

WEST RUTLAND TOWN PLAN

*** JANUARY 3, 2024 DRAFT FOR PUBLIC REVIEW – Minor edits 2/6/24 & 2/8/24 ***



PHOTO COURTESY OF KEN AND JEAN HELEBA

Approved by Town of West Rutland Planning Commission:
February 8, 2024

Adopted by Town of West Rutland Select Board:



WEST RUTLAND VERMONT

Mary Ann Goulette – Town Manager

Jeff Biasuzzi – Zoning Administrator

Planning Commission

- Sean Barrows (Chair)
- Michael Brzoza (Vice Chair)
- Leona Minard
- Jim Flint

Selectboard

- John Harvey (Chair)
- Nick Notte (Vice Chair)
- Chet Brown
- John Center
- Richard Daley



**RUTLAND
REGIONAL
PLANNING
COMMISSION**

With special thanks to Logan Solomon (photo right),
Planner, Rutland Regional Planning Commission

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	4
COMMUNITY PROFILE	5
<i>Demographics</i>	5
PUBLIC FACILITIES AND UTILITIES	7
<i>Public Lands</i>	7
<i>Emergency Services</i>	8
<i>Public Utilities</i>	10
<i>School, Child Care, and Library</i>	13
<i>Recreation</i>	14
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	18
HOUSING	21
<i>Physical Housing Stock</i>	21
<i>Affordability</i>	23
TRANSPORTATION	26
<i>Improvements</i>	30
NATURAL, SCENIC, CULTURAL, AND HISTORIC RESOURCES	33
<i>Natural Areas</i>	33
<i>Working Lands</i>	36
<i>Cultural, Historic, and Scenic Resources</i>	38
ENERGY	41
<i>Affordability</i>	42
FLOOD RESILIENCE	44
LAND USE	47
IMPLEMENTATION	52
ADJACENT MUNICIPALITIES	53

INTRODUCTION

Required to be in this chapter of the town plan by law:

24 V.S.A. § 4382 - A statement of objectives, policies, and programs of the municipality to guide the future growth and development of land, public services, and facilities, and to protect the environment

The purpose of the West Rutland Town Plan, “The Plan,” is to serve as a long-term guide for the future health of the community. Town Plans are updated and readopted every eight years per the Vermont Planning and Development Act (24 V.S.A. §4387a). The Plan is the initial component of an ongoing process, establishing a framework of planning recommendations to ensure that decisions made at the local, regional, and state levels align with the Town’s objectives for providing a clear and positive direction for future development.

These objectives are listed as “Goals” in the box below. Goals #1-#14 are at the end of each respective chapter, alongside a set of actions. Goals #15 and #16 apply across all chapters. It is the intent of the Planning Commission, and the Town as a whole, to execute the listed actions over the next eight years and beyond. To guide future growth and development of land, and public services, and to protect the environment, the Plan identifies the following goals:

1. To plan development to maintain the historic settlement pattern of compact villages separated by rural countryside.
2. To provide a strong and diverse economy that provides satisfying and rewarding job opportunities and to expand economic opportunities.
3. To broaden access to educational and vocational training opportunities sufficient to ensure the full realization of the abilities of West Rutland residents.
4. To provide safe, convenient, economical, and energy-efficient transportation systems that respect the integrity of the natural environment, including public transit options and paths for pedestrians and bicyclers.
5. To identify, protect, and preserve important natural, scenic, cultural, and historic features and areas of West Rutland’s landscape.
6. To maintain and improve the quality of air, water, wildlife, and forests.
7. To make efficient use of energy and reduce emissions of greenhouse gases.
8. To maintain and enhance recreational opportunities for West Rutland residents and visitors.
9. To support local agricultural, forestry, and related industries.
10. To provide for the efficient use of West Rutland’s geologic resources.
11. To ensure the availability of safe and affordable housing for West Rutland residents.
12. To plan for, finance, and provide an efficient system of public facilities and services to meet current and future needs.
13. To encourage the availability of safe and affordable childcare.
14. To support flood-resiliency, by maintaining wetlands and floodplains and making infrastructure improvements.
15. To encourage a welcoming community where individuals from diverse backgrounds are valued and respected.
16. To leverage grants and partnerships to reduce costs and barriers in meeting the Plan's goals, and the Town’s present and future needs.

COMMUNITY PROFILE

The Town of West Rutland, “Town,” is in the center of Rutland County, Vermont, comprising an area of 9,570 acres. The Town began as a small part of Rutland Town and grew with the rise of the marble industry. On November 19, 1886, West Rutland was incorporated as its own town, seeking greater political autonomy. Since then, West Rutland has gradually evolved into the Town we know today: with a resilient and historic village, flourishing businesses, natural abundance, and a rich cultural heritage with visual reminders of the marble era. While the commercial quarries are closed, the reminders of that successful time have not faded.



Figure 1: Marble quarry workers in West Rutland – *Miracles in Marble*, 1935

Demographics

In 2020, 2,214 people lived in West Rutland. Figure 2 shows West Rutland’s population change over the decades. There has been a gradual decline from 1890, with a 27.3% decrease occurring from 1930 to 1950, and a 12.6% decrease from 2000 to 2020.

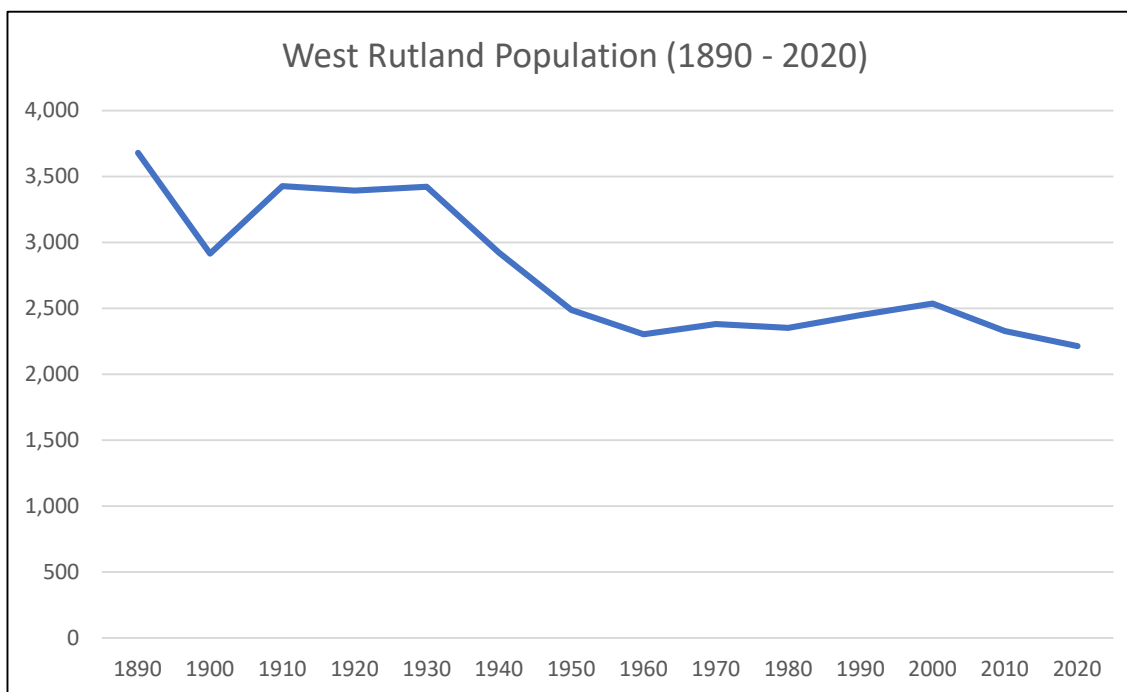


Figure 2: Town of West Rutland Population (1890 - 2020) – *U.S. Decennial Census*

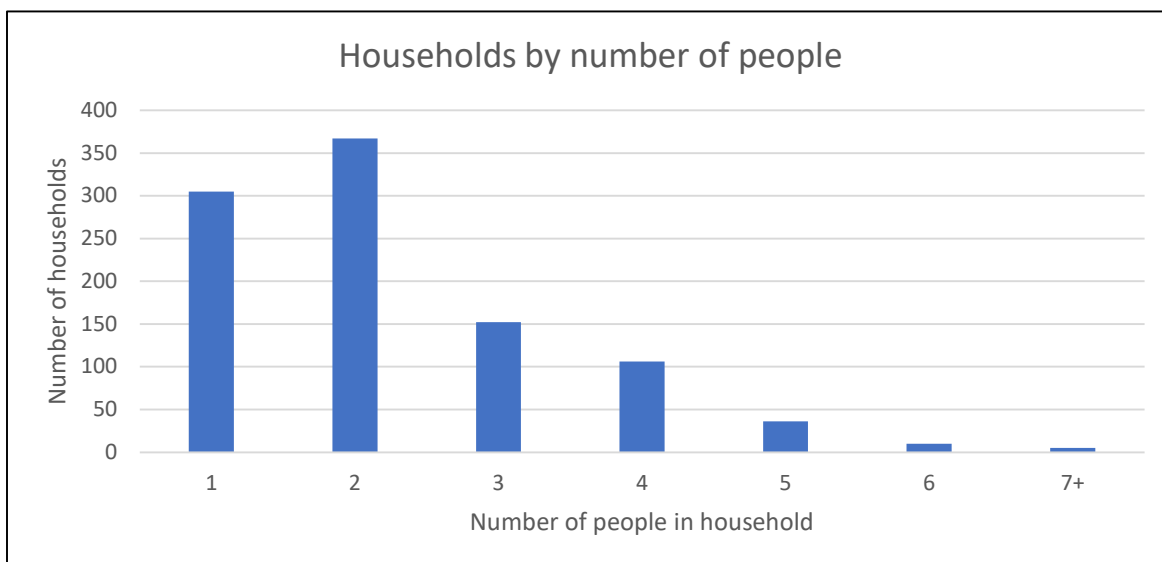
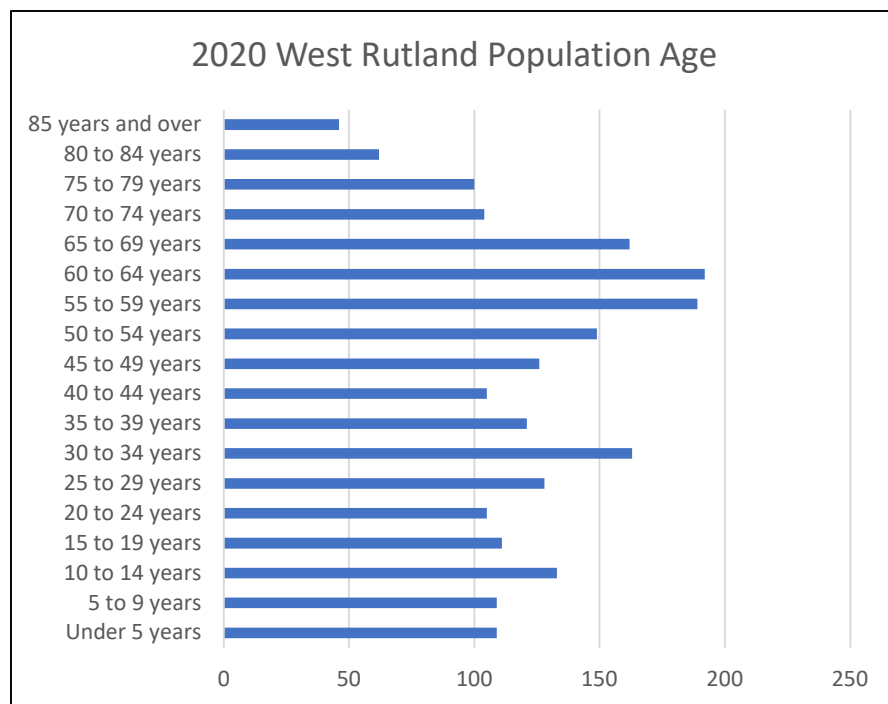


Figure 3: Households by number of people – 2020 U.S. Decennial Census

The number of households in West Rutland has fluctuated being 931 in 1990, 1021 in 2000, and 981 in 2020. The total growth in households, despite the population decline, is likely due to an increase in one-person households, with 68.5% of households in 2020 being 1 or 2 person households. Figure 3 shows households by number of people.

The median age of West Rutland residents has increased from 39.3 in 2000 to 46.2 in 2020, which is lower than the county but higher than the state. The number of school-aged individuals



between 5 and 19 in West Rutland is 462, a 13.2% decrease from 2000. The number of retirement-age adults aged 65 or older, is 474, a 24.1% increase from 2000, representing 21.4% of the 2020 population. In the next decade, an additional 381 people, or 17.2% of the 2020 population will enter retirement age, currently aged 55 to 64. Figure 4 shows West Rutland's 2020 age distribution.

Figure 4: 2020 West Rutland Population Age - 2020 U.S. Decennial Census

PUBLIC FACILITIES AND UTILITIES

Required to be in this chapter of the town plan by law:

24 V.S.A. § 4382 - A utility and facility plan, consisting of a map and statement of present and prospective community facilities and public utilities showing existing and proposed educational, recreational, and other public sites, buildings, and facilities, and recommendations to meet future needs for community facilities and services, with indications of priority of need, costs, and method of financing;

24 V.S.A. § 4382 - An educational facilities plan consisting of a map and statement of present and projected uses and the local public school system

The Plan supports growth that does not exceed the ability of the Town to provide facilities and services, including but not limited to the ones listed below.

Public Lands

According to 2022 *Grand List Tax Data*, West Rutland has 38 Public Parcels, including Library and School lands. These lands are mapped in Figure 5 and total 612.34 acres. 20 of the 38 parcels are less than 2 acres, have municipal buildings, a park-and-ride, or are vacant. In most cases, the Town has sole ownership. The Town's ten largest parcels, all exceeding 10 acres, are in clusters spread across town, with most being used for outdoor recreation.

The Plan encourages the Town to use Public Lands most efficiently to achieve the Town's goals.

Town Hall

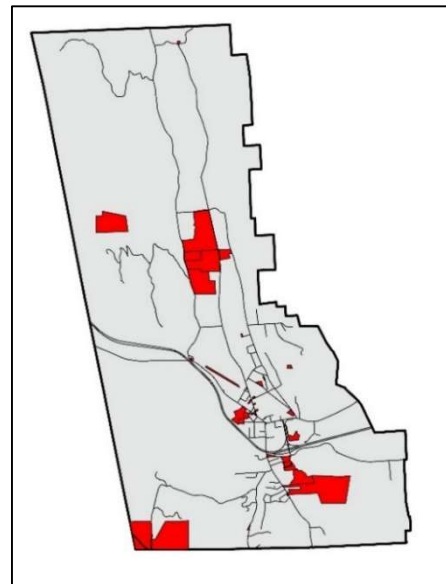
West Rutland's town hall came as the result of a tragedy early in the 20th Century.

"A devastating fire in West Rutland village in 1903 destroyed the Town Hall...The Town Hall was replaced in 1908 by an imposing Colonial Revival Style, brick building, with carved and rusticated marble trim, at the intersection of Marble and Main Street."

- [*Historic Architecture of Rutland County, 1988, Page 451*](#)

This Town Hall, located at 35 Marble Street, originally housed the town library and was used as a school, having rooms for elementary and high school children. It has an auditorium, which is used as a rental space for private events and service groups, as well as a free space for school and governmental boards. On the first Wednesday of every month, the town hosts a Senior Lunch In, providing an affordable meal at \$3.25 for those aged 60 and older, and \$5 for anyone under 60. The Town Hall is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

The Town Green outside the Town Hall hosts an annual block party in the fall. The party is topped off with fireworks and has games, craft vendors, and food trucks. Admission is free, with local businesses sponsoring the event.



**Figure 5: Town Owned Lands –
Vermont Department of Taxes**

Emergency Services

Emergency Management Services (EMS)

In February 1992, the Town's Selectboard established the West Rutland Emergency Management Division and appointed an Emergency Management Director to coordinate all town departments and outside agencies to mitigate a disaster. The current Emergency Management Director is Mary Ann Goulette, the town manager.

The town has a *Local Emergency Management Plan (LEMP)*, which is annually reviewed and updated to follow changing needs. The most recent plan was adopted on March 10, 2023. In addition to the Emergency Management Director, this plan outlines two local Points of Contact to determine emergency status and offer emergency management support. *LEMP* outlines preferred duties for the Points of Contact, a primary and alternative Emergency Operation Center, an emergency spending limit of \$10,000, local resources for emergency response, and a coordinated public information response. *LEMP* identifies vulnerable populations and shelters for displaced individuals.

The Town also has a federally approved *Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP)*, adopted on February 8, 2021. *LHMP* outlines thunderstorms and snowstorms, and their associated impacts, as being the "highest risk hazards" in West Rutland. Figure 6 shows West Rutland's history with these hazards, including a dollar figure for local or regional damage. *LHMP* also outlines vulnerable locations and assets, and the extent, impact, and probability of each "highest risk hazard." *LHMP* includes a hazard mitigation strategy, including goals and actions, which The Plan encourages the Town to continue to follow.

The Town also uses the Rutland Regional Ambulance Service, which responds to over 12,000 calls in Rutland County each year. In 2023, a satellite ambulance station, that can store four ambulances, was established in West Rutland, at 484 Main Street, the former Lake Sunapee Bank. The *2024 West Rutland Proposed Budget* shows that the town annually pays \$9,304 for the Rutland Regional Ambulance Service.

Police

The Town contracts its police services with the Rutland County Sheriff's Department. There is a Sheriff on duty in West Rutland 40 hours a week. Sometimes, police service is also provided by Rutland Barracks of the State Police, depending upon personnel availability.

