan Woods Subdivision was approved;
- the Martel Hill, located north of Mountain View Road, a portion of which was set aside as open space when a residential subdivision was approved;
- the Southridge fields – which were designated as open space in the development review process - that provide an open view up to the homes of the Southridge Subdivision, north of Rt. 2;
- the former Mahan Farm fields, south of Route 2, which the Town has committed to conserve as mitigation for the approval of Maple Tree Place;
- the LaCasse fields along South Brownell Road, a portion of which were designated as open space when a residential subdivision was approved;
- Brownell Mountain, the northern slopes of which are a future country park and conservation area; and
- the former Lyons fields south of Town Hall, which are Town property.

Some viewsheds have recently been subdivided, or are now in the development review process, including the former Swift property along Oak Hill Road, the former Brown fields west of South Road, the former Foxwood Farm north of Maple Tree Place, and a portion of the ridge that forms (roughly) the boundary between Williston and Richmond. Some open space will be protected in each of these developments. Scenic properties that currently have no formal protection from incompatible uses include:

- open fields and meadows, including the pastures along River Cove Road; the fields southwest of the intersection of Mountain View and Old Stage roads; meadows south of Governor Chittenden Road; and portions of several parcels along Oak Hill; and
- prominent ridgelines, including much of the Richmond Ridge; the hills that lie above the Winooski River; the highlands above I-89 between South Brownell and Oak Hill roads; and the north-south ridge, including Gramma Ridge that runs through the central portion of Williston south Old Creamery Road.

**13.2.1 Update the Visual Resource Assessment.** Williston’s landscape has changed since the visual resource assessment was done in 1989. Development has filled some views, formerly open fields are no longer mowed, and the number of public viewpoints has grown as roads and trails are extended. A new visual resources analysis should be conducted using a combination of public participation and geographic information systems technology.

**13.2.2 Continue to Consider Visual Resources in Development Review.** Visual impacts will continue to be considered in the review of any proposed development project in a scenic viewshed identified on Map 20 or its successor (as called for by Policy 12.2.1, above), including Administrative Permit proposals to construct new homes and other buildings that were not part of a subdivision process

where building envelopes were identified. The bylaw should be updated to clarify this permit review criteria.

The Town originally implemented this policy through two overlay zoning districts: the Ridgelines/Wooded Hillside and Special Features. In 2008, the Ridgelines/Wooded Hillside and Special Features Overlays were replaced with specific performance standards, including standards designed to minimize the impact of development on important viewsheds. These standards address the siting of structures (outside the viewshed if possible, or where they will have the least impact if it is not) and building design, including height, color, scale, area of glass surface, outdoor lighting, and signs. The standards also limit clearing and thinning of wooded landscapes on ridgelines and steep slopes.

***13.2.3 Explore New Methods and Technologies That Will Better Illustrate the Impact of Proposed Development On the Landscape.*** The Town currently relies on the Visual Resource Overlay to guide development projects in Williston. To avoid being subjective, the Town should explore new visual assessment methods and technologies that developers can use to better illustrate how the proposed development will impact the landscape.

***13.2.4 Promote Private Stewardship of Scenic Viewsheds.*** Like conservation areas, scenic viewsheds are best protected by continuing private use for agriculture, wood lots, and recreation. The Town will implement the same tools listed in Policy 12.1.8 to help landowners maintain scenic viewsheds.

**13.3 - Working Landscapes - The Town of Williston will encourage landowners to actively manage their resources for the production of food, forest, and earth products; wildlife, scenic views; and outdoor recreation. This support will include continued funding for the purchase of development rights; zoning for a reasonable range of income-generating activities in the ARZD; and encouraging landowners to take advantage of Current Use and other working lands incentive programs.**

Working landscapes are lands actively used for the production of food, fiber, earth products, and outdoor recreation. They include cropland, dairies, woodlots, orchards, sugarbushes, pastures, plant nurseries, sand mines, and fee-based recreation areas. Working landscapes do not include meadows or fields that are only periodically hayed for aesthetic purposes. These lands may fall into types of open space, but the intent here is to include only lands from which the owners derive at least a part of their livelihood.

Working landscapes are what many residents and visitors see as the classic image of Vermont. The persistence of these traditional land uses in rapidly changing Williston is a credit to the perseverance and hard work of dedicated private landowners. The policies adopted here seek to support their continued stewardship.

***13.3.1 Support and Encourage Enrollment in the Current Use Program.*** Rapidly increasing property taxes are one of the factors contributing to the loss of working landscapes and other open spaces. Current Use helps farm and forest landowners keep their land productive by assessing it for property tax purposes based on its use value, not its development value. This lowers the owners' property tax burden. In exchange for the use value assessment, owners keep their land in productive management and pledge not to develop it while they are enrolled in the program. While the state's Current Use Program has been effective at protecting large parcels of working lands, the minimum size requirement and the program's complexity has been an obstacle for many landowners who wish to keep active farms or woodlots. Several years ago, a legislative Current Use Task Force helped to develop strategies for improving the Program. Citizen groups such as the Working Lands Enterprise Board and the Current Use Tax Coalition continue to advocate for Current Use and strategic improvements to the program. Williston should participate in discussions of Current Use and how to

improve it, and should periodically sponsor outreach efforts to encourage eligible landowners to participate in the program.

