

Montgomery, Vermont Town Plan 2016-2021



Big Jay from North Hill Road, Winter 2015

Adopted by the Montgomery Selectboard on February 15, 2016

Montgomery Town Plan

Prepared by the
Montgomery Planning Commission

With the assistance of and mapping services by the
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This Municipal Plan update was funded by the State of Vermont Municipal Planning Grant Program.

Original document adopted May 1974
Amended and updated March 1987
Amended and updated November 1994
Amended and updated September 2000
Amended and updated September 2005
Amended and updated August 2010
Amended and updated February 2016

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CHAPTER 1. Introduction

Purpose

The purpose of a municipal plan is to help guide decision-makers to chart the future of a community. A plan is a town's vision for the future. It states related goals and objectives based upon a brief reflection of the past and an analysis of existing conditions. A plan is developed from an established planning program. This planning program has involved the public in a variety of ways. Through this collective effort the vision and recommendations have developed with the best interests of the Town as a whole in mind. In other words, a Town Plan is a calculated vision which is put together by the residents of the Town.

A Town Plan will help Montgomery control its future by providing it with the means to control change. A Town Plan does that by providing the community with a plan of action, or blueprint, which shows a community what it will be like in the future. A Town Plan shows a community what things are going to stay the same and what things are going to change. It defines how those changes are going to happen, and how quickly, or slowly, they are going to take place. A Town Plan gives Montgomery the power to guide change, and the pace at which change will occur, so that change does not control the Town's future. If the recommendations of the plan are implemented, the quality of life in Montgomery can be positively affected.

Montgomery Town Officials engage in an ongoing planning program for additional reasons including:

- Providing additional information and data to guide decision-makers in developing new policies.
- Identifying areas where additional study is needed.
- Providing a foundation for developing a capital program and amending the zoning and subdivision bylaws.

Recommendations within the municipal plan are based on an analysis of current conditions, the input of many residents, housing and population projections, and development trends in the Town and the surrounding region. Though the goals and recommendations of this plan are long-term, it is expected that Montgomery will re-examine them periodically and amend the Plan as needed and as required by law.

Authority

The Town of Montgomery is authorized to prepare and adopt a Municipal Plan via Chapter 117, Title 24 of the VSA (Vermont Municipal and Regional Planning and Development Act). Section 4382 of the Act dictates what needs to be included in a plan. The intent of the law is to encourage a municipality to "engage in a continuing planning process that will further several stated goals." The Act further states that municipal plans shall be re-examined, updated, and re-

adopted every five years. This process should be ongoing, whereby the Plan is continually reassessed and revised to meet the changing needs of the community. Consequently, there will be future opportunities to review and amend the plan. Residents, community groups, or anyone with an interest in the Town is encouraged to provide input into this ever-continuing process to the Montgomery Town Planning Commission at any time.

Planning Process

A Montgomery Town plan was developed and adopted in 1974. The plan was later amended in 1987, 1994, 2000, 2005 and 2010. The Town began this latest revision in 2015, with some assistance from the Northwest Regional Planning Commission.

Under current law, Act 200, a municipality must address twelve (12) elements in its plan development which are the following: 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; a land use plan; a transportation plan; a utility and facility plan; a statement of policies on the preservation of rare and irreplaceable natural areas, scenic and historic features and resources; an educational plan; a recommended program for the implementation of the objectives of the development plan; a statement indicating how the plan relates to development trends and plans for adjacent municipalities, areas and the region developed under this title; an energy plan; an economic development element; a flood resilience plan; and a housing element that shall include a recommended program for addressing low and moderate income person's housing needs. In order to develop regulatory mechanisms (by-laws) appropriate to guide development, a plan must first be adopted by the Town Selectboard. Once adopted, the Plan becomes the basis for development and enactment of zoning and subdivision regulations.

Role of the Montgomery Planning Commission

The Planning Commission is empowered to formulate goals and objectives toward Plan development. The Commission is responsible for the review and revision of the town plan and to propose amendments to the zoning bylaws and regulations in an effort to implement the plan, and nominates the zoning administrator with appointment by the Selectboard. The Commission also works on community development programs, grant applications and other projects that further the goals of this town plan.

The role of the Commission is ongoing. Changing community conditions, preferences and priorities call for consistent monitoring of plan objectives. Amendments to the plan may, from time to time, be necessary and the Commission has responsibility for this task.