Highest Risk Hazard History
Note: These are the most up to date significant events impacting West Rutland. Federal declarations are depicted in bold.
Inundation/Flash Flooding/Fluvial Erosion
4/15/2019: DR4445 1-2" rain with significant snow melt: \$26,325 local damage, including landslide on Dewey Ave
7/1/2017: DR4330 3-4" rain the previous 3-4 days with flash flooding on 7/1/17: no reported damage
6/25-7/11/2013: DR4140 with heavy rain over multiple days: no reported impact
8/28/2011: DR4022 Tropical Storm Irene with ±5" rain: \$180,576 local damage (\$106,273 Individual / \$19,177 Public / \$55,126 NFIP)
1/18/2006: 1.5-2.5" rain: \$50,000 regional damage
12/16/2000: DR1358 2-4" rain: \$8,970 local damage
9/16/1999: DR1307 Tropical Storm Floyd with 4-5" rain: no reported impact
1/19/1996: DR1101 snow melt/rain: \$15,446 local damage
High Wind/Hail
2/29/2019: 48 mph winds: \$25,000 regional damage
4/1/2018: 63 mph winds: \$50,000 regional damage
10/30/2017: 40 mph winds: \$100,000 regional damage
5/5/2017: 64 mph winds: \$500,000 regional damage
7/3/2014: 55 mph wind and 1.5" hail: no reported damage
6/23/2013: 55 mph winds: \$20,000 local damage
7/13/2011: Quarter-size hail: no reported damage
5/26/2010: 55 mph winds: \$25,000 local damage
9/29/2005: 35 mph winds: \$50,000 regional damage
10/6/2001: high winds: \$50,000 regional damage
7/9/2001: 50 mph winds: \$5,000 local damage
Extreme Cold/Snow/Ice/Wind
3/14/2017: 18" snow: \$25,000 regional damage
2/1/2015: Record cold month with 15 to 20+ days below zero: no reported impact
1/1/2015: 0 to 10 degrees with winds of 15-30 mph creating wind chills colder than -20 to -30 below zero: no reported impact
12/9/2014: DR4207 with 10-20" snow: \$100,000 regional damage
3/12/2014: 24" snow and wind gusts to 35-40 mph: \$35,000 regional damage
12/26/2012: 18" snow: \$20,000 regional damage
2/23/2010: 6-30" snow: \$100,000 regional damage
12/11/2008: 5" snow, sleet, and freezing rain resulting in glaze coating of ice: \$50,000 regional damage
4/15-16/2007: DR1698 "Nor'icane" with 3" snow, rain with winds of 60-80 mph: \$1,000,000 regional damage
10/25/2005: 8-18" snow: \$100,000 regional damage
4/4/2003: 18" snow: \$40,000 regional damage

Figure 6: West Rutland Highest Risk Hazard History - West Rutland Local Hazard Mitigation Plan

From June 30, 2022, to the end of 2022, Rutland County Sheriff's Department responded to 185 incidents in West Rutland, of which 17 resulted in criminal arrests. They also performed 187 traffic stops in Town, issuing 123 tickets during this time. West Rutland also has a Neighborhood Watch, which was established in 2022 after a community forum.

The *2024 West Rutland Proposed Budget* shows \$88,478 to \$100,402 in police expenses, paid for primarily via property taxes, from 2021 to 2023 and a proposed \$100,402 for 2024.

Fire Department

The West Rutland Fire Department provides 24-hour primary emergency response to the entire Town of West Rutland and belongs to the Rutland County Fire Mutual Aid Association, which provides support services to other towns in the county. The fire station at 217 Marble Street was upgraded to include a six-bay drive-thru garage, renovating the former bays into office space.

The Fire Department has two fire engines, one ladder truck, two utility trucks, one mini-pumper, and one utility terrain vehicle. 18 volunteer firefighters serve the Town, of which 9 have served over 15 years. The Fire Department is administered by the Fire Chief, an elected position approved by the Selectboard. All firefighters receive initial training within their first year of service through the Vermont Fire Service Training Council Program. Firefighters also attend local, state, and regional firefighting training and courses.

Emergencies are reported through the state's 911 system and the information is relayed electronically to the Vermont State Police in Rutland who then dispatch the Fire Department. In 2022, the Fire Department answered 72 emergency calls, of which 24 were motor vehicle crashes. The average response time from dispatch to the first unit on the scene of an emergency is 4 minutes.

The Fire Department does more than emergency response. Annually, firefighters distribute smoke and carbon monoxide detectors at the West Rutland Block Party; in 2022, 124 smoke detectors and 22 carbon monoxide detectors were distributed, funded by a *Vermont Division of Fire Safety* grant. The Fire Department participates in Fire Prevention Week each year, providing fire prevention safety education to kindergarten through third-grade classes at West Rutland School.

The Fire Department has an annual line-item budget item, set to meet the annual operating budget, and supplemented by a Truck Replacement Fund. The *2024 West Rutland Proposed Budget* shows \$203,112 to \$212,889 for the Fire Department from 2021 to 2023 and a proposed \$225,244 for 2024.



**Figure 7: 2023 Fire Prevention Week –
West Rutland Fire Department**

Public Utilities

For information on Electric Utilities, see the [Energy Chapter](#).

Water

Municipal water service is provided by the West Rutland Water Department, which is governed by the Selectboard and supervised by the Town Manager. West Rutland's municipal water infrastructure is detailed in a report by Otter Creek Engineering.

“Over the past four decades, the Town has developed two 450 gpm gravel-packed well sources, constructed a well pump control building, constructed two water storage tanks with substantial fire protection storage, upgraded much of its water transmission and distribution system, and installed radio-read customer water meters.”

- [Otter Creek Engineering, November 2, 2020](#)

West Rutland's two gravel-packed wells have a total permitted capacity of 648,000 gallons per day (gpd). The Town has an 830,000-gallon water storage tank on Durgy Hill, a 180,000-gallon water storage tank on Clark Hill Road, a cast iron distribution system, and a water main along Route 4 from Pleasant Street. The aquifer, from which all the water is drawn, is located near the recreation area at the end of Fairview Avenue. Well #3 is the primary pump, drilled in 2004, and can supply 454 gallons per minute (gpm). Well #2 is the secondary pump, drilled in 1984, and can supply 357 gpm. The system has an average daily water consumption of 186,400 gpd in 2020 with 763 water customers, equating to 1,0003 equivalent residential units (ERUs). With an average water consumption of 186 gpd/ERU, the system has very little water waste or leakage. Based on daily water consumption, the permitted capacity of the water services, and that Well #2 is a 100% backup, the Town has 137,000 gpd of unused source capacity.

The 2022 *West Rutland Consumer Confidence Report* outlines West Rutland's Drinking Water Quality for Well #2 and Well #3. The drinking water has no known or expected risk to human health, with all data collected being below the Maximum Contamination Level Goal. In 2022, the Town installed a chlorine analyzer, which gives more precise and frequent chlorine readings.

The 2024 *West Rutland Proposed Budget* shows \$335,693 to \$441,718 from 2021 to 2023 in water department expenses and bond principal and interest, paid for primarily via property taxes. There has been an increase in line maintenance expenses and more money going into the Water Department's Capital Improvement Reserve. The Plan encourages the Town to acquire grant funds to meet current and projected water service needs.

In 2023, the voters of Rutland Town Fire District #1 and West Rutland mutually agreed to the Town of West Rutland acquiring the district's assets, with the official transfer expected to occur in mid-2024. Before this date, a few components are being installed to connect the water systems.

Rutland Town Fire District #1 was constructed in 1980, serving 143 residential units on Route 4, East Proctor Road, Simons Avenue, and portions of Barrett Hill and Campbell Road. The district water system has unused capacity, being permitted to draw 43,200 gpd with 2020 average daily water consumption being 15,500 gpd, and has no significant water leakage, with average daily

water consumption per residential unit being 107 gpd. Once connected to the West Rutland municipal water system, the fire district's well will be disconnected.

Wastewater

Municipal wastewater service is provided by the West Rutland Wastewater Department. West Rutland's first municipal wastewater facility began operating in 1971, being constructed as a part of federal Clean Water Act requirements. Growth in town put a strain on the system, resulting in the facility retiring, with a new facility opening in 2000.

This facility's infrastructure is detailed in a 2020 report by Otter Creek Engineering, shown in Figure 8.

"The Town owns and operates a 450,000 gpd capacity wastewater treatment facility, located on Clear Water Boulevard and constructed in 1999. The wastewater collection system generally encompasses the same area as the water distribution system, including the newly constructed low-pressure collection system along Business Route 4. Given that the treatment facility is 20 years old, it can be expected that a facility upgrade project will be required within the next 5-10 years."

- [Otter Creek Engineering, November 2, 2020](#)

Following this report, in 2023, the Town acquired a brand-new UV system and the pump station on Elm Street was upgraded. The town-owned wastewater has 795 customers, equating to 1,037 residential units.

The final waste product produced is "sludge." The Town transports this final product to the Rutland City wastewater facility for further dewatering and disposal. In the event this disposal site is not available, sludge will be transported to the Glens Falls, New York facility for disposal. Those not served by either wastewater system use septic systems as an on-site sewage treatment solution.

The 2024 West Rutland Proposed Budget shows \$400,475 to \$634,435 going to the wastewater expenses and bond principle and interest, paid for primarily via property taxes, from 2021 to 2023 and a proposed \$500,752. The town has also increased capital improvement expenses by \$10,000 from 2020 to 2023. The Plan encourages the Town to acquire grant funds to meet current and projected wastewater service needs.

The Town is expected to acquire Rutland Town Fire District #1 in mid-2024. Rutland Town Fire District #1 wastewater system covers the same area and customer base as the water system. Wastewater is collected at a central pump station, located at the intersection of Routes 4 and 3, and then pumped to West Rutland's system, via a force main along Business Route 4. Otter Creek Engineering in 2020 said the pump station operates reliably with no major capital needs in the immediate future.



Figure 8: Potential Consolidation of West Rutland's and Rutland Town Fire District's Water and Wastewater Systems – Otter Creek Engineering, 2020

Solid Waste

The town belongs to the *Rutland County Solid Waste District (RCSWD)* which functions like a municipality, with a Board of Supervisors that operates under similar guidelines to the Selectboard. West Rutland has a representative on this Board.

RCSWD allows residents to purchase transfer station permits enabling them to transport their waste and dispose of it at a Rutland transfer station. There are also private transfer stations in Rutland which charge a flat fee per bag.

West Rutland closed their landfill in 1987 and residents are responsible for personal solid waste removal by either hiring a trash hauler or bringing their trash to a commercially operated drop-off location. The decision to require residents to be responsible for their waste was made after a study of the Town's solid waste costs which concluded a transfer station in West Rutland would be too expensive to build and maintain, causing a rise in taxes. A list of haulers who service West Rutland is available at the Town Hall. According to the *2022 Rutland County Solid Waste District Annual Report*, there are three haulers located in Town.

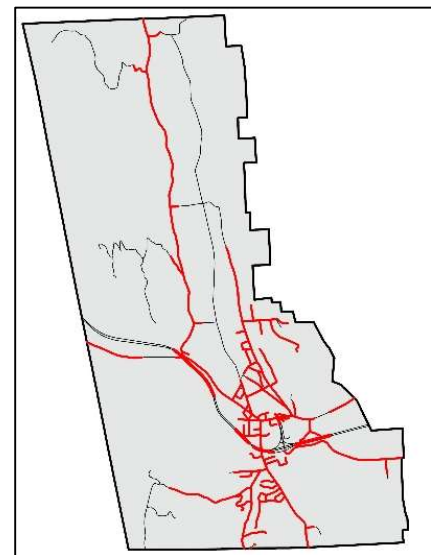
On July 1, 2020, Vermont state law banned the disposal of food scraps in the trash or landfills. *Music Mountain Compost*, *Casella Resource Solutions*, and *Wyman Frasier Compost of Vermont* serve residential and commercial composting needs in West Rutland. People also compost in their backyards, with *RCSWD* offering discounted compost bins for residents.

Local officials consider the current solid waste management system adequate. There are no plans for a town transfer station, landfill, or incinerator due to the high expense.

Communication

Consolidated Communications, and its subsidiaries like *Fidium Fiber*, along with *Comcast*, *Verizon*, and web-based services, provide telephone service in West Rutland. All West Rutland's roads, except Route 4 and small segments of Class 3 or 4 roads, have access to broadband deployment, according to 2021 *Vermont Public Service Department* data.

For cable, *Comcast* has served the Town since 1959, either by underground installations or above-ground wiring. Figure 9 shows the Town's cable lines, as of 2019, in red. The Plan encourages prospective telecommunication developers to utilize the input of West Rutland residents, adjacent towns, and the Rutland Regional Planning Commission. Telecommunication development must be consistent with West Rutland's Zoning Bylaws.



**Figure 9: West Rutland 2019
Cable Routes - Vermont
Department of Public Service**

School, Child Care, and Library

School

West Rutland School enrolls students Pre-K through 12, is located at 713 Main Street, and is a part of the Greater Rutland County Supervisory Union and a member of the Quarry Valley Unified Union School District. The school was originally built in 1928. Two additions were added over the years. The entire building is handicap accessible. The school building and adjacent fields, a total of 20 acres, are used extensively by the students and the citizens of West Rutland.

Student enrollment figures from 2005 to 2023 are shown in Figure 10.

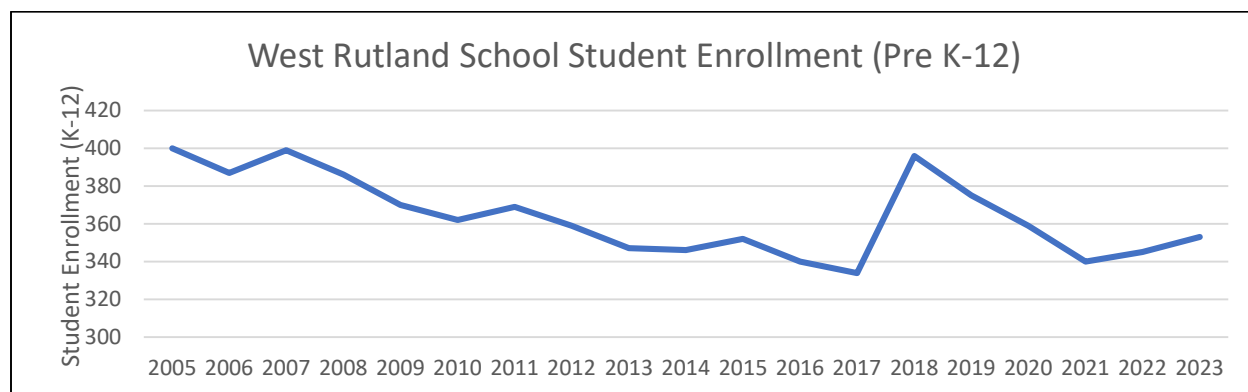


Figure 10: West Rutland School Student Enrollment - Vermont Agency of Education

The graph shows a decrease of 56 students from 2018 to 2021 and an increase of 16 students from 2021 to 2023. On a grade level, the number of students ranges from 15 to 39 students. Figure 11 shows grade-level enrollment in West Rutland School in 2018, 2021, and 2023. In 2023, there are more 1st and 10th graders and fewer 6th and 12th graders than in the other two years.

	Pre K	Kindergarten (Full Time)	1 st	2nd	3 rd	4th	5th	6 th	7 th	8th	9th	10th	11th	12th	Total
2018	28	23	25	24	30	39	32	29	28	31	28	22	28	29	396
2021	21	26	23	23	26	18	28	29	30	30	29	18	16	23	340
2023	24	25	36	21	22	25	27	21	28	27	27	31	23	15	352

Figure 11: 2018, 2021, and 2023 West Rutland School Student Enrollment by Grade - Vermont Agency of Education

West Rutland School offers 4 Advanced Placement (AP) Courses and participates in Vermont's Early College Program, where high school seniors take a year of college-level courses while completing their high school degree. Students can acquire vocational training at Stafford Technical Center in Rutland. With high college expenses and a shrinking workforce in the trades, the Plan supports Stafford Technical School, and technical programs generally, as they are important to meeting the Town's educational and economic needs.

Child Care

Ensuring accessible, affordable, and quality childcare is an integral part of the Town. There are currently three registered childcare providers in West Rutland, one being West Rutland Preschool and two being registered home providers. An additional 65 childcare providers exist within a 10-mile radius, of which 20 are registered home providers. This radius reflects childcare opportunities that parents might use when they commute to work.

Library

The West Rutland Free Library, located at 595 Main Street, serves over 1000 cardholders and has over 13,000 books and videos to choose from. The library also has snowshoes and a metal detector for residents to borrow and passes for free or reduced admission to historical sites and state parks. The library received a grant in 2021 for new computers. The Town of West Rutland, according to the 2022 *West Rutland Town Report*, provided \$55,000 to the library in 2023, with the Proctor Trust and “Miscellaneous expenses” covering the remaining expenses.



Figure 12: West Rutland Free Library

Recreation

West Rutland has many recreation opportunities, with details available here and in the [Natural Areas](#) section of the Plan.

The West Rutland Recreational Park is located at 294 Fairview Avenue. The park includes a playground with equipment for toddlers to elementary-age children, a basketball court, a volleyball court, soccer fields, and baseball fields. The recreation center building has group meeting space and bathrooms. The basketball court has painted lines outlining a pair of pickleball courts. Two pickleball nets were donated in 2023 by *Flint Consulting LLC*.

A network of walking and hiking trails is found within the park and the adjacent town-owned forest. A new walking trail along the Clarendon River past the soccer field was added to the trail network in 2022. The Recreation area grounds offer a view of the Clarendon River and a restored swimming hole. A new Putting Green, sponsored by *Carpet King of Vermont*, was installed in 2023 adjacent to the basketball court. The West Rutland "Parks for Paws" Dog Park is open from dawn to dusk, year-round. The dog park was founded and built by *Parks for Paws LTD*, a nonprofit organization committed to building and maintaining dog parks in Rutland County.

In addition to the Recreation Park, a baseball field, softball field, and two soccer fields are located behind the West Rutland School. A playground for preschoolers and elementary children is adjacent to the school.

A three-phased Marsh Trail was completed in 2023, located at 1467 Whipple Hollow Road. It was a collaboration between the *Rutland County Audubon Society* and the Town. The Town of West Rutland constructed a parking lot and Stafford Technical School's construction class built an information kiosk. With a boardwalk winding around trees in a cedar and hemlock swamp, it's a great place to hear a bird song. The construction was funded by a \$42,024 grant from the Recreational Trails Program, federal funds administered by the *Vermont Departments of Forests, Parks, and Recreation*. It was completed by the Vermont Youth Conservation Corps and volunteers, as shown in Figure 13.

Hanley Mountain is known as one of the best hang-gliding spots on the East Coast.

West Rutland State Forest, a hilly 344-acre property located at the northern end of the Taconic Mountains, is used for hunting and people walk on state forest roads.

The *West Rutland ATV Sportsman Club* provides a trail from Ira into West Rutland, entering through the Clark Hill Town Forest in the southwest corner of the Town.

In 2023, the *West Rutland Rotary Club* donated \$76,657.98 for the construction of a pavilion at the recreation area. The West Rutland chapter of the club is closing and did this as a final action. The *2024 West Rutland Proposed Budget* shows \$48,158 to \$70,145 in recreation expenses, paid primarily via property taxes, from 2021 to 2023 and a proposed \$66,063 for 2024.