**Current Use Program.** The Use Value Appraisal program provides an incentive for private landowners to keep farmland or forestland productive and undeveloped. The program assesses agricultural or forestland at its use value rather than fair market value, which lowers the property tax assessment for landowners who enroll. There are many misperceptions about the tax implications of enrolling land in the Use Value Appraisal program. For example, the State of Vermont reimburses communities for all of the tax revenue that is lost due to enrollment of land under the program. More information on Vermont’s Current Use tax program may be obtained from the Department of Taxes at <http://www.state.vt.us/tax/pvr.shtml>.

**13.3.2 Continue to Protect Important Agricultural Lands.** As noted earlier in this plan, Williston has lost a sizeable area of productive farmland to development. Agriculture is still an important part of the local landscape, however, and the Town will continue to work with landowners to sustain it. The Town developed the LESA (Land Evaluation, Site Assessment) system on which Map 16 is based to help identify important farms in the late 1980s. The top five farms identified by that system are all still in production. These include the Clark (Riverhill), Conant, Fontaine, and Landvater properties along the Winooski River, and the Imajica farm. None of these farms are protected from conversion to other uses by a conservation easement or other restriction. Working farms the Town has helped conserve through the purchase of development rights include the Lacasse Farm on South Brownell Rd, the Johnson Farm and Woodlot at the east edge of the Village, the Siple Farm on South Rd, the Isham Farm on Oak Hill Rd, and the Burnett Farm on Route 2 west of the Village. With the local foods movement, there are many small farm operations cropping up in Williston. The Town should encourage and support these small farms wherever possible.

**Defining Farmlands.** The State of Vermont uses a definition of agricultural lands that is based solely in the important farmlands definitions adopted by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (see 10 V.S.A. § 6001(15)). Those definitions, which include “prime farmland” and “farmlands of statewide importance,” reflect the inherent characteristics and management of a parcel, but ignore its context. Their use in Williston and other suburban areas has been counterproductive, making it more difficult to promote a compact pattern of development because the state is “protecting” isolated parcels of productive soils that are surrounded by development and urban infrastructure. Williston follows the experience of numerous jurisdictions throughout the nation in focusing its farmland protection efforts on working farms (which may include soils that are not so productive) rather than on soil bodies.

**13.3.3 Protect Other Working Landscapes.** Other working landscapes include tree farms, commercial wood lots, nurseries, sand and gravel mines, and fee-based outdoor recreation. Some local examples include the Comeau sugarbush at the end of Bradley Lane, the sand and gravel operations in North Williston, the Boomhower wood lot and the former O’Brien property wood lot, located on Gramma Ridge south of Five Tree Hill, which the Town has helped conserve through PDR. Outdoor recreation facilities include two golf courses (Williston and Catamount), the North Country Sportsman Club located off Old Creamery Road; and the Catamount Family Center on Governor Chittenden Road.

**13.3.4 Ensure that the Town Bylaws Permit a Reasonable Range of Uses in Working Landscapes.** The Town will periodically review its bylaws to ensure promotion of the development of diverse, innovative agricultural activities, including farm stands; cottage industries like cheese making or other value-added enterprises; farm waste recovery for energy generation; and fee-based recreation, hospitality, and educational activities.

**13.3.5 Promote Community Gardens in Designated Open Space.** The Town should encourage developers to designate community garden space into their development plans whether inside or outside of the designated open space.

**13.3.6 Consider Land Use Conflicts when Investing in Parks or Trails.** The Town should carefully consider the potential conflict between public access and farm and woodlot operations before investing in country parks or trails.

## CHAPTER 14 – IMPLEMENTATION: REALIZING WILLISTON’S VISION

Every policy in this plan was developed with action in mind. Many will be implemented through the continuing enforcement and revision of the town’s bylaws. Others will require public investment, as the town budgets money for everything from planning studies to major infrastructure improvements. Most of all, making this plan work requires a continuing community conversation, in which the people of Williston educate themselves about growth-related issues and volunteer to serve on town boards and task forces.

**Williston Needs You!** The successful implementation and realization of the town’s goals expressed in this plan depends upon the work of its citizen volunteers who sit on all of the town’s boards. If you would like to serve on one of the citizen boards charged with the administration of this plan, you will find notices of vacancies and application forms posted on the town’s web page or at the Town Manager’s office. The boards and their roles are listed below.

The **Planning Commission** is responsible for policy discussions and recommendations to the town’s elected officials, the Selectboard. It prepared this document and will prepare the bylaw revisions it recommends.

The **Development Review Board (DRB)** makes sure that development proposals comply with the town’s bylaws.

The **Conservation Commission** reviews development proposals that impact open space and makes recommendations to the DRB. Its main mission, however, is to identify lands that should be conserved, work with landowners, and acquire conservation lands or development rights to those lands. This board also seeks trail easements and provides direction for the management of the town’s country parks, conservation lands, and primitive trails.

The **Historic and Architectural Advisory Committee (HAAC)** conducts design review in the Village Zoning District and makes recommendations to the DRB. It promotes an awareness of historic resources by seeking grants to fund workshops and informational literature. The HAAC also reviews most commercial and many industrial development proposals following a set of design guidelines that are adopted in the town’s bylaws. Based on its review, the HAAC provides recommendations to the DRB.