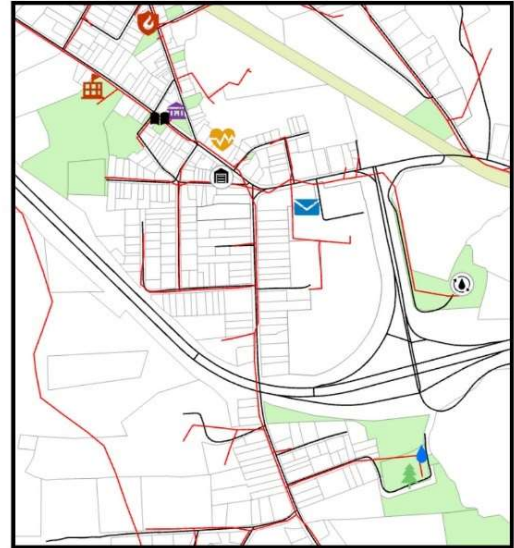
These facilities and natural areas offer opportunities for residents and have the power to attract visitors who might explore local shops and even consider making West Rutland their home. The Plan encourages the Town to pursue recreational improvements, and related grants, to create, expand, and connect trail networks. The Plan also encourages towns beyond West Rutland to cooperatively plan to establish connected trail networks for residents and visitors alike to travel long distances.



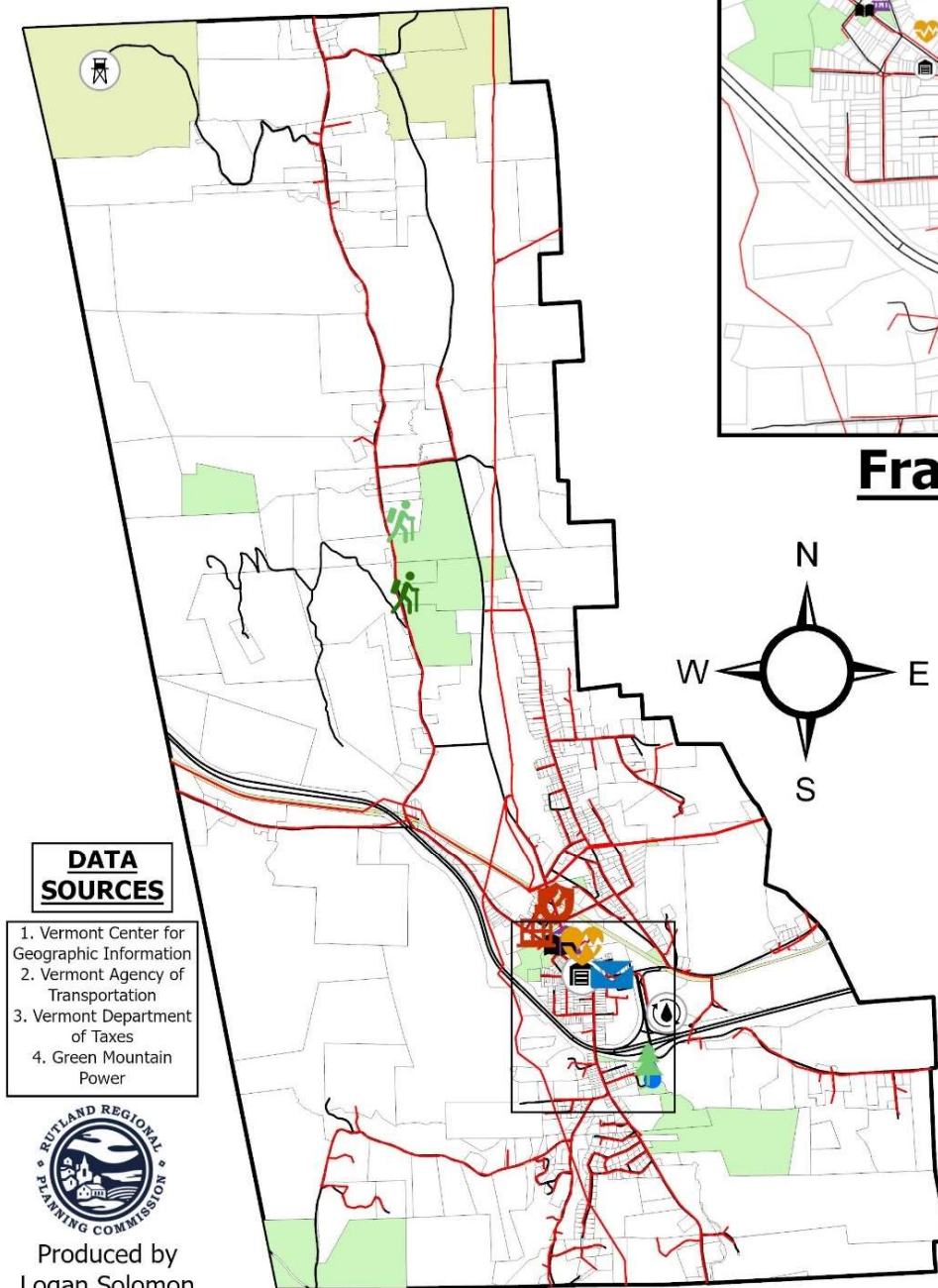
**Figure 13: Marsh Trail Construction –
Town of West Rutland**

PUBLIC FACILITIES AND UTILITIES

WEST RUTLAND, VERMONT



Frame 1



DATA SOURCES

1. Vermont Center for Geographic Information
2. Vermont Agency of Transportation
3. Vermont Department of Taxes
4. Green Mountain Power



Produced by
Logan Solomon

LEGEND

- Fire Station
- Library
- Marsh Trailhead 1
- Marsh Trailhead 2
- Post Office
- Recreation Area
- Satellite Ambulance Station
- School
- Town Garage
- Town Hall
- Wastewater Treatment Facility
- Water Wells
- West Rutland State Forest
- Electric Distribution Lines
- Road
- Parcels
- Town Owned Parcels
- State Owned Parcels
- Town Boundary

THIS MAP IS FOR PLANNING PURPOSES ONLY

PUBLIC FACILITIES AND UTILITIES GOALS

1. To plan for, finance, and provide an efficient system of public facilities and services to meet current and future needs.
2. To broaden access to educational and vocational training opportunities sufficient to ensure the full realization of the abilities of West Rutland residents.
3. To encourage the availability of safe and affordable childcare.
4. To maintain and enhance recreational opportunities for West Rutland residents and visitors.

PUBLIC FACILITIES AND UTILITIES ACTIONS

1. Annually review the West Rutland *Local Emergency Management Plan* and *Local Hazard Mitigation Plan* and revise these plans as needed.
2. Collaboratively work with West Rutland School, Stafford Technical Center, and surrounding towns to identify further opportunities for students to gain job training opportunities besides a four-year degree.
3. Promote state agency information on the Town website and in the Town Hall on best practices for home use of public facilities and services, including proper disposal of cooking grease, water conservation, and recycling.
4. Evaluate town-owned property's current use and identify potential future uses to benefit the citizens and environment of West Rutland most efficiently.
5. Work with the Rutland Regional Planning Commission to identify and pursue funding opportunities to upgrade the wastewater facility, and other public facilities and services, as needed, to meet current and future needs.
6. Annually evaluate the *Consumer Confidence Report* and take action as needed to maintain West Rutland's healthy water quality.
7. Seek public input on updating the 2012 Recreation Master Plan and establishing a recreation committee and pursue either or both if decided by the Town.
8. Establish and improve pedestrian facilities and bike routes in areas of highest priority, including areas with high recreation value.
9. Further identify opportunities for West Rutland seniors to socialize and prevent isolation, including on Town Owned Lands.
10. Conduct youth outreach with entities like West Rutland School to identify programs, facilities, and services necessary to retain high school graduates.
11. Communicate with West Rutland School administration annually to ensure the School and its Pre-K program remain open.
12. Establish a recreational water feature at the Recreation Field.
13. Build the pavilion in the recreation area.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Required to be in this chapter of the town plan by law:

24 V.S.A. § 4382 - An economic development element that describes present economic conditions and the location, type, and scale of desired economic development, and identifies policies, projects, and programs necessary to foster economic growth;

The West Rutland Historical Society tells the early economic history of West Rutland,

“By the 1850’s the marble industry began to flourish and with it, the Town of West Rutland. Marble companies built houses and tenements for the workers, most of whom were seasonal employees. Between 1870 and 1880 the population began to climb rapidly as the marble industry boomed. In 1870 there were 1,600 people living in West Rutland, but by 1880 there were over 3,000 residents. Consolidation of the marble companies began in 1888 with the Vermont Marble Company Purchasing the Gilson and Albertson Marble Company. The marble industry declined in the mid-20th century and the once powerful Vermont Marble Company’s holdings were sold in 1978.”

- [*West Rutland Historic Society, 2023*](#)

By 1990, just 0.7% of the population was in the mining and quarrying industry, according to that year’s *Decimal Census*. And West Rutland's economy diversified: 26.3% of residents were in the service industry, 19.7% were in manufacturing, and 19% were in retail.

The economy has changed again. In 2021, as shown in Figure 14, manufacturing has declined, while the service industry has replaced it. Unlike the marble industry era, 940 people, 83.7% of employed West Rutland residents, work outside of West Rutland.

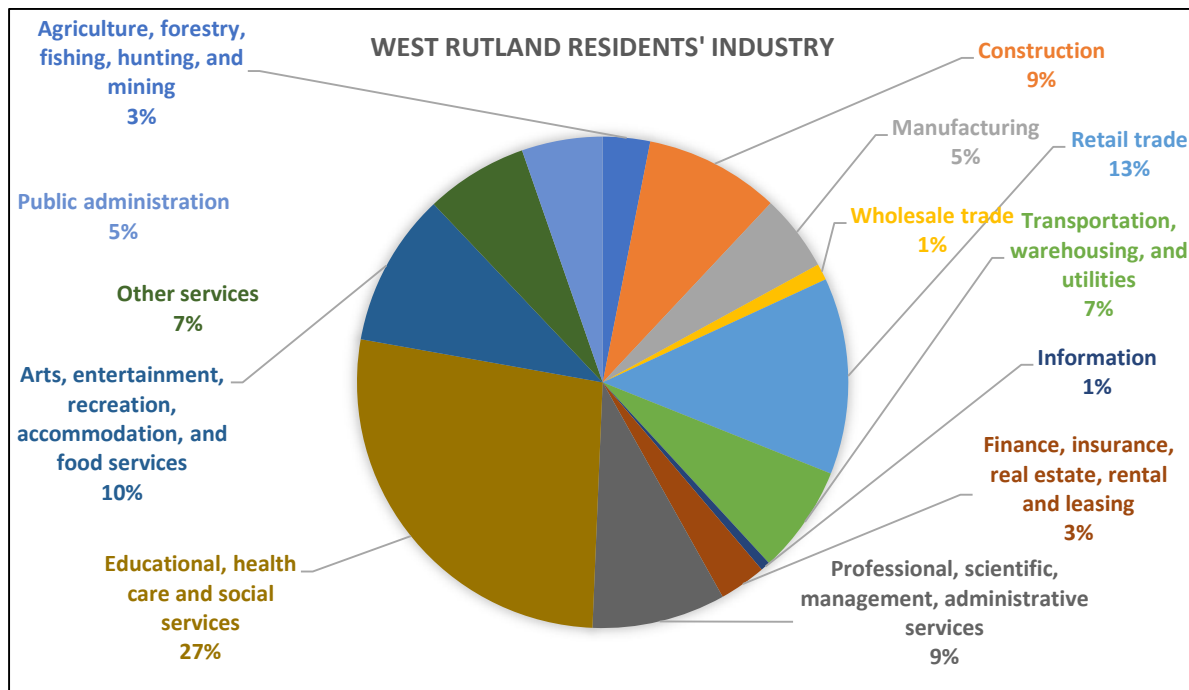


Figure 14: 2021 Industries Residents Work In – 2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate

West Rutland's Businesses

The *West Rutland Business Directory* lists 56 businesses in and around West Rutland. From construction and home improvement to retail and local food, to sculpting and carving, West Rutland's businesses serve many of our community's wants and needs and draw many to Town.

Most businesses are in and around the historic village, with some being in the state-designated Village Center, which was adopted on March 1, 2016, and had its boundaries expanded in 2022.

Village Center is the “core of a traditional settlement, typically comprised of a cohesive mix of residential, civic, religious, commercial, and mixed-use buildings, arranged along a main street and intersecting streets that are within walking distance for residents who live within and surrounding the core.”

- 24 V.S.A. § 2793a

The Village Center designation offers five benefits for local businesses to provide more welcoming storefronts and have greater accessibility: The 10% State Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit, 25% Façade Improvement Tax Credit, 50% Code Improvement Tax Credit, and the 50% Technology Tax Credit. Also, the village qualifies as an existing settlement under criterion 9(L) of *Act 250*, relaxing regulations for future business development. The town may create a Special Assessment District within the Village Center, which can raise funds for capital expenses to support business projects. The village center also allows the town to have top priority for all state agency funding programs, many of which could further economic development.

The Westway Mall is a valuable commercial parcel to the Town. The *2018 West Rutland Village Master Plan*, ‘Village Master Plan’, produced by Camoin Associates, identified development opportunities on the eastern and southern sides of the Westway mall, as well as six retail sectors that have the potential to thrive in West Rutland.

- Clothing Stores
- Sports Goods/Hobby/Musical Instrument Stores
- Furniture Stores
- Electronics and Appliance Stores
- Special Food Services
- Book, Periodical, and Music Stores

The Village Master Plan also identified five businesses for the general Village Area and the Westway Mall: an Outdoor Recreation store; cafes and coffee shops; a brew pub; a clothing store; and a hardware store.

The Village Master Plan regarded the 17-acre Westway Mall as a large parcel opportunity. It produced a site concept map, shown in Figure 15, which shows additional commercial buildings in front of the mall and a collection of mixed-use development buildings and green space behind the mall.



**Figure 15: Westway Mall Site Concept Map –
2018 West Rutland Master Plan**

Since this, mall owners have conducted their own studies on how best to use the space.

West Rutland Industrial Park, built by the West Rutland Development Corporation, contains seven tenants in light industry, manufacturing, and/or commercial businesses. These businesses are important in providing local employment and generating tax revenue. For instance, Pet Gear, in 2017, employed 135 people and made up 22% of total Grand List revenue.

West Rutland is a dog-friendly town with a popular dog park. The Plan encourages the “dog economy,” including groomers, pet stores, veterinary clinics, dog trainers, dog daycare centers, and dog-friendly restaurants and retailers. The Plan encourages the Town to further its economic development planning, either by developing an economic development plan and/or establishing an economic development committee and/or participating in the Community Visits program by the *Vermont Council on Rural Development*. The Community Visits program is a free program that allows communities to engage in economic development planning within a facilitated structure.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOAL

1. To provide a strong and diverse economy that provides satisfying and rewarding job opportunities and to expand economic opportunities.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACTIONS

1. Plan new infrastructure to assist the growth of West Rutland’s businesses.
2. Work with the Rutland Regional Planning Commission to identify funding opportunities that enhance the town’s business environment.
3. Work with Westway Mall owners to most efficiently use the parcel to meet West Rutland’s economic development goal.
4. Conduct further economic development planning by doing one or more of the following: Develop an economic development plan and/or economic development committee and/or participate in the VCRD Community Visits program.
5. Market West Rutland to the business sectors outlined in the 2018 *West Rutland Village Master Plan* and to the “dog economy”

HOUSING

Required to be in this chapter of the town plan by law:

24 V.S.A. § 4382 - A housing element that shall include a recommended program for addressing low- and moderate-income persons' housing needs. The program should account for permitted accessory dwelling units, which provide affordable housing;

Physical Housing Stock

Like many New England Towns, West Rutland's residential development is in and near our community's historic core. West Rutland has over 100 architecturally and historically significant buildings, most are residential.

West Rutland's town center, 'West Rutland CDP' in the 2020 *Decadal Census*, shown in Figure 16, holds 88% of all West Rutland housing units and 91% of all occupied housing units according to the 2020 *Decadal Census*.

Outside West Rutland CDP, development density decreases, and agriculture and recreational uses radiate from the center of town. New development typically occurs towards the perimeter of the village area and along the major roads.

Three-quarters of West Rutland's housing stock is single-family detached houses.

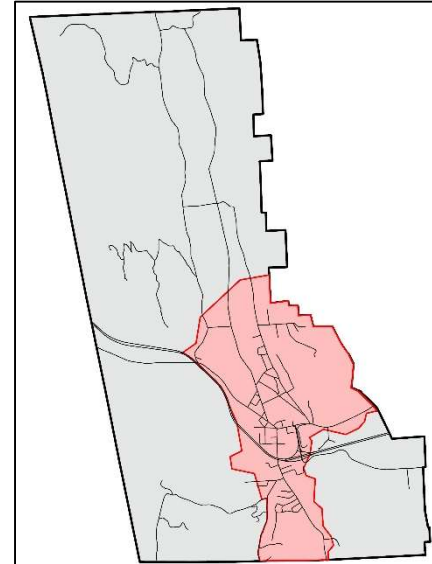


Figure 16: West Rutland CDP (in red) – U.S Census Bureau

Figure 17 shows the frequency of each housing type.

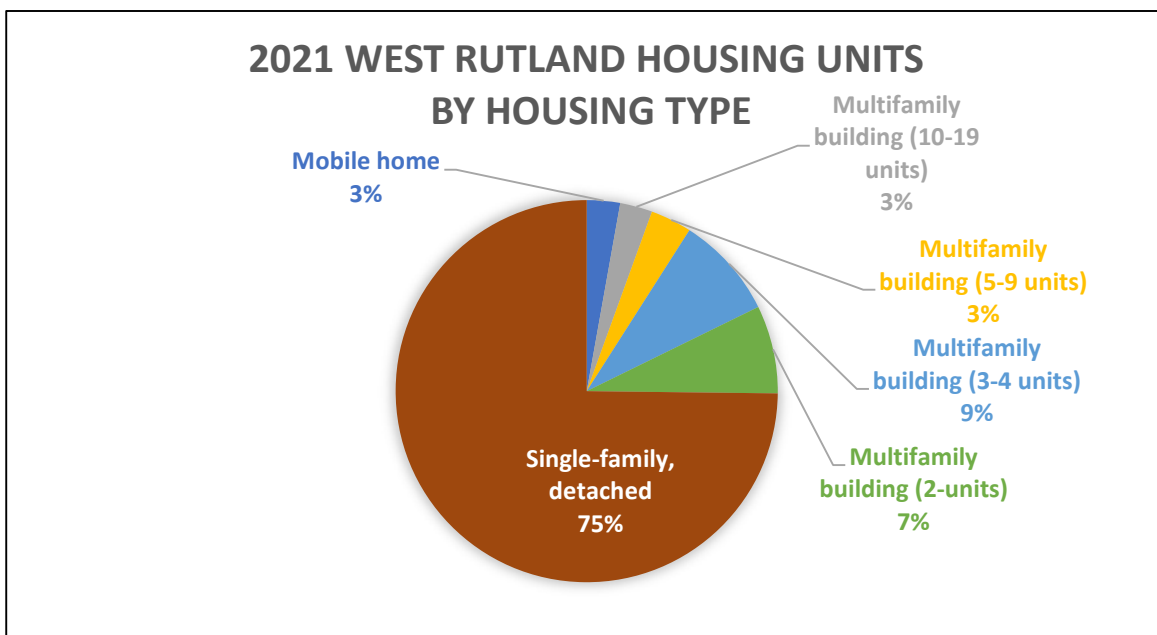


Figure 17: 2020 West Rutland Housing Units by Housing Type - 2021 American Community 5-Year Estimate

55.3% of West Rutland's homes were built in 1939 or earlier. Older homes have historic character and tend to be more affordable but need more maintenance, have higher utility costs, may be harder for older or disabled individuals to live in, and can pose health hazards like lead paint and asbestos. Figure 18 below shows West Rutland's housing age distribution.