The objectives adopted below constitute a general basis for the implementation of this plan. To provide details, Table 13.A lists the 130 some objectives and policies adopted here and shows which departments of town government are principally responsible for each. That table also proposes a schedule and, where possible, offers a rough estimate of the costs of implementation. It should be clearly understood that the schedule and costs given here are estimates intended to help decision-makers and citizens understand the challenges the town faces. Timeframes and costs will be refined in planning and engineering studies and the annual budget process.

### **14.1 Bylaws - The Town of Williston will revise its bylaws to be consistent with the policies adopted in this plan. These revisions will take the form of a unified development bylaw.**

Williston has regulated land use since the early 1960’s. There have been numerous amendments of the bylaws as the town learned from experience and new ideas emerged. The result is a set of bylaws that incorporate hundreds of incremental changes. While each of those changes was a good idea (at least at the time), the resulting documents are bulky and difficult to administer. There are internal contradictions, or

at least sections that work at cross-purposes. Many sections could be made more specific and, thus, more defensible. The time has come to reflect what the town has learned in an easier-to-use form by adopting a unified development bylaw that is consistent with the objectives and policies of this plan.

24 V.S.A. § 4402 and 4419 authorize adoption of unified development bylaws, which consolidate all procedures – subdivision, site plan, conditional use, special use, etc. – that apply to a development proposal into a single set of procedures. This will streamline development review (projects in Williston are frequently subject to two-three separate sets of procedures) and make it easier to incorporate many of the regulatory policies adopted here.

**14.2 Budgets - The Town of Williston will incorporate the objectives and policies of this plan into its capital and operating budgets. The town will also continue to pursue grants.**

As noted in Chapter 7, Williston has a strong capital budget process. The infrastructure improvements (and studies leading up to them) called for by this plan will be included in the capital budget as resources allow. Tax funding will be supplemented with impact fees and grants. Planning studies will generally be funded from the operating budget, as feasible, or by grants.

**14.3 Costs of Growth - The Town of Williston will continue to monitor the costs of growth and use the results of its analysis as a basis for setting fees, seeking grants, and documenting the continuing need for a municipal sales tax.**

A “Costs of Growth” element was included in the town’s 2001 plan. An update will be completed and added to this document by 2016.

**14.4 Economic Development – The Town of Williston has now added an economic development element to this plan. This was identified as a goal in the town’s 2011-2016 plan, and it is now a requirement of state statute.**

The local economy is currently healthy, but the continued vibrancy of Williston economy will require continued attention to the town’s land use and transportation policies as the nature of business and commerce continue to change and evolve. The need for the town to continue to provide housing affordable to a broad range of workers will continue to be an important goal for both the region and the town, and an important goal within this plan.

**14.5 Maps - The Town of Williston will develop more accurate and useful maps to support the implementation of this plan, as necessary. The town will also begin to develop its own Geographic Information Systems capability.**

Experience has demonstrated a need for revisions in some of the maps used in administering Williston’s bylaws. The town will work with the Chittenden County Regional Planning to produce improved mapping of ridgelines and other scenic assets, stream and wetland buffers, and other features. The town will also begin to build its own mapping capabilities.

**14.6 Coordination - The Town of Williston will continue to work with other agencies and organizations to implement this plan.**

Williston’s vision of a desirable future cannot be realized without the cooperation and support of state and federal agencies, regional planning organizations, and other municipalities. This reality is reflected in the many policies that call for the town to work with specific agencies.

**14.7 Growth Center - The Town of Williston was the first community in Vermont to have a designated Growth Center under Vermont's planning statutes in 2007 (24 V.S.A. 4302 and 24 V.S.A. §§2791, 2792 and 2793(c). The town will monitor and participate in any future discussions to changes in this legislation while evaluating the effectiveness of the Growth Center designation for Williston. See also Objective 3.1.**

**Growth Centers.** There is a great deal of discussion of growth centers on the web. A starting point that gives some history of the idea is provided by the Vermont Planner's Association at <http://www.vermontplanners.org/documents/GrowthCentersReport.pdf>.

### **A Return to the Vision**

Williston's vision statement fits easily on a single page. Setting a clear, reasonably specific direction for how that vision will be realized has taken quite a few more.

This plan ends with a reminder that while Williston's vision keeps evolving, the core of that vision has been consistent for many years. It is also important to remember that the town has made substantial progress in attaining its vision. Your planning commission members expect that progress to continue, guided by this latest edition of the town's plan. We also thank everyone who contributed to the 2016-2024 planning effort!

**Table 14.A – 2016-2024 Williston Town Plan – Objectives and Policies – Implementation Table**

Chapter – Objective	Policy	Responsibility	Timeframe	Cost	Proposed Source	
<b>Chapter 3- Land Use</b>						
Objective 3.1 – Taft Corners and Growth Center	3.1.1	Work with Developers to Build Grid Streets	Planning, Public Works	2016-2024, as development occurs	developers and impact fees	
	3.1.2	Work with VTrans on Circulation Improvements	Planning, Public Works, VTrans	2016-2024	no additional	n/a
	3.1.3	Commercial Zoning Districts	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	3.1.4	Refine Development Standards in the Growth Center	Planning	2017-2019	no additional	n/a
	3.1.5	Consider Form Based Code	Planning	2017-2020	TBD	TBD
Objective 3.2 – Rural Williston	3.2.1	Protect Rural Character and Open Space	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	3.2.2	Permit Larger Developments in Highly Suitable Locations	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	3.2.3	Develop a Transfer of Development Rights Program	Planning	2020-2021	no additional	n/a
	3.2.4	Encourage the Adaptive Reuse of Historic Barns	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
Objective 3.3 – Industrial Lands	3.3.1	Transportation Improvements to Support Industrial Activity, Direct Truck Traffic away from Taft Corner	Planning,	2020-2024	no additional	n/a
	3.3.2	Consider Revising Allowed uses in IZDW	Planning	2018	no additional	n/a
Objective 3.4 – Residential Neighborhoods	3.4	Protect Residential Character	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
Objective 3.5 – Open Space	3.5	Protect Open Space-See Chapter 13	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
Objective 3.6 – Williston Village	3.6.1	Develop a Village Master Plan	Planning	2017-2018	no additional	n/a
	3.6.2	Examine Density Standards in the VZD	Planning	2017-2018	no additional	n/a

**Table 14.A – 2016-2024 Williston Town Plan – Objectives and Policies – Implementation Table**

<b>Chapter – Objective</b>	<b>Policy</b>		<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Proposed Source</b>
Objective 3.7 – Other Land Use Areas	3.7.1	Refine Watershed Protection Buffers	Planning	2018-2019	no additional	n/a
	3.7.2	Consider Changes to Uses in IZDW	Planning	2018-2019	no additional	n/a
<b>Chapter 4 – Community Design</b>						
Objective 4.1 – Village Design and Historic Preservation	4.1.1	Review and Revise the Village Design Guide	Planning	2018-2019	no additional	n/a
	4.1.2	Maintain Character of Historic Properties Outside the VZD	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
Objective 4.2 – Commercial Design	4.2.1	Require Landscaping	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	4.2.2	Use of native plants	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	4.2.3	Minimize Parking	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	4.2.4	Minimize Visual Impact of parking	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	4.2.5	Avoid Dead Walls	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
Objective 4.3 – Mixed Use Design	4.3	Apply Design Guidelines to Mixed- Use Projects	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
Objective 4.4 – Urban Parks	4.4.1	Enliven Existing Urban Parks	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	4.4.2	Encourage New Urban Parks	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	4.4.3	Refine Urban Park Requirements	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	4.4.4	Develop and Maintain Urban Parks	Developers and HOA’s	ongoing	no additional	private
Objective 4.5 – Neighborhood Parks	4.5.1	Require Neighborhood Parks in New Developments	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	4.5.2	Refine Neighborhood Park Requirements	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	4.5.3	Maintain Existing Neighborhood parks	Developers, HOA’s	ongoing	no additional	n/a
Objective 4.6 – Signs and Outdoor Lighting	4.6.1	Revise and Clarify Sign Regulations	Planning	2017-2019	no additional	n/a
Objective 4.7- Urban Forestry	4.7.1	Continue to Require and Maintain Street Trees	Planning/Public Works	ongoing	no additional	n/a

**Table 14.A – 2016-2024 Williston Town Plan – Objectives and Policies – Implementation Table**

<b>Chapter – Objective</b>	<b>Policy</b>		<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Proposed Source</b>
	4.7.2	Maintain the Tree Inventory	Planning/ Public Works	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	4.7.3	Implement the Urban Forestry Plan	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	4.7.4	Establish a Town Tree Nursery	Planning/ Public Works	TBD	Unknown	Grants
Objective 4.8- Williston in Bloom		Continue to Support Williston in Bloom	Public Works	ongoing	no additional	n/a
Objective 4.9- Gateways to Williston		Work to Enhance Major Gateway Areas	Planning	TBD	TBD	Grants
<b>Chapter 5 – Housing and Growth Management</b>						
Objective 5.1- Residential Growth Management	5.1.1	Link Residential Growth Target with Sewer Allocation	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	5.1.2	Set Residential Target to 80 Dwelling Units per Year	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	5.1.3	Assign Growth Management Consistent with Plan Goals	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	5.1.4	Adopt More Specific Growth Management Criteria	Planning/ Selectboard	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	5.1.5	Provide for Small Residential Development	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	5.1.6	Encourage High-Density Residential in Growth Center	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	5.1.7	Require Master Plans for Subdivisions	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	5.1.8	Implement and Refine the Growth Management System	Planning, Planning Commission, DRB Planning	2017-2018	no additional	n/a
Objective 5.2- Housing Opportunities	5.2.1	Use Growth Management to Encourage Affordable Housing	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	5.2.2	Consider Using Inclusionary Zoning	Planning	2017-2018	no additional	n/a
	5.2.3	Encourage Housing Choice	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a