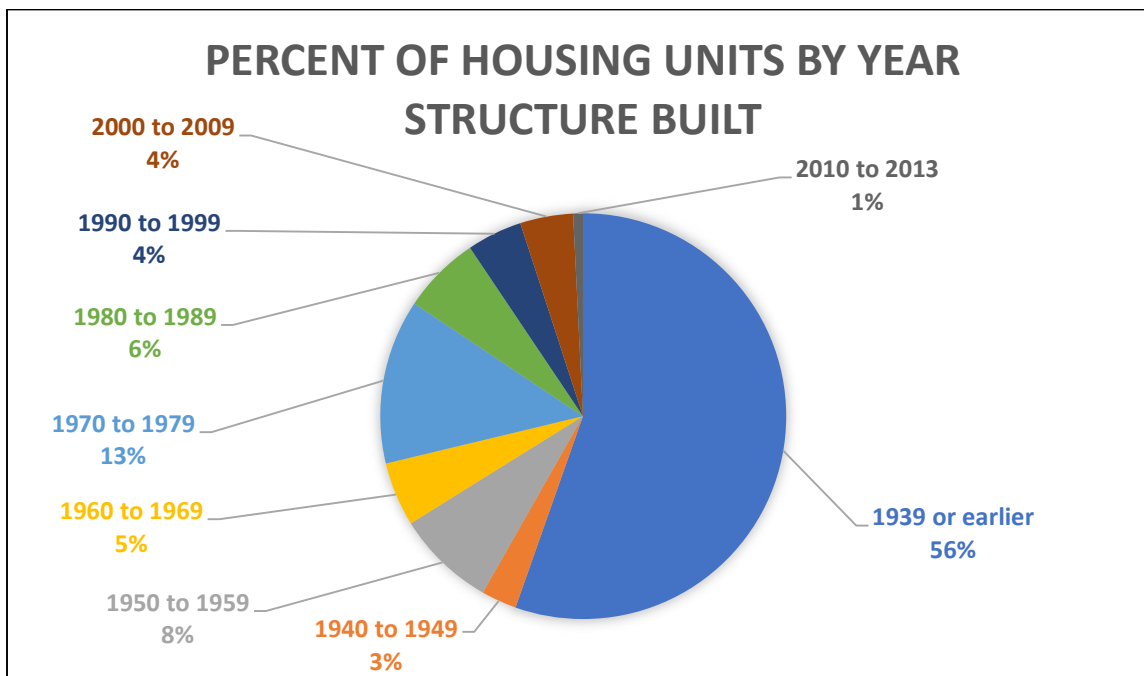


Figure 18: Percent of West Rutland Housing Units by Year Structure Built – 2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate

2% of West Rutland homes are for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use. As shown in Figure 19, there has been a rise in short-term rentals in West Rutland, according to *AirDNA short-term rental listing data*, which aggregates listings from popular rental platforms, including *Airbnb* and *Vrbo*.

From Fiscal Years 2010 – 2020, 18 new Single-Family Homes were constructed. During this time, there was a trend of multi-family units being converted to single-family units.

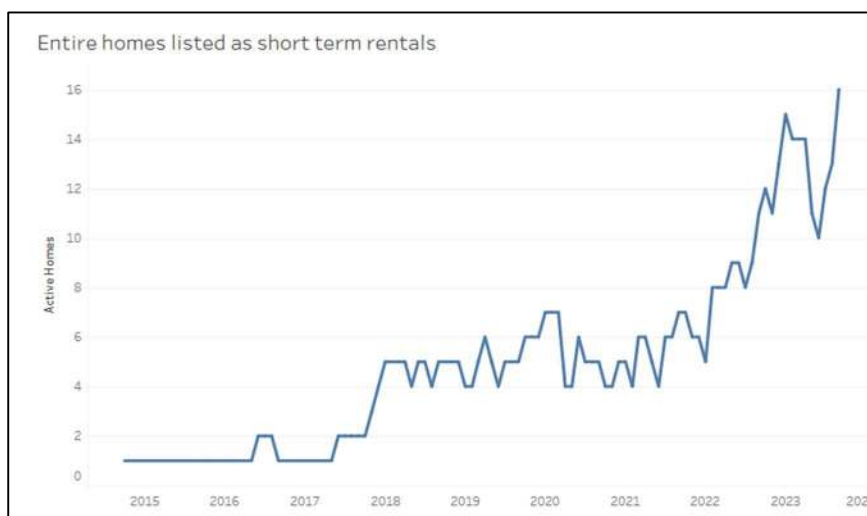


Figure 19: 2015 - 2023 West Rutland Short Term Rental Listings – AirDNA & HousingData.org

Consistent with the [Land Use](#), [Public Facilities and Utilities](#), and [Natural, Scenic, Cultural, and Historic Resources](#) Chapters of the Plan, residential growth must not exceed the ability of the Town to provide facilities and services, and must not have undue and adverse impacts on natural, scenic, cultural, and historic resources, areas, and features.

Affordability

Affordable housing is commonly defined as spending 30% of income on housing expenses. Vermont Housing Finance Agency's Home Price Affordability Calculator estimates a home's affordable purchase price for the average Vermont buyer, assuming a 5% downpayment, average statewide interest rates, property taxes, insurance premiums, and closing costs. Using the 2021 median household income for West Rutland at \$50,909, this calculator estimates that the median West Rutland household could afford a home priced at \$154,500 if they had \$16,297 available for closing costs.

In 2021, the median price of a home sold was close to affordable for the median West Rutland household, being priced at \$164,000. In 2022, the median price of a home sold was \$202,000. Figure 20 shows West Rutland, with one exception in 2018, has had a lower median home sale price than both Rutland County and statewide dating back to 1988.

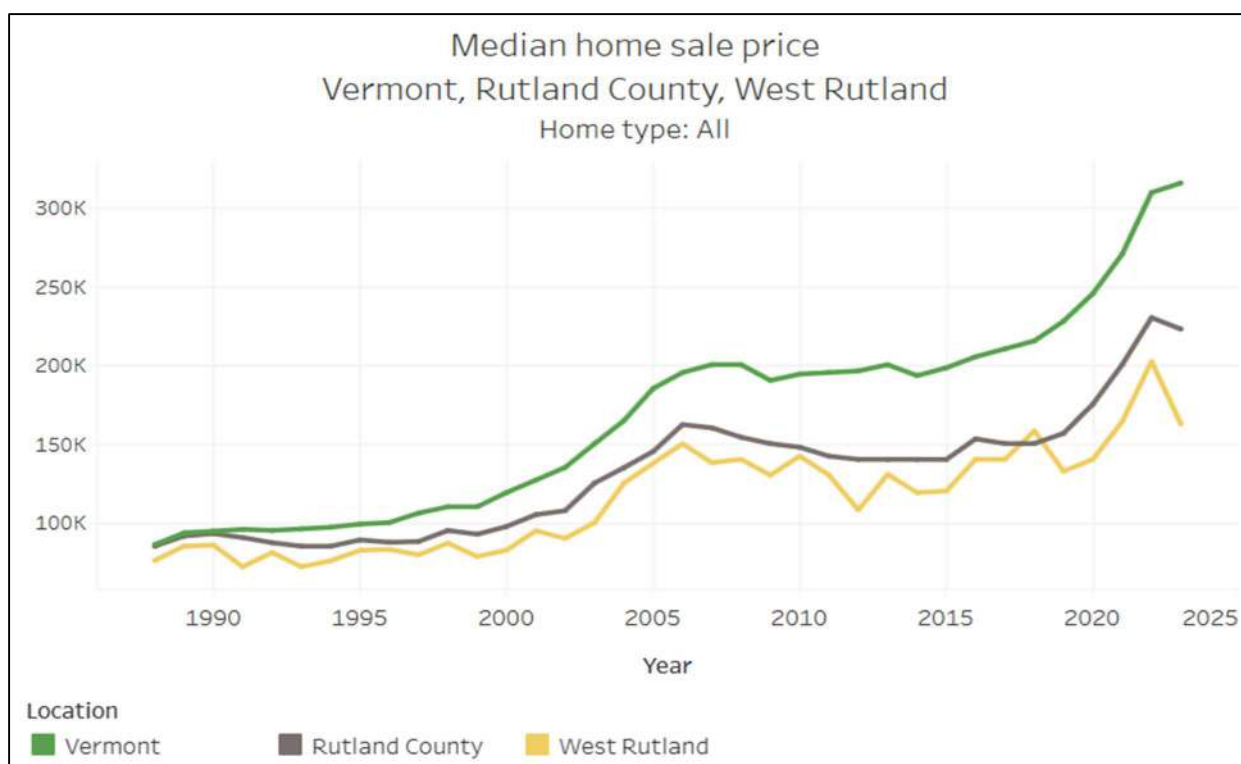


Figure 20: Median Home Sale Price for Vermont, Rutland County, and West Rutland from 1988 to 2023 – Vermont Department of Taxes

While the 2021 median household income for all households is \$50,909, for renters it's \$37,875. 43% of renters have unaffordable housing, spending more than 30% of household income on housing costs and 27% of renters spend more than 50% of household income on housing costs.

There are several regulatory and financial factors on the local, state, and national levels that impact the cost of housing development and redevelopment, and the ability to provide housing:

1. *West Rutland's Zoning Regulations*: The Planning Commission updated its zoning regulations to promote high-density multi-family housing in the designated village center and encourage redevelopment of existing parcels that have been vacant and underutilized for many years. The zoning regulations were adopted on December 19, 2022.
2. *Act 47 (2023), known as the HOME ACT*: In June 2023, Governor Scott signed a law that supersedes West Rutland's zoning regulations. Duplexes are allowed wherever year-round single-unit dwellings are allowed, five dwelling units per acre are allowed in areas served with municipal water and sewer, and until July 1, 2026, it loosens *Act 250 regulations* for housing development. It also has funds available for affordable housing development and a Housing Resource Navigator program at the Rutland Regional Planning Commission, which is an opportunity in 2024 for the Town to receive technical support identifying future sites and housing types that fit the Village's character.
3. *Vermont Housing Improvement Program (VHIP)*: State grants up to \$50,000 per unit for property owners to repair vacant rental units, meet rental health codes, add additional units to existing buildings, or create accessory dwelling units (ADU) on owner-occupied properties. Participants must contribute a 20% match and those not creating an ADU must maintain Fair Market Rent prices. This program was further funded by the HOME ACT and promoted by Governor Scott in West Rutland.
4. *Inflation*: Housing construction costs have risen 33% from 2022 to 2023 according to the *Vermont Housing Finance Agency*. This is attributed to the price of acquiring land, labor, and materials and having higher interest rates on financing.



Figure 21: Governor Scott promoting VHIP outside NeighborWorks of Western Vermont – Town of West Rutland

Non-profits, however, have stepped up. In 2022, *BROC Community Action* assisted 215 West Rutland residents, providing food, housing counseling, homelessness assistance, and weatherization, heating, and utility assistance.

The *Housing Trust of Rutland County*, 'HTRC', as of January 2023, owns and manages 35 affordable rental units in West Rutland. *HTRC* and *Evernorth Inc.* are redeveloping the former Main Street Cash Market and NAPA Property, located at 376-418 Main Street, as a three-story energy-efficient 24-unit complex in the designated Village Center. It will be a multi-family mixed-income residential development primarily of one-bedroom units. The Town's Development Review Board approved the project with multiple public hearings and a site visit occurring prior. It is waiting for state regulatory approval.

NeighborWorks of Western Vermont administers *VHIP* and since 2020, they have provided West Rutland's residents with 20 homebuying counseling appointments, seven financial coaches, four energy loans (totaling \$10,600), and 2 Home Repair Grants (totaling \$48,559).

HOUSING GOAL

1. To ensure the availability of safe and affordable housing for West Rutland residents.

HOUSING ACTIONS

1. Collaborate with non-profit and private developers to ensure housing growth is safe and affordable, fits the character of the neighborhood, and meets the diverse needs of the community.
2. Encourage and support property development of studio apartments, mixed-income housing, senior housing with progressive levels of care, townhouses, and mixed-use developments that fit a neighborhood's character and match future land use plans.
3. Scope areas for potential use as a Planned Unit Development.
4. Work to expand the Grand list to lower residents' tax burden and utility fees.
5. Pursue Rutland Regional Planning Commission's Housing Resource Navigator program for technical assistance in identifying future sites and housing types that fit the Village's character.
6. Promote housing-related grants and low-interest loans on the town's website and in town buildings.
7. Inventory low-value lands and housing and explore the feasibility of the town buying up these lands to be developed or redeveloped for housing.

TRANSPORTATION

Required to be in this chapter of the town plan by law:

24 V.S.A. § 4382 - A transportation plan, consisting of a map and statement of present and prospective transportation and circulation facilities showing existing and proposed highways and streets by type and character of improvement, and where pertinent, parking facilities, transit routes, terminals, bicycle paths and trails, scenic roads, airports, railroads, and port facilities, and other similar facilities or uses, with indications of priority of need;

The first roadways in West Rutland were established in the early 1800s. Railroads came to Vermont, and West Rutland, in the late 1840s. For some time, Rutland and West Rutland were connected by trolleys, begun in 1885 with horse cars, and converted to electricity in 1894. The trolley service was abandoned in 1924 with the advent of the private automobile.

The major transportation corridors through West Rutland are US Route 4, 4A, and Business Route 4 running east and west, and Route 133, Marble Street, and Whipple Hollow Road forming the main north-south routes through town. US Route 4 was paved in 1927, widened to four lanes in 1959, and upgraded to interstate standards with changed alignment from West Rutland to Castleton in 1969.

Vermont State Law, 19 VSA § 302, defines town highways in four categories.

Class 1 Town Highways: an extension of a state highway routes and carry a state highway route number.

Class 2 Town Highways: the most important route in each town with the purpose of securing trunk lines of improved highways from town to town and to places which have more than a normal amount of traffic.

Class 3 Town Highways: minimum standards for Class 3 highways require that they be negotiable, under normal circumstances, all seasons of the year by a standard, manufactured, pleasure car. This includes, but is not limited to, sufficient surface and base, adequate drainage, and sufficient width capable to provide winter maintenance.

Class 4 Town Highways: are all other town highways including trails and pent roads. The Selectboard determines which highways are Class 4 highways.

Figure 22 shows the total mileage of each type of town highway in West Rutland, according to a 2022 *Agency of Transportation Road Map*. In total, West Rutland has 39.327 miles of road, when adding non-town-highways, VT-4A, VT-133, and US-4, which add 9.2 miles.

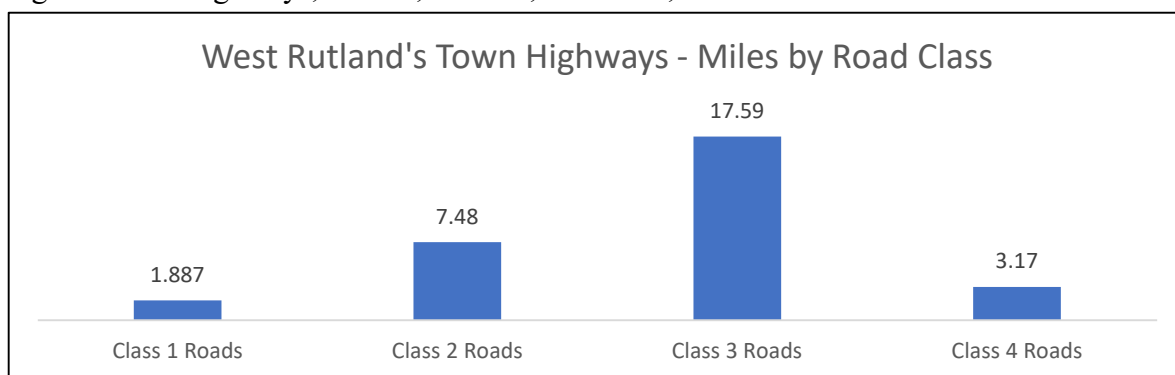


Figure 22: 2022 West Rutland Town Highways – Vermont Agency of Transportation

There are six railroad crossings, 13 bridges, and 107 culverts in Town. Figure 23 shows the condition of these culverts with 70% being in good or fair condition. 51% of culverts are made from plastic and 34% are made from steel. The Plan encourages the Town to maintain and improve culverts, especially those listed as critical or poor, to ensure adequate stormwater management.

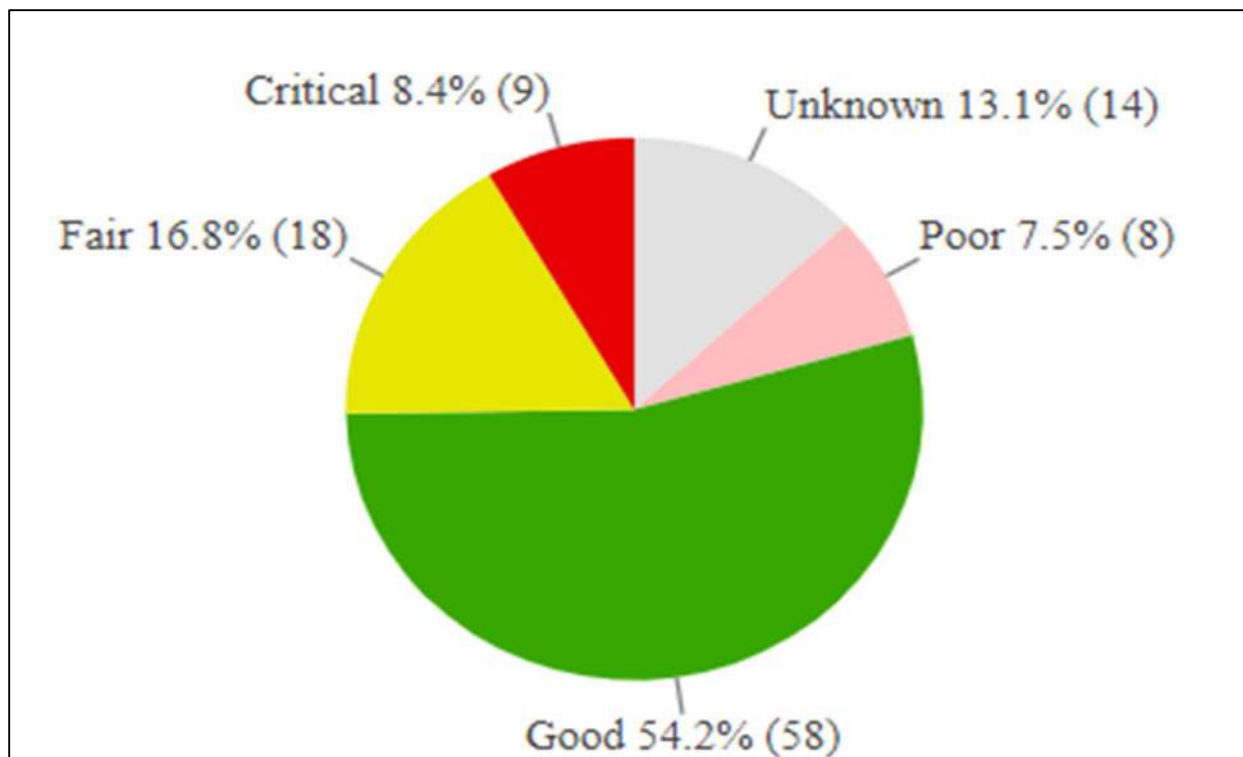


Figure 23: Culverts by the overall condition – Rutland Regional Planning Commission

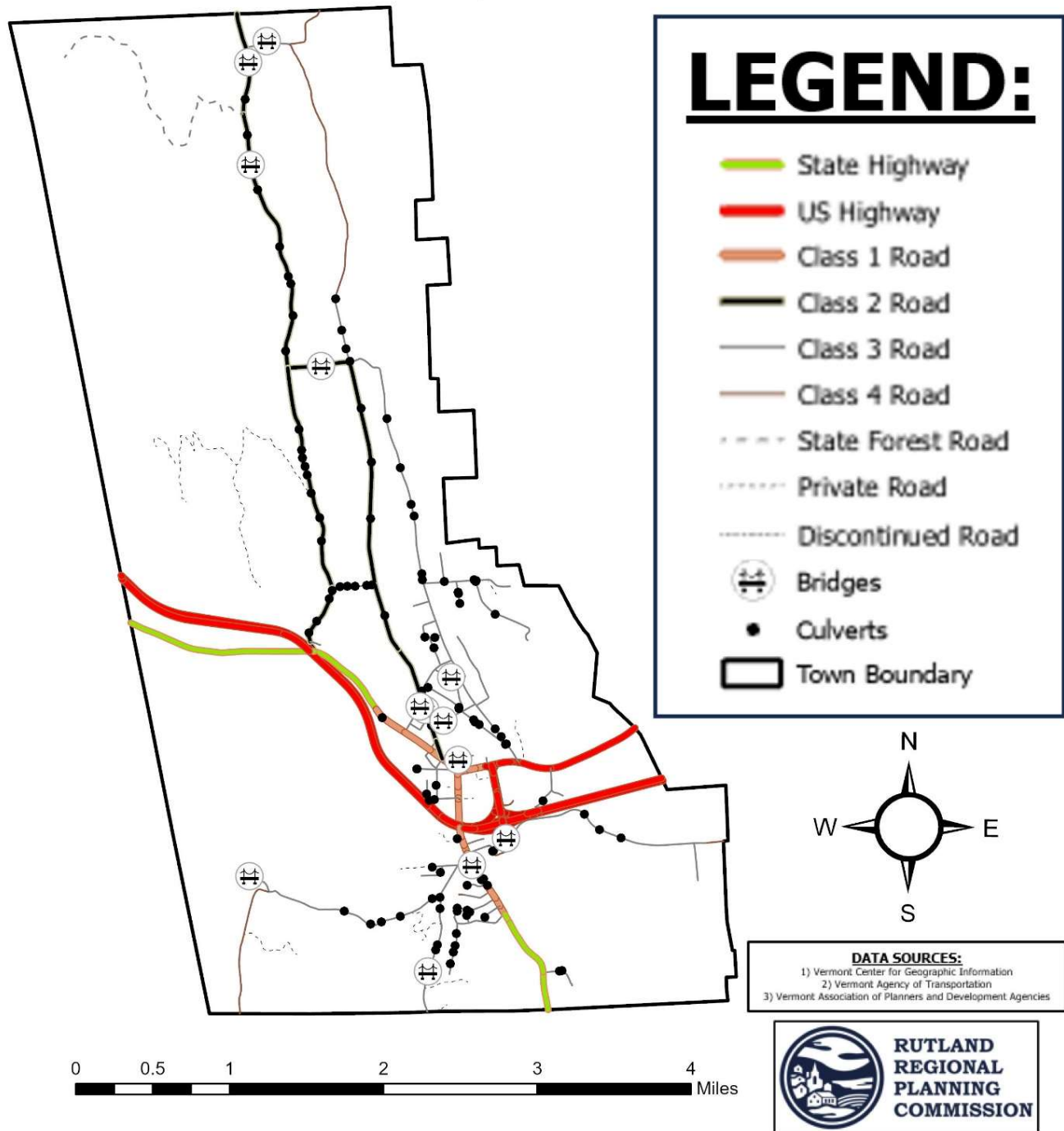
The West Rutland Highway Department's maintenance garage is located at 265 Ross Street. The 6200 square foot, six-bay garage was constructed in 2002. A sand/salt fabric shed adjacent to the maintenance garage was added in 2005. The West Rutland Highway Department is committed to maintaining and upgrading its vehicles and equipment.

The West Rutland Highway Department has the following maintenance equipment:

- 2021 Freightliner M2 medium size dump/ Plow truck
- 2021 Ford F600 dump/ plow truck
- 2018 Western Star tandem axle dump/ plow truck
- 2016 Trackless MT6 sidewalk plow/ roadside mower
- 2014 Caterpillar 924k wheel loader
- 2003 Ray – Tech Infrared asphalt “hot box” trailer
- 2000 John Deere 80 excavator
- 1986 Eager Beaver lowboy equipment trailer
- 1979 Caterpillar 120G road grader

TRANSPORTATION

WEST RUTLAND, VERMONT



THIS MAP IS FOR PLANNING PURPOSES ONLY

The Vermont Agency of Transportation performed 21 one-day automotive traffic counts in West Rutland from January 1, 2022, to October 31, 2023, that counted traffic in both directions. The highest volumes are on US-4 and VT-4A, with slightly lower volumes on VT-133. Town highways, that are counted, show much lower volumes. Figure 24 shows the one-day two-way traffic counts.

Location	Traffic Volume	Date Data Collected	Latitude	Longitude
US4 btw Exits 5/6	12053	9/30/2023	43.5888	-73.0478
MAIN ST near Route 4 Entrance	11750	1/1/2022	43.59388	-73.0408
Main St near Route 4 Entrance	9248	1/1/2022	43.59372	-73.0418
Main St near Westway Mall	9055	1/1/2022	43.5934	-73.0437
Route 4 Entrance near Main St	8272	1/1/2022	43.59332	-73.0413
Main St near Clarendon Ave	7707	1/1/2022	43.59321	-73.0452
US4 btw Exits 5/6	5519	8/21/2023	43.5888	-73.0478
US4 btw Exits 5/6	5485	10/31/2023	43.5888	-73.0478
Clarendon Ave (175 feet north of Crossman Lane)	4637	1/1/2022	43.5922	-73.0458
US4 btw Exits 5/6	4468	8/21/2023	43.5888	-73.0478
Clarendon Ave near Westside Ct	3067	1/1/2022	43.5825	-73.042
Main St near St Stanislaus Kostkas Church	2481	1/1/2022	43.597	-73.053
Marble St near Town Hall	1495	1/1/2022	43.5952	-73.0482
Pleasant St (175 feet south of Baxter Street)	760	1/1/2022	43.6088	-73.0495
Whipple Hollow Road (1900 feet South of Whipple Hollow Trailhead)	581	1/1/2022	43.6204	-73.0653
Bus 4 Ramp at Boardman Hill Road	397	1/1/2022	43.58779	-73.0396
Marble St (450 feet south of Carving Studio & Sculpture Center entrance)	279	1/1/2022	43.6023	-73.0516
Pleasant Hts (950 feet South of end of road)	204	1/1/2022	43.6034	-73.044
Pleasant St (650 feet west of Whipple Hollow Road)	140	1/1/2022	43.63119	-73.0657
Clark Hill Rd (1825 feet southwest of Dewey Ave)	86	1/1/2022	43.5792	-73.0543
E PLEASANT ST / Durgy Hill Road Intersection	30	1/1/2022	43.6111	-73.0477

Figure 24: West Rutland One Day Two-Way Traffic Counts (2022 - 2023) – Vermont Agency of Transportation

Public transportation is a method to reduce traffic and an affordable alternative to owning a car. The *2022 West Rutland Town Report* outlines that the Marble Valley Regional Transit District (MVRTD) provided over 1,700 rides in West Rutland on the Fair Haven Route, a commuter service with stops at the Colonial Apartments, Marble Street, West Rutland High School, West Rutland Industrial Park, and Westway Mall. A park-and-ride with space for 25 cars is at 27 Thrall Ave.

In addition to their transportation value, the Town seeks to protect roads' scenic qualities, especially on Boardman Hill Road, Durgy Hill Road, Clark Hill Road, Old Town Farm Road, Marble Street Extension, Whipple Hollow Road, and Pleasant Street Extension.

Some of the streets are narrow and the houses are close together causing some issues with the lack of adequate parking.

Act 47 (2023), known as the 'HOME Act', supersedes West Rutland's zoning, including its parking standards. The HOME Act requires in areas served by municipal sewer and water that the Town cannot require more than one parking space per dwelling unit. A homeowner can opt to build more than the state standard, but the Town must not have parking minimums in zoning regulations that violate these standards. This provision means that the Town will have to rely on developers to choose whether to build off-street parking or the Town will have to work on providing alternative transportation options.

Improvements

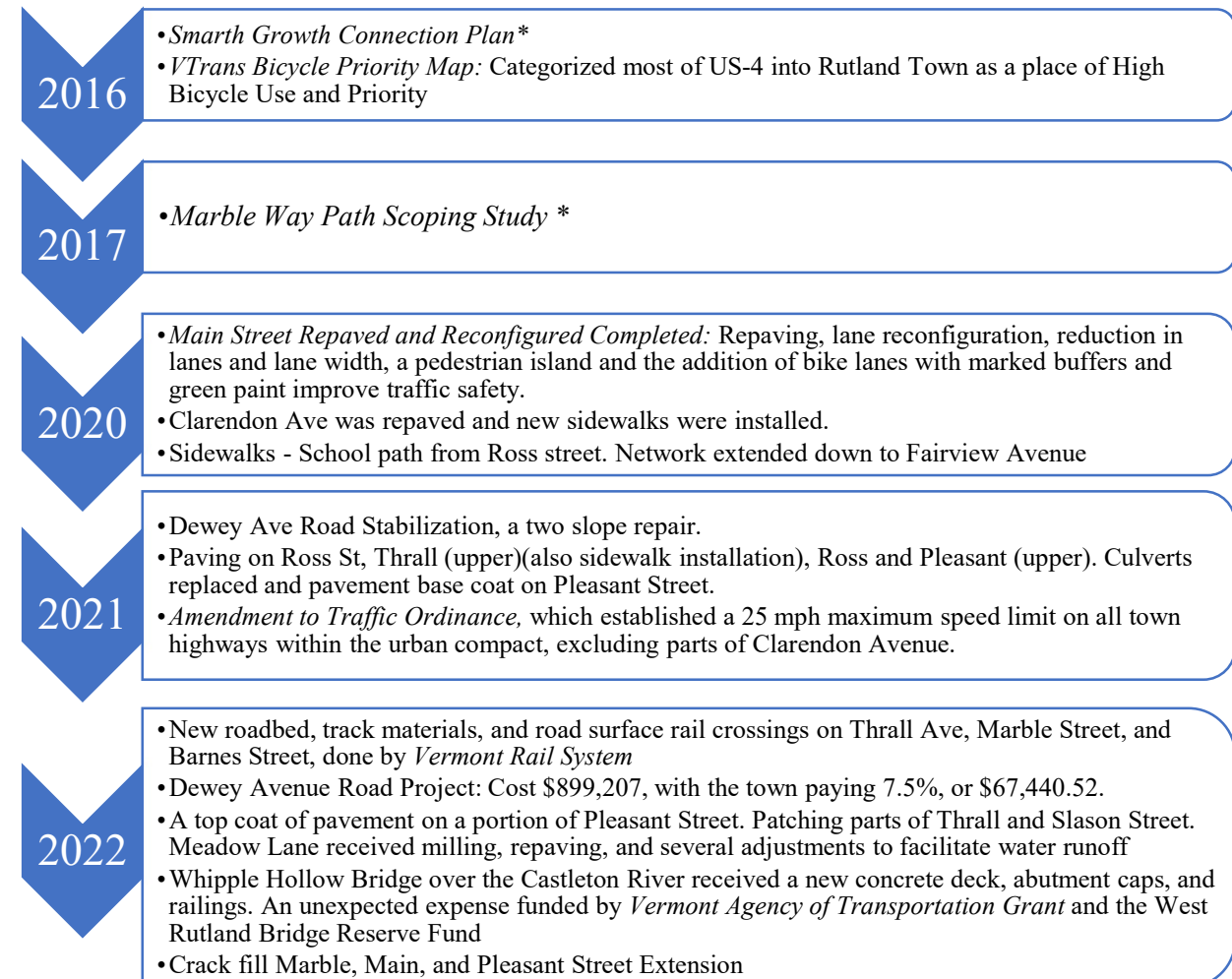
Mary Ann Goulette, our Town Manager, describes the challenge in further improving West Rutland's transportation infrastructure:

"The bottom line is, the dollars don't cover what they used to cover. We have twenty-one miles of paved roads and several roads that need immediate attention (Whipple Hollow Road, Pleasant Street, and Skyline Drive). We are using some less expensive techniques such as crack and chip sealing, but we still can't afford to get behind in maintaining our infrastructure. These increases will result in an annual increase of \$97 on a \$100,000 home."

- Mary Ann Goulette, West Rutland Town Manager Report 2022

Fortunately, since the last Plan was adopted in 2016, the Town and the State, have conducted studies and made improvements to meet West Rutland's transportation needs.

The West Rutland Highway Department is responsible for maintaining town highways, sidewalks, and Town-owned parking lots. Each spring, the highway department grades and performs minor repairs to gravel roads and ditches as needed from winter damage. The timeline shows some of the work done from 2016 to 2022. Years are the completion date and an asterisk indicates details are on the next page.



2016 Smart Growth Connection Plan: A jointly developed plan from the Towns of Rutland and West Rutland which outlined transportation recommendations, including methods to induce slower motorist speeds, expand crosswalks, roundabouts, reroutes, connectors, add bus stops, and create protected bike lanes.

2017 Marble Way Path Scoping Study: A study initiated by the Towns of West Rutland and Rutland assessing the feasibility of linking the two towns together through a multi-use path along Business Route 4. The study identified 17 potential segments to connect West Rutland to Rutland Town. Each segment was deemed feasible, but 6 segments were identified as preferred, extending from the West Rutland Park & Ride facility at Thrall Avenue to the Park & Ride facility at the Town of Rutland's Town Hall. Figure 25 shows the proposed path, with each color representing one of the six parts.



Figure 25: Proposed Marble Way Path – 2017 Marble Way Path Scoping Study

The January 2023 *West Rutland Sidewalk Scoping Study*, executed by Weston & Sampson, performed an April 2022 field review of a subset of sidewalks. The exact locations are shown in Figure 26. Sidewalks on Pleasant Street (east side), Thrall (north side – from stream crossing to end of storage yard parking lot), and Ross Street (north side) are in “Poor Condition,” with cracked sidewalks presenting tripping hazards and concerns in meeting *American Disabilities Act (ADA) Accessibility Standards*.

Sidewalk alternatives for each study area were proposed, with a conceptual cost estimate for all alternatives, using 2015 -2020 average prices, being \$1,964,000.



**Figure 26: West Rutland Sidewalks Scoped –
West Rutland Sidewalk Scoping Study**

The department also paved the following roads in 2023: Whipple Hollow (Burke to Pleasant St), Sheldon (Thrall to Crescent), Thrall (Sheldon to Railroad), Pleasant (Crescent to Anderson), Skyline (temporary patch), and Barnes (near Railroad).

In addition to the projects completed in 2023, several projects are ongoing:

1. \$42,024 *Vermont Agency of Transportation* Grant is funding identifying gaps in existing sidewalk networks on Ross Street, Pleasant, Thrall, Main, and Dewey Avenue.
2. The design and construction of the Marble Street Municipal Parking Lot will be funded by a \$180,000 *Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development Downtown Transportation Fund*, a financing tool to stimulate private investment in infrastructure.
3. A \$320,000 *Vermont Agency of Transportation Bicycle/Pedestrian Grant* will design and construct the MarbleWay multi-use path from Thrall Avenue to Gilmore Street.

The [*Natural Areas section*](#) of the Plan explains that the Emerald Ash Borer, a beetle, is in West Rutland. The beetle infests ash trees with infested trees dying in three to five years and is an environmental concern and transportation hazard. The Plan encourages the Town to inventory ash tree quantity, condition, and location, prioritizing high-traffic locations, and acquiring or contracting the proper equipment to remove hazardous ash trees.

The 2024 *West Rutland Proposed Budget* shows \$582,208 to \$704,543 in highway expenses, paid for primarily via property taxes, from 2021 to 2023 and a proposed \$739,901 for 2024. It shows anywhere from \$83,000 to \$105,569 in State Highway Aid from 2020 to 2023. The Plan encourages the Town to acquire grant funds to meet current and projected transportation needs and take action that builds off the history of improvements and studies detailed in this section.

TRANSPORTATION GOAL

1. To provide safe, convenient, economical, and energy-efficient transportation systems that respect the integrity of the natural environment, including public transit options and paths for pedestrians and bicyclers.

TRANSPORTATION ACTIONS

1. Establish and improve pedestrian facilities and bike routes in areas of greatest traffic and recreation value.
2. Work with RRPC to identify funding opportunities to lower the cost of implementing sidewalk improvements outlined in the 2023 *West Rutland Sidewalk Scoping Study*.
3. Grade and perform repairs to gravel roads and ditches as needed from winter damage.
4. Annually monitor culvert data and identify funding to replace culverts as needed.
5. Continue to pursue appropriate transportation grants to meet present and future transportation needs.
6. Work collaboratively to develop a multiuse path from West Rutland to Rutland City and a multiuse path connecting to the D&H Rail Trail in Castleton.
7. Work with RRPC to identify future transportation improvements and funding sources.
8. Inventory ash trees along West Rutland's roads.
9. Continue to fund the Capital Equipment Fund to maintain a safe, reliable, and adequate transportation fleet.
10. Utilize pavement preservation techniques to maintain and extend the life of pavement.