**Table 14.A – 2016-2024 Williston Town Plan – Objectives and Policies – Implementation Table**

<b>Chapter – Objective</b>	<b>Policy</b>		<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Proposed Source</b>
	5.2.4	Evaluate Town Lands for Affordable housing Potential	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	5.2.5	Encourage Adaptive Reuse of Industrial and Commercial Buildings for Affordable Housing	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	5.2.6	Explore Additional Affordable Housing Programs	Planning	2018-2020	no additional	n/a
	5.2.7	Implement Recommendations of Affordable Housing Task Force	Planning	2018-2019	no additional	n/a
	5.2.8	Create Housing Trust Fund	Selectboard	TBD	TBD	TBD
<b>Chapter 6- Transportation</b>						
Objective 6.1- Master Transportation Plan	6.1.1	Implement Major Road Plan	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	6.1.2	Build Sidewalks, Paths and Trails	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	6.1.2.1	Build Sidewalks, Paths and Trails supported by the Bond Issue	Planning/ Public Works	ongoing	no additional	Bond and Impact Fees
	6.1.2.2	Build Other Sidewalks, Paths and Trails	Planning/ Public Works	As Needed	TBD	Impact Fees
	6.1.2.3	Provide Wide Shoulders	Planning/ Public Works	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	6.1.2.4	Provide Amenities	Planning/ Public Works	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	6.1.2.5	Evaluate Linking Recreation Paths to Sidewalk Network	Planning/ Public Works	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	6.1.2.6	Public Works Specifications	Planning/ Public Works	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	6.1.2.7	Require Paths in New Development	Planning, Developers	ongoing	TBD	Developers
	6.1.3.1	Support Public Transportation	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	6.1.3.2	Promote Construction of Ride Sharing Facility	Planning/ Selectboard/ Public Works/VTRANS	ongoing	no additional	n/a

**Table 14.A – 2016-2024 Williston Town Plan – Objectives and Policies – Implementation Table**

<b>Chapter – Objective</b>	<b>Policy</b>		<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Proposed Source</b>
	6.1.3.3	Build a Transit Center	Town/GMT	TBD	Unknown	Unknown
	6.1.3.4	Build Bus Pull Offs	GMT/VTRANS	TBD	TBD	TBD
	6.1.4.1	Require Multiple Points of Access	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	6.1.4.2	Require Connectivity	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
Objective 6.2- Access Management	6.2.1	Limit New Points of Access	Planning, Public Works	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	6.2.2	Limit Access directly from parking	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	6.2.3	Consolidate Existing Points of Access	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	6.2.4	Locate Points of Access to Protect Public Safety	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	6.2.5	Require Turning Lanes	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	6.2.6	Design Access Points for Safety	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	6.2.7	Protect Pedestrians and Bicyclists	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
Objective 6.3 – Transportation Improvements- State	6.3.1	Build Circ. Alternatives Projects	VTrans	2017-2024	TBD	State
	6.3.2	Construct a Williston Park-and-Ride	VTrans	2017-2018	\$2,500,000	State
	6.3.3	Improve the Intersection of Route 2 and Industrial Avenue	VTrans	2020-2024	\$3,000,000	State
	6.3.4	Consider Improvements to the Intersection of Route 2 and North Williston Road	Planning, Selectboard, Public Works	TBD	TBD	Federal and State
	6.3.5	Calm Traffic in Williston Village	Planning, Public Works, VTrans	2017-2020	TBD	Town, Grants
Objective 6.4 – Transportation Improvements- Town – High Priority	6.4.1	Construct Trader Lane	Public Works, Planning	2017-2018	\$2.5 million	Impact Fees / VTRANS
	6.4.2	Study Improvements at Mountain View Road and North Williston Road	Public Works	2016-2018	TBD	CCRPC

**Table 14.A – 2016-2024 Williston Town Plan – Objectives and Policies – Implementation Table**

<b>Chapter – Objective</b>	<b>Policy</b>		<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Proposed Source</b>
	6.4.3	Complete Improvements at James Brown Drive	VTrans/ Public Works	2018-2020	\$2.6 million	Federal, State, Developers
	6.4.4	Build a Williston Town Park-and-Ride	Planning, Developers	TBD	TBD	TBD
	6.4.5	Construct Road Connection Between Home Depot and Route 2A (Depot Street)	Planning, Public Works	2018-2024	TBD	Developers
Objective 6.4 – Transportation Improvements- Town – Lower Priority	6.4.7	Build other Taft Corners Grid Streets	Public Works	2022-2024	TBD	Developers
	6.4.8	Study North Williston Road Improvements	Public Works / CCRPC	2017-2018	TBD	TBD
	6.4.9	Study Oak Hill Road Improvements	Planning, Public Works	TBD	TBD	Impact Fees / CCRPC
Objective 6.5 - Freight	6.5.1	Designate Truck Routes	Public Works	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	6.5.2	Support Rail Services	Selectboard	ongoing	no additional	n/a
Objective 6.6 – Transportation Funding	6.6.1	Require Developers to Provide Local Streets and Bicycle and Pedestrian Ways	Planning	ongoing	varies	Developers
	6.6.2	Update the Transportation Impact Fee	Planning/ Selectboard	2017-2018, ongoing	TBD	n/a
	6.6.3	Pursue Additional Funding for Transportation	Planning/ Public Works	ongoing	TBD	Grants
Objective 6.7 – Regional Transportation Planning	6.7	Continue to participate in the CCRPC	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
<b>Chapter 7 – Economic Development</b>						
Objective 7.1 – Implement the Land Use Plan to Support Economic Development	3.1	Taft Corners and Growth Center	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	3.3	Industrial Lands	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
Objective 7.2 – Implement the Transportation Plan to Support Economic Development	6.1.3	Public Transportation	Selectboard	ongoing	TBD	General Fund
	6.3	State Transportation Improvements	VTrans	2016-2024	TBD	State
	6.4	Town Transportation Improvements	Selectboard/Public Works/Developers	TBD	TBD	Impact Fees/Grants
	6.5	Freight	Selectboard	ongoing	no additional	n/a