NATURAL, SCENIC, CULTURAL, AND HISTORIC RESOURCES

Required to be in this chapter of the town plan by law:

24 V.S.A. § 4382 - A statement of policies on the preservation of rare and irreplaceable natural areas, scenic and historic features, and resources

West Rutland seeks to preserve its rare and irreplaceable natural, scenic, cultural, and historic areas, and features, and its working lands, including but not limited to the areas mentioned in this chapter. Per state law, the Plan prohibits development that has undue and adverse impacts on these areas and features.

Natural Areas

Wildlife and Habitats

West Rutland has many unique natural areas that provide habitat for a variety of wildlife. Several are listed here, in addition to the [Recreation section](#) of the Plan.

Two “Birding Hot Spots” in West Rutland have been identified by the *Rutland County Audubon Society*: The West Rutland Marsh and the Pleasant Street Powerline.

The West Rutland Marsh, “The Marsh” is one of only 21 Important Bird Areas in Vermont, being an important breeding location for rare and priority species. Located in the valley of the Castleton River, the Town, State, and Federal agencies have conservation and easement plans for the watershed. Birds at The Marsh include the Least and American Bittern, Virginia Rai, Pied-billed Grebe, Blue-winged Warbler, Least Bittern, and American Black Duck.

The Pleasant Street Powerline area and Pleasant Street itself attract species that nest in the open, shrubby area, including Prairie Warbler, Eastern Towhee, and Field Sparrow.

Rare birds in West Rutland include the Whippoorwill, Carolina Wren, and the Sedge Wren. In addition, several deer wintering areas have been identified, and mapped, in the northern half of West Rutland.

The following plant species found in West Rutland are ranked extremely rare by the State of Vermont: Smooth Forked Chickweed, Green Rockcress, Large Bracted, Foxtail Sedge, Sharp Manna Grass, Nodding Trillium, American Dragon, and the Douglas Knotweed.

The West Rutland State Forest, a hilly 344-acre property located at the northern end of the Taconic Mountains, below Grandpa’s Knob, had 159,000 red and white pine seedlings planted in 1916, with the forest being professionally managed since. The forest is used for hunting and state forest roads are walked on.



Figure 27: Prairie Warbler - US Department of Fish and Wildlife

The Whipple Hollow Wildlife Management Area is split between West Rutland and Pittsford, with West Rutland making up 35.24% or 185 acres of the 525-acre area. The Castleton River flows to the south of the area, with steep west-facing slopes. The land is 72% hardwood stands, 14% softwood stands, and 14% open/semi-open lands, according to the *Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife*. White-tailed deer, coyotes, fishers, red foxes, brown bats, wood frogs, woodland salamanders, trout, and various birds can be seen.

West Rutland's natural areas are going through changes.

1. In 2019, US Fish and Wildlife filled in drainage canals and ditches to rewild a 2.5-acre area near the northern town border, restoring the area to the wild open meadow before farmers came.
2. A three-phased Whipple Hollow Road Marsh Trail was completed in 2023 through collaboration between the Rutland County Audubon Society and the Town of West Rutland. The trail was envisioned to better monitor birds without walking on Whipple Hollow Road.
3. The Youngs Brook Dam, located at 1010 Dewey Avenue, was built in 1920 as a public water supply reservoir. Inspections dating back to 1980 have classified the dam as in poor condition. It is expected to be removed by October 1, 2024, a collaboration between the town and *Vermont Natural Resources Council (VNRC)* and funded by the federal government. It will protect future water quality and make it easier for aquatic species to travel.
4. A Wetland Restoration Project, funded through an *Otter Creek Clean Water Service Grant*, will design a wetland restoration project at the recreation area.
5. The invasive Emerald Ash Borer infested West Rutland in October 2020, according to the *Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation*. This beetle feeds on all species of ash trees, with infested trees dying in three to five years. As a non-native species, it lacks natural predators. Figure 29 is an excerpt from the 2020 *Local Hazard Mitigation Plan*. The Plan encourages the Town to inventory ash tree quantity, condition, and location, and acquire or contract the proper equipment to remove hazardous ash trees. Inventories should prioritize high-traffic locations and the Town should seek assistance from entities like the Vermont Urban & Community Forestry Program and the Rutland Regional Planning Commission.

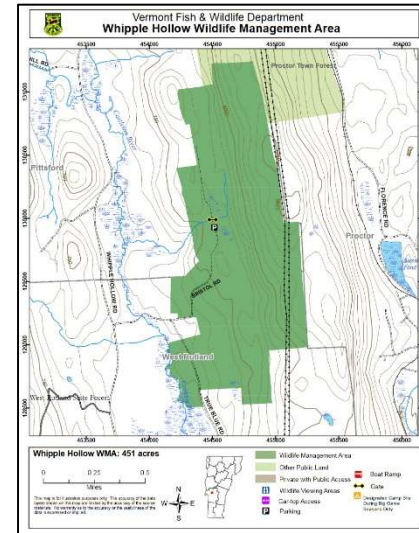


Figure 28: Whipple Hollow Wildlife Management Area Map - Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife

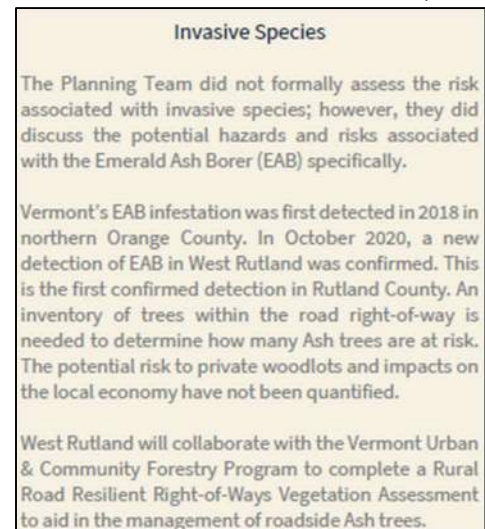


Figure 29: West Rutland 2020 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan - Page 9

Wetlands

Wetlands are land areas with saturated soil for at least part of the year. They provide wildlife habitat, help manage water runoff, purify surface and groundwater, replenish aquifers, prevent erosion, and offer recreation opportunities.

West Rutland's wetlands are primarily located in the central valley running north-south along the Castleton and Clarendon Rivers. The Town purchased a total of 223 acres along the Castleton River and the West Rutland Marsh to protect and preserve the function and values of the wetland.

In 1986, the Vermont Wetlands Act was passed by the Vermont Legislature which tasked the Water Resources Board to identify wetlands that need buffer zones to protect wetland function. There are two types of Wetlands, Class I, and II Wetlands, and are shown in Figure 30.

The [Flood Resilience](#) chapter goes into greater detail on how wetlands impact public safety.

Streams, Rivers, and Groundwater Resources

Figure 31 shows rivers and streams are abundant in West Rutland. Not only do they provide ecological habitat but also recreational opportunities and visual beauty.

There are two main rivers in West Rutland: The Castleton River and the Clarendon River. All these waters end up in Lake Champlain.

The Castleton River enters West Rutland from Pittsford in the north it then curves west slightly north of the corner of Route-4A and Whipple Hollow Road. From there, it runs west and stays parallel with Route 4, eventually entering the town of Castleton.

The Clarendon River enters West Rutland from Clarendon in the South and exits into Rutland Town and Otter Creek in the east. Both the Castleton River and the Clarendon River have many streams connected to them.

Aquifers are the main groundwater source for the Town, with the aquifer extending south of West Rutland, running roughly underneath the Clarendon River. The two wells, located near the Sabotka Recreation Area at the end of Fairview Avenue, draw the town's water supply from the aquifer. A wellhead protection area has been designated to help protect the water supply from contamination and infiltration of chemicals.

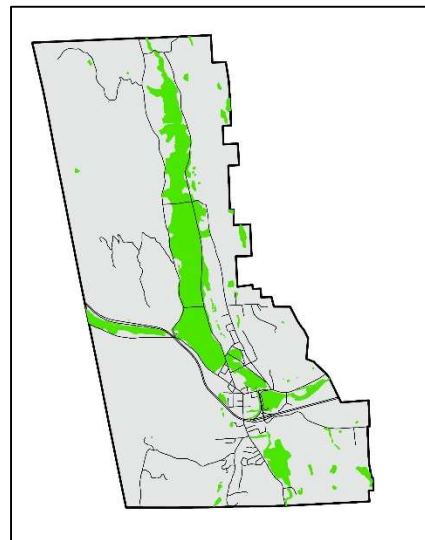


Figure 30: West Rutland's Class I and Class II Wetlands - Vermont Agency of Natural Resources

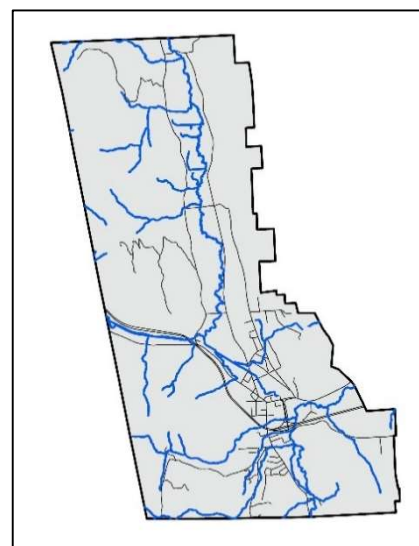


Figure 31: West Rutland Rivers and Streams - Vermont Agency of Natural Resources

Air Quality

West Rutland lies topographically in a valley running North-South, as well as another running East-West. Like most of Vermont, West Rutland is fortunate to enjoy exceptional air quality, being within a Class II "attainment" or "clean air" region as defined by Vermont's Air Quality Implementation Plan. Local air quality concerns are limited mainly to emissions from traffic and associated idling at busy intersections, heating systems (e.g. woodstoves), and some agricultural practices. Efforts to avoid periods of congestion can help to maintain local air quality. The Plan encourages residents to improve the Town's air quality by converting to heat pumps and using Efficiency Vermont's technical services and financial support.

Working Lands

The Town's lands have historically been farmed, forested, and quarried at various intensities.

Quarrying – Geologic Resources

West Rutland has a diverse range of geologic resources, including carbonated rocks like limestone and dolostone. Under heat and pressure, these form different types of marble and slate. West Rutland, during the marble era, was known for its high-quality "pure white" and "pure blue" marble. Geologic shifts also led to the formation of sandstone and mudstone.

William F. Barnes began West Rutland's marble quarrying history on a solid marble bedrock,

"Realizing the potential of this valuable natural resource, (he) bought much of this otherwise worthless land for the price of an old horse (in) 1835. In 1838 he began with Dr. Lorenzo Sheldon the first systematic exploitation of marble in West Rutland...in 1844 (they) opened the first marble quarry in West Mountain. (In 1850s), Sheldon and Slason, one of the most successful marble companies in town... turned out 254,000 headstones for Civil War dead at the request of the federal government."

- [*Historic Architecture of Rutland County, 1988, Page 449*](#)

This is referred to as the "mid-century boom," with the construction of several railroads helping transport West Rutland's marble.

For much of the second half of the 19th century, West Rutland was the leading marble producer of Rutland County, where the largest quarries and mills in the world were to be found. In 1890, 2,000 West Rutland residents, mostly Irish immigrant men, worked at 15 marble quarries.

The marble industry then consolidated. By 1900, most worked at the Vermont Marble Company, as they bought most quarries in town from the 1880s to 1911, later becoming the largest marble company in the world.



Figure 32: A West Rutland Marble Quarry
- *Miracles in Marble, 1935*

The Great Depression slowed down the industry and by the end of World War II, the Vermont Marble Company ceased marble production. Following, a few smaller marble companies quarried but eventually the Town's marble production ceased.

West Rutland's marble history is apparent today, with local marble in buildings, a historical quarry monument standing at Barnes and Marble Street, and a sculpture park featuring many marble sculptures on the grounds of the Carving Studio & Sculpture Center, a former quarry site. Consistent with the [Land Use Chapter](#), and [Cultural, Historic, and Scenic Resources section](#), the Plan encourages the Town to preserve West Rutland's marble heritage and promote the use of geologic resources in an efficient manner that benefits the public.

Agriculture – Crops and Livestock

Beginning in the 1770s, subsistence farmers traveled an early road that roughly traced U.S. Route 4 to reach West Rutland. Some had trouble farming, running into solid marble bedrock, while for others, the lands provided rich deep soil. By the early 19th century, farming was firmly established. In 1831, a town farm was established on the south end of Durgy Hill.

The landscape looked different than today: The Marsh had crop farms and sheep could be seen roaming now forested mountainous hills. Agriculture in West Rutland grew with the construction of three railroads in the 1850s but not to the degree of quarrying. Around this time in Vermont, cows surpassed sheep and the greatest number of farms existed in the state's history. Tariffs for wool were reduced, making it difficult for the Town's sheep farmers to compete against global markets. Eventually, dairy became the new agricultural industry in Town. But today, only one dairy farm remains, with market gardening being the most common agricultural activity.

West Rutland's prime agricultural soils, shown in Figure 33, are found mostly on the eastern side of town and in and around the village. The Plan supports local agriculture, and home gardening, especially where prime agricultural soils are.

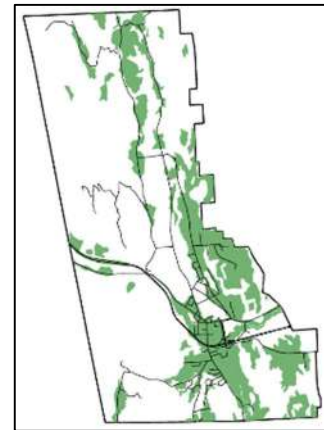


Figure 33: Prime Agricultural Soils
- National Cooperative Soil Survey

Forestry – Timber Resources

West Rutland forests over the years, like much of Vermont's, have been logged and replanted. The forested hillsides of today once were clearcut, generating logging revenue, and providing lands for sheep, and later cows, to graze.

Today, as shown in Figure 34, much of West Rutland is forested. The invasive Emerald Ash Borer is a threat to preserving West Rutland's ash trees. The beetle feeds on all ash tree species, with infested trees dying in three to five years. The Emerald Ash Borer is discussed more in the [Transportation Chapter](#) and [Natural Areas section](#). The Plan supports managing timber resources and updating forest management plans to protect West Rutland's forests.

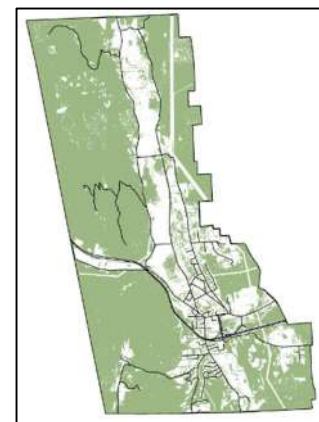


Figure 34: 2016 Tree Canopy - UVM Spatial Analysis Lab

Cultural, Historic, and Scenic Resources

Historic

In 1988, the *Vermont Division for Historic Preservation* published *The Historic Architecture of Rutland County*, detailing the historic buildings in West Rutland, including over 100 architecturally and historically significant buildings. Although most of these buildings are residential, historic churches, stores, and civic buildings can be found in Town.

Some of these buildings are in the Marble Street Historic District, which encompasses the historic commercial core of West Rutland. This district consists of nineteen buildings of which ten are commercial blocks, four are houses, and the remainder are barns/garages. The larger West Rutland Village Historic District contains 97 buildings and still retains its integrity of design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and location.

The West Rutland Vermont Marble Company complex, formed through the consolidation of several 19th-century marble companies, contains what's believed to be the oldest standing structure associated with the marble quarrying business in Vermont. The complex is listed on the State Register of Historic Places.

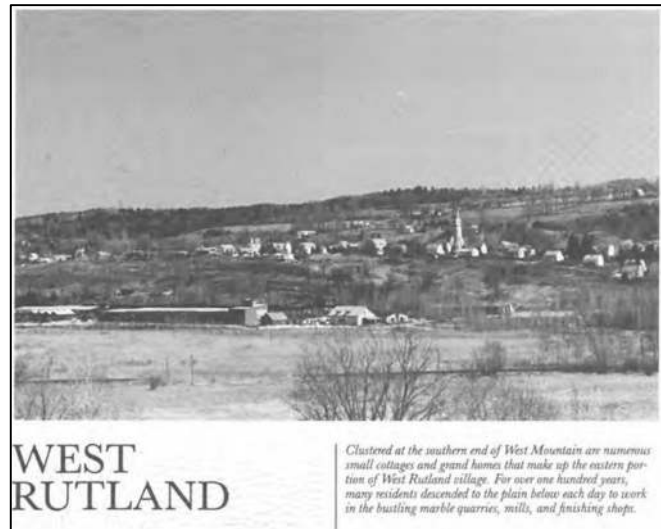


Figure 35: West Rutland
- *The Historic Architecture of Rutland County*

Cultural

West Rutland's culture stems from its history. The remains of the once booming quarries have fostered the growth of an arts community, based in the Carving Studio and Sculpture Center, which promotes and teaches sculpting, and draws an international community. Many participate in one of the numerous workshops or arrange for highly individualized instruction. West Rutland's marble history is apparent in the Carving Studio's sculpture park and in monuments found in the Village.

The churches of West Rutland are an integral part of the community. At the time of the town's incorporation, six churches existed, being the center of social life, hosting fairs, musical performances, lectures, plays, and creating societies. Three of the historic churches remain.

St. Bridget's, completed in November 1861, is a Gothic Revival-style church above the former quarry, located on Pleasant Street. The marble was donated by Sheldon and Slason, a local marble company at the time, and completed by the company's quarryman, who for two years built the church in the evenings after work and on Sundays.

The United Church of West Rutland, built in 1886, is located off Main Street at the corner of Chapel and High Street. St. Stanislaus Kostkas Church, built in 1885, is at the corner of Main and Barnes Street. The Christian Science Church, located at 71 Marble Street, next to the town

hall, administers the West Rutland Food Shelf, which is open two Saturdays a month between noon and two p.m.

West Rutland values its veterans. 606 residents fought in WWII, representing 20.73% of the town's population at the time. A memorial outside the Town Hall commemorates these veterans and the Town has an annual Memorial Day parade.

The Town's culture is one of compassion and pride: with community events, monuments, and learning opportunities that seek to meet the needs and wants of West Rutland's residents.

Scenic

West Rutland lies in a valley with scenic vistas showcasing mountainsides surrounding the town. In West Rutland, almost the entire western side has a slope classification greater than 25%. In the northeast part, there are also slopes greater than 25% as well as a few small areas located in the southeast part of town.

Clark Hill, Durgy Hill Ridgeline between West Rutland and Proctor, Hanley Mountain/Grandpa's Knob/Taconic Mountain Range are specific scenic resources to be protected from development. While not a part of West Rutland, the Plan values Route 4's beautiful scenic vistas that can be seen by drivers entering or exiting West Rutland.

The Town of West Rutland has designated a "Ridgeline Overlay District," a part of the Town's zoning, as shown in Figure 36.

The Ridgeline Overlay District ensures buildings do not block ridgeline sight lines, blend with the surrounding landscape, and minimize ecological impact.

Consistent with the [Land Use](#) and [Energy Chapters](#), energy development greater than 50kW, is prohibited in the Ridgeline Overlay District.

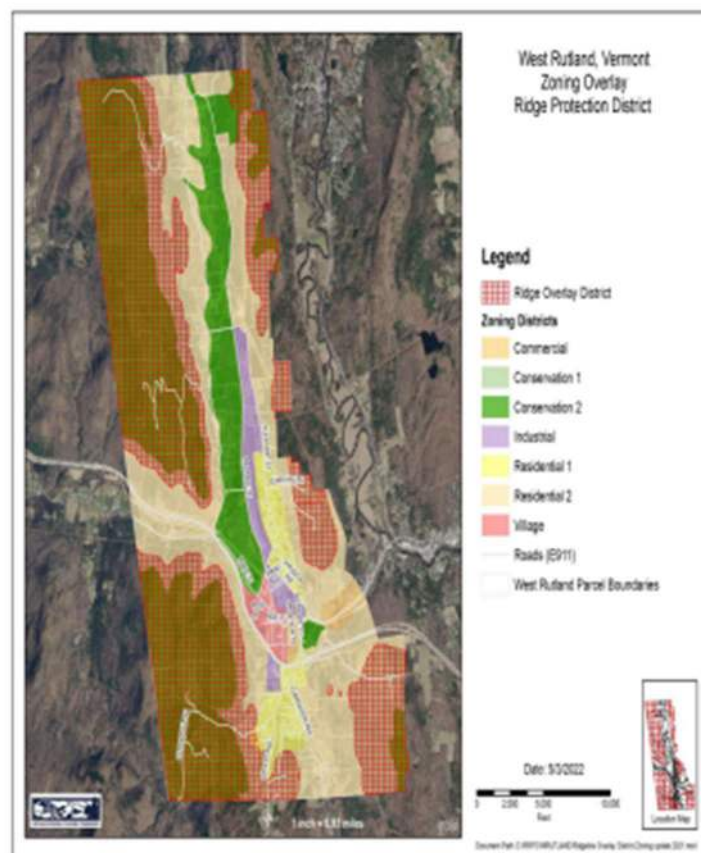


Figure 36: West Rutland Ridgeline Overlay District

NATURAL, SCENIC, CULTURAL, AND HISTORIC RESOURCES GOALS

1. To identify, protect, and preserve important natural, scenic, cultural, and historic features and areas of West Rutland's landscape.
2. To maintain and improve the quality of air, water, wildlife, and forests.
3. To support local agriculture, forestry, and related industries.
4. To provide for the efficient use of West Rutland's geologic resources.

NATURAL, SCENIC, CULTURAL, AND HISTORIC RESOURCES ACTIONS

1. Scope purchasing habitats and wetlands to protect and ensure no net loss of these important natural areas.
2. Market local natural resource products, including agriculture and forestry.
3. Oppose proposed development that adversely impacts the quantity and quality of West Rutland's natural, cultural, historic, and scenic resources, including but not limited to the resources outlined in the chapter.
4. Leverage town funds to acquire grant opportunities, to provide improvements to Skyline Drive and create a Village Streetscape Master Plan, in addition to other improvements to meet future needs.
5. Promote best management practices on the Town's website and in the Town Office, including lawn fertilizers, and pesticides, that protect West Rutland's resources.
6. Inventory existing quarries in West Rutland and collaborate with owners to identify the best use of these geologic, historic, and cultural resources for the town's residents and the environment.
7. Work with the Rutland Regional Planning Commission and Vermont Urban & Community Forestry Program to inventory ash trees and develop a strategy to protect the public and West Rutland's forests from the Emerald Ash Borer.
8. Work with the Rutland County Audubon Society to help promote the health of the marsh and West Rutland's bird population.
9. Support and preserve the collection of West Rutland marble memorabilia.
10. Utilize public lands to collaborate with community organizations to develop art projects, cultural events, festivals, and historical exhibits.
11. Work with the Carving Studio & Sculpture Center to allow public access and set up tours of the Town's quarries.

ENERGY

Required to be in this chapter of the town plan by law:

24 V.S.A. § 4382 - An energy plan, including an analysis of energy resources, needs, scarcities, costs and problems within the municipality, a statement of policy on the conservation of energy, including programs to implement that policy, a statement of policy on the development of renewable energy resources, a statement of policy on patterns and densities of land use likely to result in conservation of energy;

Electrical infrastructure can be classified into four categories: electric generators, transmission lines, distribution lines, and service lines. Transmission lines transport electricity over long distances from electric generators to a town. Distribution lines then carry electricity to a neighborhood. Service lines deliver power directly to a home or business.

The Town has some renewable energy generators. There is a 500-kW commercial solar array off Clarendon Avenue and a community solar farm on Boardman Hill. A 2.2 MW, approximately 14-acre solar array is planned on Boardman Hill. Solar energy is most used for rooftop net-metered generation. Commercial electric generation is constrained by access to three-phase power, which is shown in Figure 37.

The Plan supports net-metered solar energy in all districts. Preferred solar energy sites are on rooftops, impervious surfaces, like surface parking lots, brownfields, and reclamation sites. The Plan supports the development of Town guidelines on energy storage.

The Plan prohibits wind powered generation greater than 100kW in all districts. The Plan prohibits energy development greater than 50kW in the Ridgeline Overlay District. This is consistent with the [Land Use](#) and [Natural, Scenic, Cultural, and Historic Resources chapters](#).

Prospective energy project developers should utilize the input of West Rutland residents, adjacent towns, and the Rutland Regional Planning Commission. The 2018 Rutland Regional Plan “does not support the construction of industrial-scale wind generation facilities within the region,” defined as greater than 100kW.

The Plan is given “due consideration” in Section 248 siting process. Act 174 (2016) established a new set of voluntary energy planning standards that allow town plans to carry greater weight than “due consideration,” known as “substantial deference.” A plan meeting these voluntary standards is commonly referred to as an “Enhanced Energy Plan” and requires towns to outline current energy use, set targets that align with state energy goals, outline pathways to meet these targets, and prepare maps to help guide renewable energy development. The Plan encourages the

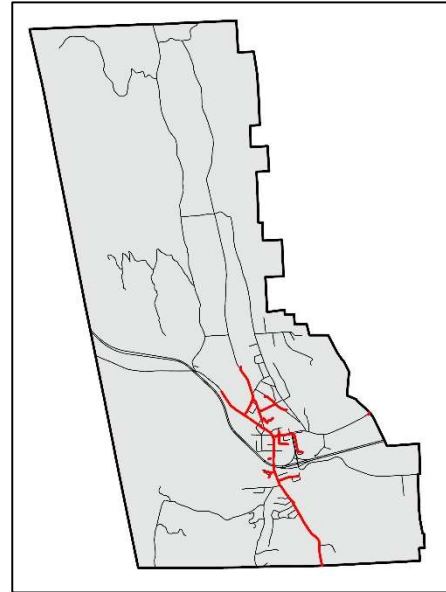


Figure 37: West Rutland 3 Phase Power (as of 2018) - VT Center for Geographic Information & "Various Energy Utilities"

Town to seek public opinion on amending the Plan to meet Enhanced Energy Planning standards and to do so if decided by the Town.

The primary transmission system that supplies the Town consists of two 46,000-volt lines: one from the Rutland area and one from the Poultney area. In emergencies, *Green Mountain Power (GMP)* can supply electricity from Proctor's transmission lines. There are also two major transmission corridors and a transmission substation owned by *Vermont Electric Power Company (VELCO)*. The corridors run east-west from New York State and north-south to the Chittenden County area. Green Mountain Power (GMP) serves the Town's electricity needs via its distribution line network, shown in red in Figure 38.

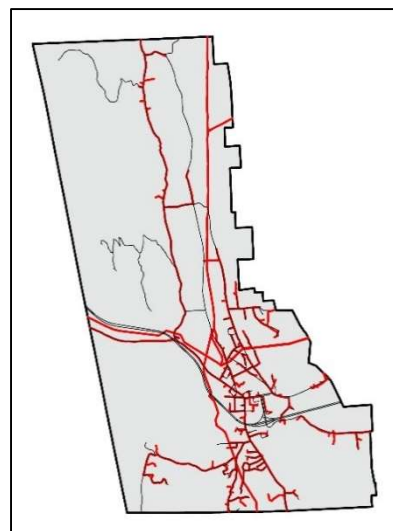


Figure 38: West Rutland Distribution Lines - Green Mountain Power

Present Vermont Tariff structures require that developers pay the cost of extending or upgrading electrical facilities to serve developments. Easements must be made for the extension of electrical facilities.

Affordability

The 2023 Vermont Energy Burden Report found that Vermont households on average spend 11% of their income on energy costs – including electricity, transportation fuel, and home heating fuel. The report found that in West Rutland, the median household has a high energy burden, spending 12.9% of its income on energy costs.

Efficiency Vermont and NeighborWorks of Western Vermont share rebate information, conduct energy assessments and offer low-interest energy financing and bill assistance. The Plan encourages energy efficiency, recycling, and innovative housing siting where applicable, and residents to use available resources to help lower energy costs. Subdivision regulations require Planned Unit Developments to consider energy conservation.

From 2020 to 2022, 198 heat pumps were installed in West Rutland using Efficiency Vermont rebates. Figure 39 shows most West Rutland residents use fuel oil or kerosene to heat their homes.

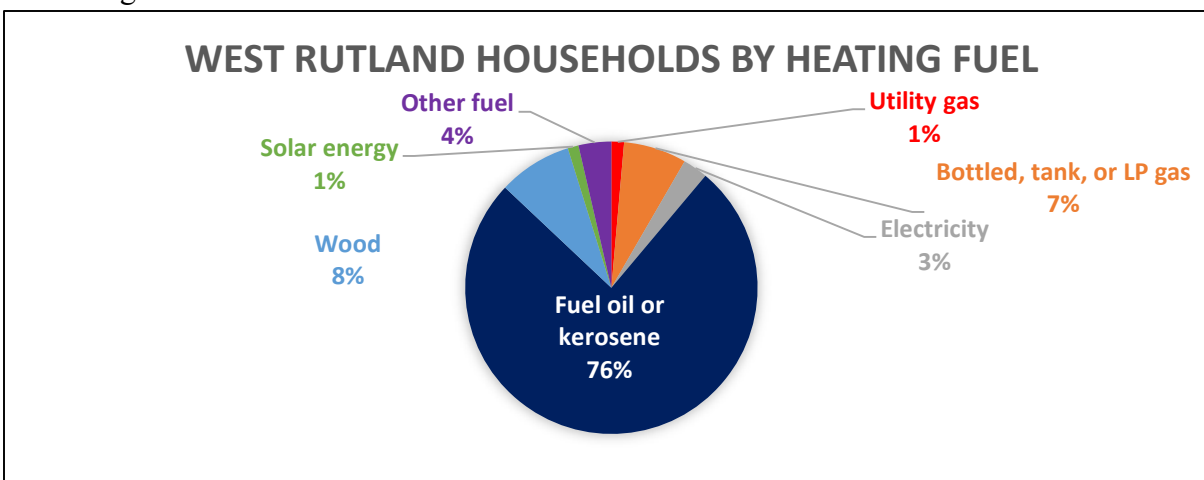


Figure 39: West Rutland Households by Heating Fuel - 2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

ENERGY GOAL:

1. To make efficient use of energy and reduce emissions of greenhouse gases.

ENERGY ACTIONS:

1. Provide information at the Town Hall and on the Town Website about funding opportunities to lower the cost of making homes and businesses more energy efficient.
2. Seek public opinion on an enhanced energy plan.
3. Pursue a MERP Community Capacity mini-grant to fund Enhanced Energy Planning technical assistance from the Rutland Regional Planning Commission if the Town decides to pursue an Enhanced Energy Plan.
4. Further provide transportation alternatives to single occupancy car transportation, including pedestrian and bike facilities, and public transportation.
5. Support the installation of Electric Vehicle charging stations in West Rutland.
6. Support alternative energy sources that do not conflict with any restrictions in the Plan.
7. Explore the feasibility of cooperative fuel-purchasing organizations and community energy-generating facilities.
8. Work with *NeighborWorks of Western Vermont* and *BROC Community Action* to help residents identify programs to lower their energy bills and make buildings more energy-efficient.

FLOOD RESILIENCE

Required to be in this chapter of the town plan by law:

24 V.S.A. § 4382 - A flood resilience plan that identifies flood hazard and fluvial erosion hazard areas, based on river corridor maps, and designates those areas to be protected, including floodplains, river corridors, land adjacent to streams, wetlands, and upland forests, to reduce the risk of flood damage to infrastructure and improved property and recommends policies and strategies to protect the areas identified and designated to mitigate risks to public safety, critical infrastructure, historic structures, and municipal investments.

In Vermont, there are two types of flood impacts: water inundation and fluvial erosion. The *National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP)* covers water inundation, where water rises into low-lying land. For fluvial erosion, where a river overflows and cuts through, it's covered by the *Vermont Agency of Natural Resources River Corridor and Floodplain Management Program*.

NFIP offers optional federally subsidized flood insurance to communities if they have land use regulations that meet federal standards in reducing flood damage risk. Residents' insurance rates depend on Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs), which show flood-prone areas based on flood likelihood. Special Flood Hazard Areas (SFHA) have a 1% chance of flooding in any given year, being the highest risk. 59 structures, 6% of community structures, are in the Special Flood Hazard Area. 30% of these structures have flood insurance, covering \$3.1967 million in value.

Vermont's *River Corridor and Floodplain Management Program* supplement *NFIP*. A river corridor is not static, with steep terrain, frequent storms, development in the river corridor, and stream channel engineering influencing the degree of erosion.

"River corridor" means the land area adjacent to a river that is required to accommodate the dimensions, slope, planform, and buffer of the naturally stable channel and that is necessary for the natural maintenance or natural restoration of a dynamic equilibrium condition.

- § 1422, 24 V.S.A. § 430

West Rutland's two river corridors, for the Clarendon and Castleton Rivers, are shown in Figure 41.

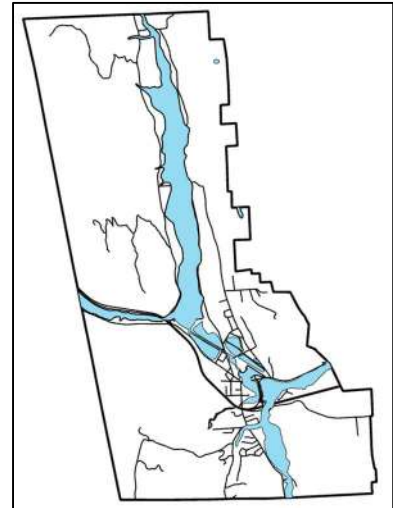


Figure 40: Special Flood Hazard Area - Federal Emergency Management Agency

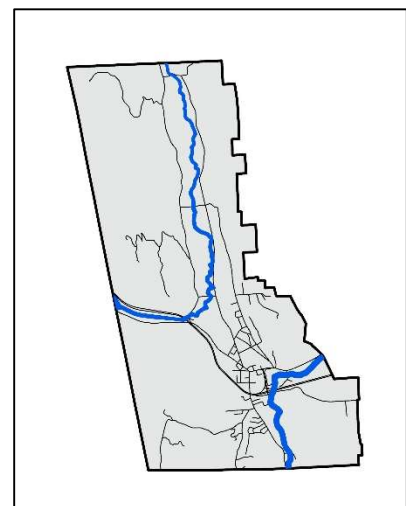


Figure 41: West Rutland River Corridors - Vermont Agency of Natural Resources

Land use decisions impact flood resiliency. Overdevelopment in the river corridor can result in channel instability; infrastructural improvements can mitigate flood risk. The Town Highway Department has permit standards that require driveways to not add stormwater to town highways. The Plan encourages the town to acquire grant funds to improve infrastructure resilience, especially in the Village District and the Special Flood Hazard Area. The Plan supports education and enforcement of the Town's Highway Access Policy to mitigate flood risk.

The Town's most recent federally approved *Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP)* was adopted on February 8, 2021, and outlined heavy rain events and snowstorms, and their associated impacts, most notably flooding, as being the "highest risk hazards" in West Rutland. Both types of flooding mentioned above are deemed to have a >75% probability in a year with potential impacts being isolated occurrences of minor or moderate damage that could result in potential injury.

LHMP outlines West Rutland's flood history, which can be found in Figure 6 in the [Emergency Management Section](#) of the Plan. *LHMP* also provides a flood vulnerability summary, shown in Figure 42.

Damages from Tropical Storm Irene resulted in approximately \$185,000 in flood impacts to roads and culverts. Since Tropical Storm Irene, *LHMP* explains that West Rutland's development patterns have increased flood risk, but the Town's preparedness efforts have decreased flood risk.

The Town, in *LHMP*, has committed to monitor river stability, performed a cost/benefit analysis of federally recommended flood mitigation actions, and developed a hazard mitigation strategy, including goals and actions, which the Plan encourages the Town to continue to follow.

The *Emergency Relief and Assistance Fund (ERAF)* provides state funding to match Federal Public Assistance after federally declared disasters. Eligible public costs are generally reimbursed by FEMA at 75% with the state matching 7.5%. But communities can receive 12.5% if they have 4 mitigation measures or 17.5% if they participate in FEMA's Community Rating System or adopt bylaws, that meet or exceed *Vermont Agency of Natural Resources* model regulation.

The Town adopting an *LHMP* resulted in the town getting to the 17.5% standard. The Youngs Brook Dam, located at 1010 Dewey Avenue, is expected to be removed as part of a partnership with the Town and the *Vermont Natural Resources Council (VNRC)*, with federal funding. The dam removal will mitigate flood and erosion risks and restore the stream channel. The Plan encourages the town to preserve its wetlands, and if appropriate or necessary, purchase additional wetlands to strengthen the town's flood resiliency.