**Table 14.A – 2016-2024 Williston Town Plan – Objectives and Policies – Implementation Table**

<b>Chapter – Objective</b>	<b>Policy</b>		<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Proposed Source</b>
Objective 7.3 –Maintain Available Wastewater Treatment Capacity	7.3	Purchase additional sewer capacity as identified in Chapter 8.	Selectboard	\$10/gallon	\$500,000	General Fund
Objective 7.4 – Affordable Housing	5.2	Housing Opportunities calls for the town to incentivize building additional affordable and workforce housing.	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
Objective 7.5 Support VTC Development	10.3	Support VTC Expansion Goals through land use regulations.	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
<b>Chapter 8 – Public Facilities and Services</b>						
Objective 8.1 – Administration	8.1.1	Renovate Older Town Hall Facilities for Energy Efficiency	Planning/ Public Works	ongoing	TBD	Grants, Town Funds
Objective 8.2 – Cemeteries	8.2.1	Enhance the Appearance of the Deer View Cemetery	Public Works	TBD	TBD	TBD
Objective 8.2 – Fire and Rescue	8.3.1	Continue Adding Professional Firefighters	Fire	ongoing	TBD	General Fund
	8.3.2	Adopt and Enforce National Fire Codes	Fire	2018-2020	no additional	n/a
	8.3.3	Cooperate with the Williston Police Department to Improve Dispatch	Fire/ Police	2020-2022	TBD	TBD
Objective 8.4 – Law Enforcement	8.4.1	Raise the Level of Service to 18 Officers	Police	TBD	TBD	General Fund
	8.4.2	Raise the Level of Service by Coordinating Dispatch	Police/ Fire/ Rescue	2015-2016	TBD	General Fund
Objective 8.5 - Library	8.5	Continue to Provide Exemplary Library Services	Library	ongoing	no additional	n/a
Objective 8.6 – Sewerage	8.6.1	Confine Sewer to the Sewer Service Area	Selectboard/ Planning/Public Works	ongoing	no additional	n/a

**Table 14.A – 2016-2024 Williston Town Plan – Objectives and Policies – Implementation Table**

<b>Chapter – Objective</b>	<b>Policy</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Proposed Source</b>	
	8.6.2	Allocate Treatment Capacity in Accordance with This Town Plan	Selectboard	2016-2024	no additional	n/a
	8.6.3	Purchase Additional Sewer Capacity	Selectboard	2018-2022	\$10/Gallon /day	General Fund
	8.6.4	Implement the Sewerage Facilities Plan	Public Works	ongoing	TBD	TBD
	8.6.5	Develop a 20 year Plan for Sewer Service.	Planning	2017-2018	no additional	n/a
	8.6.6	Make Better Use of and Reacquire Existing Capacity	Selectboard, Planning, Public Works	2017-2020	no additional	n/a
	8.6.7	Continue to Assess Sewer Connection Fees	Public Works	ongoing	no additional	n/a
Objective 8.7 – Solid Waste	8.7.1	Make Road Improvements to Support the Landfill	Public Works	TBD	TBD	CSWD
	8.7.2	Require Host Town Agreements	Selectboard	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	8.7.3	Explore Requiring Recycling by Commercial Users	Selectboard, Planning	2018-2020	no additional	n/a
Objective 8.8 - Water	8.8.1	Protect the Town’s Water Source	See Objective 12.5	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	8.8.2	Improve Water Storage	Public Works	2017-2018	TBD	Bond
	8.8.3	Eliminate Dead - Ends	Public works	ongoing		
	8.8.4	Collect water connection Fees	Public Works	ongoing	no additional	n/a
Objective 8.9 – Capital Budget	8.9	Continue to use the Capital Budgeting Process	Selectboard	ongoing	no additional	n/a
Objective 8.10 – Public Works Specifications	8.10	Implement the Public Works Specifications in Project Review	Planning/ Public Works	ongoing	no additional	n/a
<b>Chapter 9 – Recreation and Parks</b>						

**Table 14.A – 2016-2024 Williston Town Plan – Objectives and Policies – Implementation Table**

<b>Chapter – Objective</b>	<b>Policy</b>		<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Proposed Source</b>
Objective 9.1 – Recreation	9.1.1	Develop a Process to Determine and Meet Recreation Needs	Recreation	2017-2019	TBD	TBD
	9.1.2	Foster Volunteer Opportunities	Recreation	ongoing	no additional	n/a
Objective 9.2 – Indoor Recreation Facilities	9.2.1	Identify Recreation Facility Needs	Recreation	2017-2019	no additional	n/a
	9.2.2	Meet the Need for Indoor Recreation Facilities	Recreation, Selectboard	2018-2020	TBD	TBD
Objective 9.3 – Community Parks	9.3.1	Maintain Existing Community Parks	Public Works	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	9.3.2	Meet the Need for Additional Park Development	Recreation, Public Works	ongoing	TBD	TBD
	9.3.3	Consider the Distribution of Park Space	Recreation	ongoing	no additional	n/a
Objective 9.4 – Country Parks	9.4.1	Maintain Existing Country Parks	Planning	ongoing	TBD	TBD
	9.4.2	Develop Additional Country Parks	Planning	ongoing	TBD	TBD
	9.4.3	Prepare Management Plans for Country Parks	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	9.4.4	Consider Country Parks in Development Review	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
Objective 9.5 – Trails	9.5.1	Maintain Existing Trails	Planning	ongoing	\$10,000 / yr.	General Fund
	9.5.2	Expand the trail System	Planning	ongoing	TBD	TBD
	9.5.3	Require Trails in New Developments	Planning / Developers	ongoing	no additional	n/a
Objective 9.6 – Lake Iroquois Natural Area	9.6	Continue to Cooperate with Other Towns to Manage Recreational Facilities	Planning Recreation	ongoing	no additional	n/a
<b>Chapter 10 – Education and Child Care</b>						
Objective 10.1 – Schools	10.1.1	Continue to Charge School Impact Fees	Planning	ongoing	no additional	Developers
	10.1.2	Prepare a Facilities Plan	School District	TBD	no additional	School District

**Table 14.A – 2016-2024 Williston Town Plan – Objectives and Policies – Implementation Table**

<b>Chapter – Objective</b>	<b>Policy</b>		<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Proposed Source</b>
	10.1.3	Meet regularly to Discuss School Needs	School District/ Selectboard	annually	no additional	n/a
Objective 10.2 – Child Care	10.2.1	Permit Child Care Centers Wherever Schools are Permitted	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	10.2.2	Permit Child Care Centers in Employment Generating Zoning Districts	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	10.2.3	Continue to Permit Child Care Centers as accessory use	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
Objective 10.3 – Higher education		Encourage and Facilitate the Expansion of Vermont Technical College in Blair Park	Planning, Selectboard	ongoing	no additional	n/a
<b>Chapter 11 – Energy Efficiency and Conservation</b>						
Objective 11.1 – Renewable Energy Resources	11.1.1	Explore Green Pricing Programs	Manager	TBD	no additional	n/a
	11.1.2	Encourage Renewable Energy Generation	Planning	2017-2018	no additional	n/a
	11.1.3	Demonstrate Renewable Energy Projects	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
	11.1.4	Prohibit Residential Property Assessment Increases for Renewable Energy Equipment	Selectboard	TBD	TBD	TBD
	11.1.5	Provide E.V. Charging Stations	Planning	2017-2018	no additional	n/a
	11.1.6	Update Energy Efficiency Incentives in Growth Management	Planning	2017-2018	no additional	n/a
Objective 11.2 – Future Utilities Siting	11.2.1	Place Local Utilities Underground	Planning/ Public Works	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	11.2.2	Place Regional Transmission lines in Existing Corridors	Public Service Board	ongoing	no additional	n/a

**Table 14.A – 2016-2024 Williston Town Plan – Objectives and Policies – Implementation Table**

<b>Chapter – Objective</b>	<b>Policy</b>		<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Proposed Source</b>
	11.2.3	Limit the Impact of Telecommunication Installations	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	11.2.4	Encourage Utility Scale Co-Generation Energy Projects	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	11.2.5	Encourage Utility-Scale Renewable Energy Projects	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
Objective 11.3 – Municipal Energy Efficiency	11.3.1	Review and Improve Performance of Existing Town Buildings and Operations	Planning Public Works	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	11.3.2	Use “Green Building” Technology as Feasible		ongoing		
	11.3.3	Consider Energy Consumption when Purchasing		ongoing		
	11.3.4	Use Fuel-Efficient Low or Zero - Emission Vehicles		TBD	TBD	TBD
	11.3.5	Encourage Walking, Cycling, Ride-Sharing and the Use of Public Transportation	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	11.3.6	Prepare Annual Energy Reports	Manager	2016-2024	no additional	n/a
	11.3.7	Designate a Town Energy Coordinator	Selectboard	2018	no additional	n/a
Objective 11.4 – Energy Conservation and Efficiency through Land Use	11.4.1	Include Energy Efficiency and Conservation in Development Review	Planning	TBD	TBD	TBD
	11.4.2	Direct Residents to Energy Efficiency and Conservation Programs	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
	11.4.3	Pursue a PACE Financing Program	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
	11.4.4	Require E.V. Charging Facilities in New Developments	Planning, Selectboard	2016-2024	no additional	n/a

**Table 14.A – 2016-2024 Williston Town Plan – Objectives and Policies – Implementation Table**

<b>Chapter – Objective</b>	<b>Policy</b>		<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Proposed Source</b>
Objective 11.5 – Municipal Energy Plan		Prepare a Municipal Energy Plan as a Supplement to this Town Plan	Planning	2016-2024	TBD	n/a
Objective 11.6 – Sustainable food Systems	11.6.1	Encourage Home Gardens, Food Preservation, and Small Animal Husbandry	Planning	Ongoing	no additional	n/a
	11.6.2	Support Farmer’s Markets and CSA’s	Planning, Schools	Ongoing	no additional	n/a
	11.6.3	Support Community Gardens	Planning	Ongoing	no additional	n/a
Objective 11.7 – Waste Reduction	11.7.1	Reduce Waste Generated by the Williston Community	Planning, CSWD	2016-2024	TBD	TBD
	11.7.2	Maximize the Recovery of Recyclable Materials	Planning	2016-2024	TBD	TBD
<b>Chapter 12 – Watershed Health</b>						
Objective 12.1 – Stormwater Management	12.1.1	Implement the Stormwater Management Plan	Planning Public Works	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	12.1.2	Regional Stormwater Education	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	12.1.3	Strengthen Regulations Related to Water Quality	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	12.1.4	Manage Residential Stormwater Facilities	Selectboard Public Works	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	12.1.5	Plan and Implement Stormwater Improvements	Selectboard Public Works	Ongoing	no additional	n/a
	12.1.6	Regularly Update the Stormwater Management Plan	Planning	As Needed	no additional	n/a
	12.1.7	Develop a Snow Management Regulation	Planning	2020-2022	no additional	n/a
	12.1.8	Stormwater Issues in Older Developments	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a