Vulnerability Summary	
Inundation/Flash Flooding/Fluvial Erosion	
Location: Main Street by the Westway Mall, Westway Mall, Proctor Street, and Elm Street (in the Clarendon River floodplain), Clearwater Boulevard (access road to the municipal wastewater treatment plant), Thrall Avenue (runs through the Marsh), Recreation Fields and Bike/Ped Path (located south of the Clarendon River floodplain), Water Street (annual flooding due to undersized bridge on Castleton River), Gorham Road (crosses the Clarendon River), Bristols Road (crosses the Castleton River), Marble Street (runs along the Castleton River floodplain), Crescent Street, Pleasant Street, Slason Road, and Dewey Avenue	
Vulnerable Assets: Roads, culverts, bridges, municipal wells, municipal wastewater treatment plan access road, municipal wastewater pump station on Elm Street, buildings on Proctor Street	
Extent: ±5" rain; extent data for fluvial erosion is unavailable	
Impact: \$180,576 local damage	
Probability: >75% chance per year	

Figure 42: West Rutland's Flood Vulnerability - 2021 West Rutland Local Hazard Mitigation Plan

FLOOD RESILIENCE GOAL

- | |
|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. To support flood-resiliency, by maintaining wetlands and floodplains and making infrastructure improvements. |
|---|

FLOOD RESILIENCE ACTIONS

- | |
|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Update flood hazard areas and river corridors, as needed, to meet the most up-to-date Vermont flood hazard area regulations.2. Add areas that have flooded during a weather event, that are not designated by the state or federal government, to local flood regulations.3. Pursue infrastructure improvements, and related funding opportunities, to improve West Rutland's flood resiliency.4. Educate residents about relevant flood resiliency.5. Enforce the Town's Highway Access Policy. |
|---|

LAND USE

Required to be in this chapter of the town plan by law:

24 V.S.A. § 4382 - A land use plan consisting of a map and statement of present and prospective land uses that indicates those areas proposed for forests, recreation, agriculture, residence, commerce industry, public, and semi-public uses, and open spaces, areas reserved for flood plain, and areas identified that require special consideration for aquifer protections, for wetland protection, for the maintenance of forest blocks, wildlife habitat, and habitat connectors, or form other conservation purposes.

- sets forth the present and prospective location, amount, intensity, and character of such land uses and the appropriate timing or sequence of land development activities in relation to the provision of necessary community facilities and services.
- indicates those areas that are important as forest blocks and habitat connectors and plans for land development in those areas to minimize forest fragmentation and promote the health, viability, and ecological function of forests.

The Land Use chapter is based on the Town's objectives for future development as they relate to and are influenced by natural and socio-economic factors. The goals and actions outlined in previous chapters have been considered. This chapter divides the Town into land use districts, outlining current land use and recommended future land use types and intensity. Consistent with the [Historic, Cultural, and Scenic Resources section](#), the Plan prohibits energy development greater than 50kW in the Ridgeline Overlay District.

The Vermont Planning and Development Act authorizes towns to implement land use regulations such as zoning bylaws, subdivisions, and site plan review, provided regulations conform with State planning goals (24 V.S.A. §4411a).

Each district's boundaries can be located on the *Future Land Use Map*.

Village District:

The village is the historic town center, densely settled with a mix of residential, commercial, and municipal structures, and a high concentration of historic structures. This Plan strives to sustain the village's economic vitality, a compatible mix of uses, and historic integrity.

Within the village district, the Plan encourages residential dwellings (whether an ADU, single-family, duplex, or multi-family unit); compatible commercial uses (retail, offices, eateries, professional services, and institutions); and public, cultural, and civic uses (post office, public buildings, churches, library, historical society, theaters, art spaces/galleries, etc.)

Transportation improvements, including pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, should enhance the village's vitality. Current residential streets and neighborhoods should stay residential. Preservation and adaptive reuse of historic structures is encouraged. The Town has a state-designated Village Center, a subset of the village district eligible for state community revitalization support, including tax credits and regulatory relief.

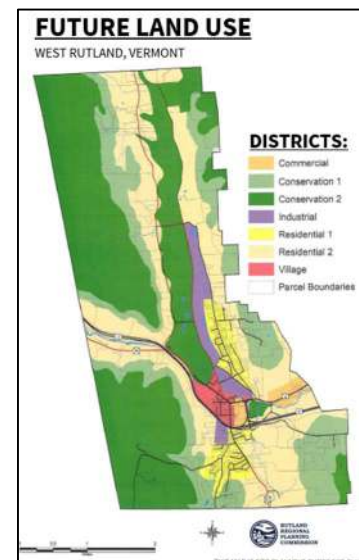


Figure 43: Village District Boundary (in red)

Industrial District:

There is limited land suitable for industrial purposes, in two areas of Town, based on convenient access to rail, power, and highway infrastructure. The largest is in and around the former marble operations, running along the east side of Marble Street and stretching down into West Rutland Industrial Park. The other district is a site off Clarendon Avenue occupied by *Casella Waste Systems*. Given the high demand in the commercial district, commercial uses are allowed in the industrial district.

Within the Industrial District, the Plan primarily encourages Industrial or Commercial Uses, however, nature preserves, and municipal facilities are allowed.

The Industrial Park usually requires adequate buffers due to its proximity to residential neighborhoods. Emphasis in all industrial areas should be placed on minimizing adverse impacts from industrial uses, including but not limited to noise, vibration, dust, and others. Appropriate buffering from adjoining properties and siting to minimize visual impacts on the rural landscape is usually required.

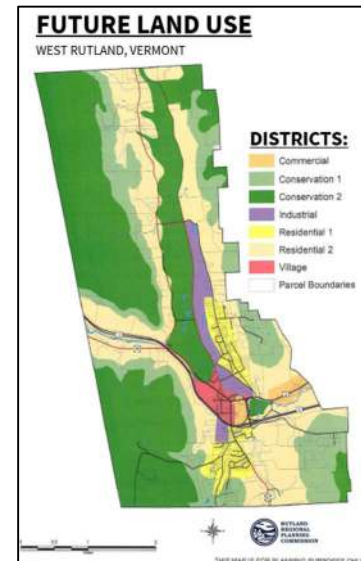


Figure 44: Industrial District Boundaries (in purple)

Commercial District:

West Rutland has a developed linear commercial district, running along Business Route 4 on the eastern side of Town, bordering Rutland Town. A smaller commercial district is in and around the Westway Mall, between State Route 4, Business Route 4, and Clarendon Ave (VT-133). Both Commercial Districts are appropriate locations for local and regionally oriented businesses and services that require good automobile accessibility.

The Plan encourages Commercial Uses, including mixed-use multifamily dwellings.

Development projects at the border with Rutland Town, along Business Route 4, are the highest priority. Most parcels along Business Route 4 are highly visible, so consideration should be given to site development and design. Access points and curb cuts should be designed to ensure that Business Route 4 continues to serve as an important transportation link with neighboring communities.

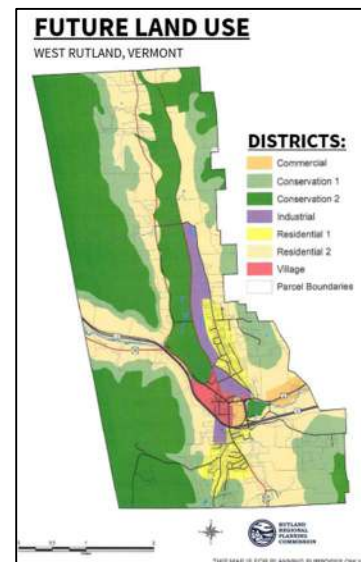


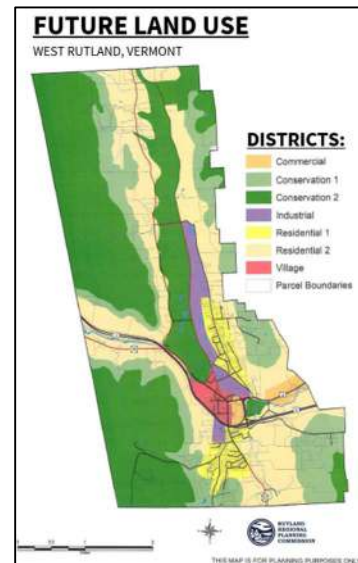
Figure 45: Commercial District Boundaries (in orange)

Residential Districts:

West Rutland has two residential districts based on district density and character. West Rutland's Source Water Protection District zoning overlay is primarily in the Residential Districts. Residential District 1 is suitable for medium-density development and has a neighborhood feel. The Plan supports subdivisions and residential structures that fit the area's character. Municipal water and sewer should be served. Neighborhood amenities, including sidewalks, bike paths, and small green spaces, are encouraged.

Residential District 2 is suitable for lower-density development, with complementary rural land uses, including farming, forestry, recreation, and low-impact commercial uses. Most of this district is not served by municipal water and sewer. The Plan encourages growth so long as approved services, private or public, are available. Conservation of open spaces, natural and scenic resources, and working lands is a priority. Roads in this district should allow transportation for large equipment, such as farm and forestry vehicles.

The Future Land Use Maps purpose, Goals, and Actions listed in the Plan minimize fragmentation of important forest blocks and promote the health, viability, and ecological functions of forests in Residential District 2, and the two Conservation Districts.



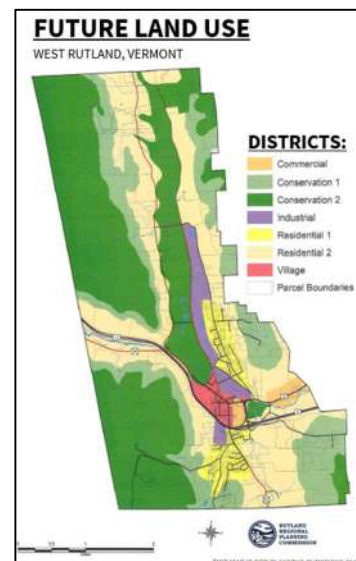
**Figure 46: Residential Districts
(District 1 in yellow,
District 2 in Peach)**

Conservation Districts:

West Rutland has two conservation districts. Both contain significant natural resources but are divided based on the sensitivity of the land. Roads and driveways should follow natural contours.

Conservation District 1 is a buffer between Conservation District 2 and other districts. Development should occur in small clusters, with natural features conserved. Shared driveways are encouraged to minimize the number of curb cuts along public roads.

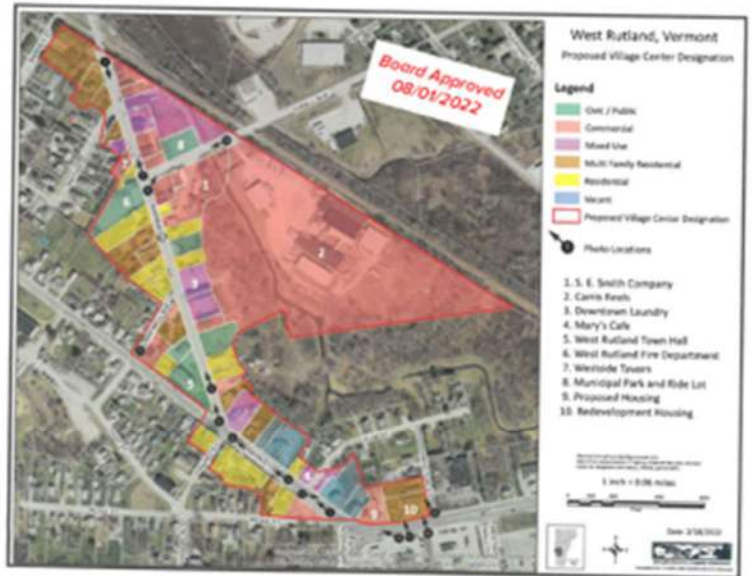
Conservation District 2 is the most restrictive, containing lands on which development would have a very detrimental effect. These include lands above 1,000 feet, very steep lands, floodplains, and lands with high scenic and cultural value to the town. These lands are suitable for low-impact recreational use, such as walking trails or hunting.



**Figure 47: Conservation Districts
(District 1 in light green,
District 2 in dark green)**

FUTURE LAND USE

WEST RUTLAND, VERMONT



DISTRICTS:

- Commercial
- Conservation 1
- Conservation 2
- Industrial
- Residential 1
- Residential 2
- Village
- Parcel Boundaries



THIS MAP IS FOR PLANNING PURPOSES ONLY.

LAND USE GOAL

1. To plan development to maintain the historic settlement pattern of compact villages separated by rural countryside.

LAND USE ACTIONS

1. Implement current zoning regulations to promote orderly development.
2. Amend zoning regulations with assistance from the Rutland Regional Planning Commission to align regulations with the HOME Act. In amending, consider civil citations and Environmental Court enforcement.
3. Support or oppose development proposals based on meeting the land uses' purpose as defined in the Town's zoning and the Town's land use goal.
4. Work with prospective developers to adapt site plans to better conform with the Town's opinion.

IMPLEMENTATION

Required to be in this chapter of the town plan by law:

24 V.S.A. § 4382 - A recommended program for the implementation of the objectives of the development plan.

The Vermont Planning and Development Act enables a municipality to guide its future growth through the preparation, continued maintenance, and implementation of a Municipal Plan (24 V.S.A. §4381). The West Rutland Planning Commission, whose members are appointed by the Selectboard, is responsible for the preparation of the West Rutland Town Plan. West Rutland first adopted a Town Plan in 1994 and since then has amended and re-adopted the Plan several times to reflect change in the Town, new legislation, and shifting resident attitudes.

Adoption of the Plan represents acceptance of its goals for guiding West Rutland's development. To realize full local control, implementation of the Plan takes two primary forms: enforcing zoning bylaws and through annual budgets.

The Planning and Development Act requires that Zoning Bylaws, as well as other bylaws, serve to implement the Plan and shall be in accord with its policies (24 V.S.A. §4410). Therefore, the Zoning Bylaws shall be in accordance with the Plan. On December 19, 2022, the Town adopted a series of Zoning Bylaw Amendments. The purpose of these amendments is to promote high-density multi-family housing in the designated village center and encourage redevelopment of existing parcels that have been vacant and underutilized for many years.

The expenditure of public funds will be required to implement some of the recommendations contained in the Plan. In this regard, the Town adopts an annual budget for the fiscal year. Annual budgets outline expected costs and proposed methods of financing. Likewise, a capital program is a plan of capital projects to be undertaken, including estimated costs and methods of financing. Both tools may be used in promoting sound fiscal Town management.

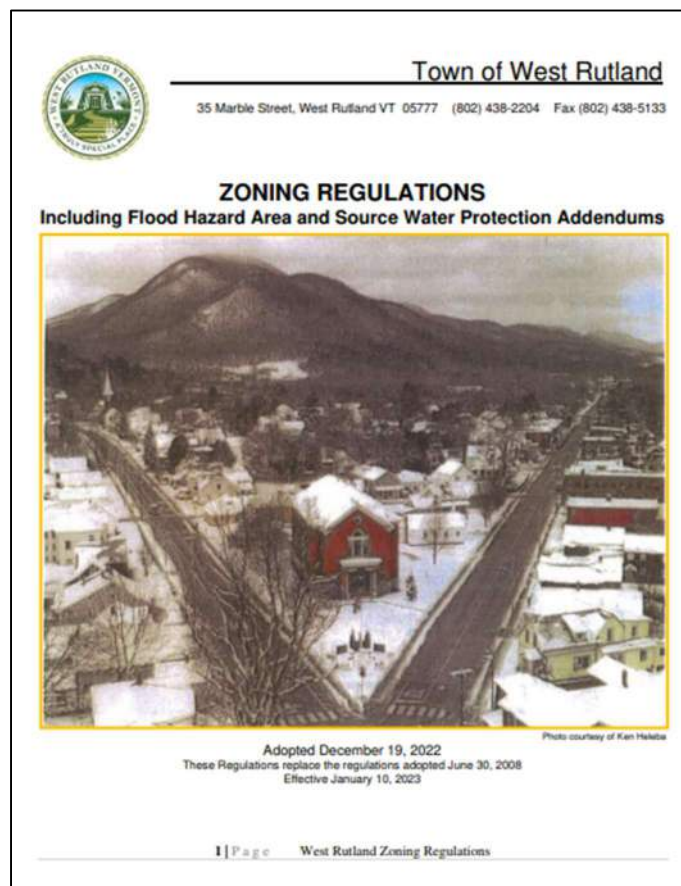


Figure 48: West Rutland Zoning Regulations

ADJACENT MUNICIPALITIES

Required to be in this chapter of the town plan by law:

24 V.S.A. § 4382 - A statement indicating how the plan relates to development trends and plans for adjacent municipalities and the region.

The towns of Rutland, Proctor, Pittsford, Castleton, Ira, and Clarendon abut West Rutland. These towns have similar development trends to West Rutland, with compact settlements surrounded by rural countryside. The town of Rutland, which originally included West Rutland, Rutland City, and Proctor, surrounds Rutland City.

Through Vermont's public notice requirements (24 V.S.A. §4384e), West Rutland exchanges draft copies of the Town Plan with all these municipalities to ensure the draft and published plans are reasonably compatible with one another. Plan review also allows possible conflicts in land use to be identified and properly addressed.

West Rutland is involved in regional cooperation with these towns in several ways: coordinating E-911 addresses where neighborhoods cross town lines, active participation in the Rutland Regional Planning Commission (RRPC) and working with the Marble Valley Regional Transit Company. West Rutland reviews RRPC's Regional Plan to ensure it and the Plan are compatible.

The Town recognizes some issues transcend town borders and require regional solutions. RRPC should provide the leadership and technical assistance needed to help all towns in the region identify their interdependent needs and form regional solutions. Where conflicts arise, RRPC should be a mediator to offer acceptable solutions to the towns involved.

The Plan is in accordance with 24 VSA 117 § 4384, § 4385, and § 4386 which govern the preparation of the plan, hearings by the planning commission and selectboard, and adoption and readoption of plans by the selectboard.

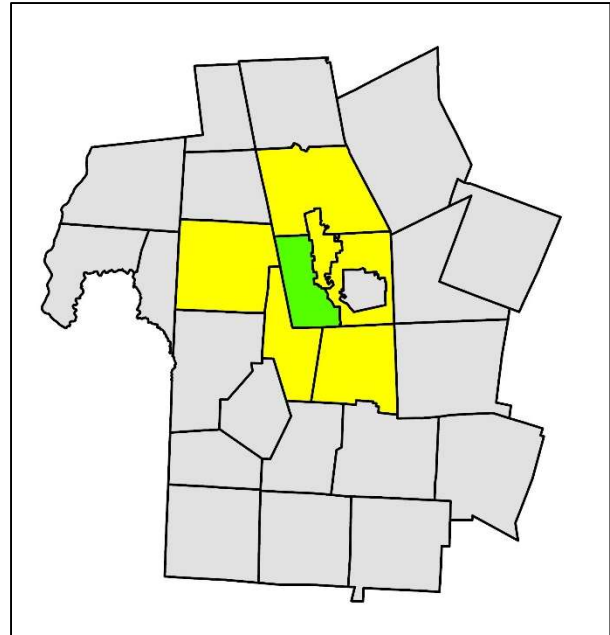


Figure 49: Rutland Region, West Rutland (green), Adjacent towns (yellow)