**Table 14.A – 2016-2024 Williston Town Plan – Objectives and Policies – Implementation Table**

<b>Chapter – Objective</b>	<b>Policy</b>		<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Proposed Source</b>
	12.1.9	Encourage Roof Disconnects for Runoff	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
Objective 12.2 – Stream Restoration	12.2.1	Monitor Completed and Ongoing Restoration Projects	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	12.2.2	Restore the Allen Brook with Corridor Protection	Planning	ongoing	TBD	TBD
	12.2.3	Begin to Restore Muddy Brook	Planning	2020-2022	no additional	n/a
Objective 12.3 – Water Quality Monitoring	12.3.1	Continue to Collect and Process Data	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	12.3.2	Use Data to Prioritize Implementation	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	12.3.3	Explore how to Identify Sources of E.coli	Planning	TBD	no additional	n/a
Objective 12.4 – Lake Iroquois	12.4.1	Support the Lake Iroquois Association	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
Objective 12.5 – Source Water Protection	12.5.1	Coordinate Development Review in Source Water Protection Areas for Lake Iroquois with Champlain Water District.	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	12.5.2	Coordinate Development Review in Source Water protection Areas for Porterwood with Williston Fire District #1.	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
Objective 12.6 – Groundwater	12.6.1	Refer to Hydrogeological Studies	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	12.6.2	Support developing a Protocol to Measure Adequate Water Supply	Planning	TBD	no additional	n/a
	12.6.3	Compliance with State Rules	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a

**Table 14.A – 2016-2024 Williston Town Plan – Objectives and Policies – Implementation Table**

<b>Chapter – Objective</b>	<b>Policy</b>		<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Proposed Source</b>
Objective 12.7 – Stewardship	12.7.1	Develop Protocol for Addressing Hazardous Land Use Activities	Planning	TBD	no additional	n/a
	12.7.2	Develop Regulations Where Contamination is Present	Planning	TBD	no additional	n/a
	12.7.3	Provide Incentives to Encourage Water Conservation	Planning	TBD	no additional	n/a
	12.7.4	Continue to Omit Wetlands, Rivers, and Buffers from Residential Density Calculations	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	12.7.5	Discourage Phosphorous Fertilizer	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
Objective 12.8 – Flood Resilience	12.8.1	Avoid development in floodplains and river corridors	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	12.8.2	Allow new development in less flood prone areas	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	12.8.3	Where development already exists in vulnerable areas, take measures to protect people, buildings and facilities.	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	12.8.4	Use stormwater management techniques to slow, spread and sink floodwater.	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	12.8.5	Protect and restore floodplains and upland forested areas that attenuate and moderate flooding and fluvial erosion.	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	12.8.6	Support flood emergency preparedness and response planning				n/a

**Table 14.A – 2016-2024 Williston Town Plan – Objectives and Policies – Implementation Table**

Chapter – Objective	Policy	Responsibility	Timeframe	Cost	Proposed Source	
<b>Chapter 13 – Open Space and Working Landscapes</b>						
Objective 13.1 – Conservation Areas	13.1.1	Maintain Existing Conservation Areas	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	13.1.2	Protect Conservation Areas in Development Review	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	13.1.3	Develop Conservation Area Management Plans	Planning	2017-2020	TBD	Grants
	13.1.4	Protect Wetland and Riparian Conservation Areas	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	13.1.5	Protect Upland Conservation Areas	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	13.1.6	Protect Significant Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	13.1.7	Assess Significant Wildlife Habitat Data for Continued Relevance	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	13.1.8	Utilize ERF Funds to Protect Conservation Areas	Planning	ongoing	TBD	ERF
	13.1.9	Promote Private Stewardship of Conservation Areas	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	13.1.10	Ensure Compliance with Conditions of Approval	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	13.1.11	Improve the TDR program to better Protect Open Space Resources	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
Objective 13.2 – Scenic Viewsheds	13.2.1	Update the Visual Resource Assessment	Planning	2020-2022	TBD	Grant

**Table 14.A – 2016-2024 Williston Town Plan – Objectives and Policies – Implementation Table**

<b>Chapter – Objective</b>	<b>Policy</b>		<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Proposed Source</b>
	13.2.2	Continue to Consider Visual Resources in Development Review	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	13.2.3	Explore new Methods to illustrate the Visual Impact of Development	Planning	2020-2022	no additional	n/a
	13.2.4	Promote Private Stewardship of Scenic Viewsheds	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
13.3 – Working Landscapes	13.3.1	Encourage Enrollment in the Current Use Program	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	13.3.2	Protect Important Agricultural Lands	Planning	ongoing	TBD	Environmental Reserve Fund
	13.3.3	Protect Other Working Landscapes	Planning	ongoing	TBD	Environmental Reserve Fund
	13.3.4	Permit Reasonable Uses in Working Landscapes	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	13.3.5	Promote Community Gardens in Open Space	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a
	13.3.6	Consider Land Use Conflicts When Investing in Parks and Trails	Planning	ongoing	no additional	n/a