CHAPTER 2. Visions for the Future of Montgomery

Montgomery is defined by the natural character which surrounds us, by our history, and by the community of people that call our broad valley at the northern end of the Green Mountains home. Surrounded on three sides by pristine ridge lines, enveloped in woodlands, and threaded by wild and scenic brooks flowing into the Trout River, our town expands from two village centers along rural back roads. Transformed through the last century by growth and development, including shifts in economy and culture, our covered bridges and historic buildings still serve as icons of our heritage, and provide a testament to a past driven by agriculture and a vibrant wood products industry. Our sense of community is strong. We value our connections with each other through the arts, local entertainment, and a willingness to support our neighbors and the community that binds us. We are proud of what we as a community have created together, assets like our top ranked school, library, and recreation center, and the traditions which bring us together around food and drink in celebration of this place and its people. We are blessed by what the natural world has provided us, from our vast forests and the myriad of wildlife species which share them, to our smallest swimming holes and the pleasures found there. As we consider our plan for the future we are charged with balancing the stewardship of our past with shaping a vision for growth which sustains these elements which define our town.

A Vision of the Future

Our vision is of a strong and sustainable local economy which maintains Montgomery's uniqueness of character and celebrates our history. An economy driven by a growth of local enterprise, responding to new technologies, and based in diversification of value added manufacturing, community scaled agriculture, and tourism based on our natural environment. A vision of a community resilient to the effects of a changing climate, prepared for more intense storm events and increased flooding, and acknowledging the importance of renewable energy development on a local, non-industrial scale, with sound stewardship of our woodlands and waters to ensure their health and productivity into the future.

CHAPTER 3. Summary of Goals and Policies

ARCHAEOLOGICAL, HISTORIC, AND SCENIC RESOURCES

GOAL: TO RECOGNIZE THE ROLE OF MONTGOMERY'S ARCHAEOLOGICAL, HISTORIC, AND SCENIC RESOURCES IN SHAPING THE TOWN'S PRESENT QUALITY OF LIFE AND FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES

Policies

- Protect sites of potential archaeological and/or historical significance
- Promote community growth that maintains the land use pattern developed throughout the Town's history – densely settled villages separated by open agricultural and forest land
- Promote the use of historic buildings for public purposes whenever feasible
- Preserve the scenic beauty and rural character of Montgomery's ridgelines, forests, open lands, and roads

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

GOAL: TO LOOK AHEAD AND PREDICT FUTURE NEEDS FOR PUBLIC FACILITIES BASED UPON COMMUNITY GROWTH AND CHANGE

Policies

- Promote efficient and functional use of existing municipal buildings and facilities
- Provide sufficient space and facilities to carry out essential municipal functions
- Provide a gathering place for the local population to address town business
- Conserve Montgomery's recreational resources, discourage incompatible land uses, and protect the scenic qualities that contribute to recreation
- Promote recreational areas and facilities in convenient and reasonable locations for the use and enjoyment of all residents and visitors
- Promote the protection and maintenance of public recreation trails within the town on private land, including the Catamount Trail, a cross-country ski trail that runs the length of Vermont
- Provide space for gatherings, functions, and events to provide educational, social, and civic opportunities to enhance community involvement and identity

COMMUNITY SERVICES

GOALS: TO PROVIDE MUNICIPAL SERVICES, OR ENABLE OTHER ENTITIES TO MEET THE NEEDS OF LOCAL RESIDENTS OF ALL AGES WITHOUT UNDUE OR SUDDEN IMPACTS UPON LOCAL PROPERTY TAXES

Policies

- Provide emergency services to protect the health, safety, and property of local residents
- Provide library services to enable Montgomery residents access to information, resources, and opportunities for personal and community enrichment
- Encourage safe and affordable childcare facilities in the community

COMMUNITY UTILITIES

GOAL: TO PROVIDE PUBLIC UTILITIES TO SUPPORT CONCENTRATED COMMERCIAL, AND LIGHT INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT.

Policies

- Protect the public water supply by restricting inappropriate development in the source protection area
- Operate the Montgomery Water System in an economic manner, while providing an adequate source of good potable water for the needs of the Village and Center
- Promote the expansion of telecommunications and electric facilities provided that infrastructure to develop these opportunities shall be located in appropriate areas; respecting the integrity of residential areas, aesthetic concerns, and natural resource issues

ECONOMY

GOAL: TO FOSTER A DIVERSE AND STABLE ECONOMY BY HELPING TO ENSURE THE SUCCESSFUL OPERATION OF EXISTING ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES AND PROVIDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR NEW ONES

Policies

- Support and encourage sustainable and diversified activities to supply local and regional food needs
- Encourage businesses that complement recreation opportunities within the town
- Protect the vitality and importance of the villages as a community and regional asset
- Encourage commercial development that supplies local needs for retail, business, and personal services
- Encourage and develop resources for home occupations
- Encourage Montgomery's growing arts community
- Encourage businesses and industries that use the skills of the local labor force
- Create an attractive, safe and friendly village environment that invites and supports safe pedestrian use, community events and an active lifestyle

ENERGY

GOAL: TO PROMOTE ENERGY CONSERVATION AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF LOCAL ENERGY PRODUCTION

Policies

- Make Town owned buildings as energy efficient as feasible
- Encourage the development of renewable energy resources, including the heating of municipal facilities
- Promote car-pooling among area residents; encourage the use of informal park and ride lots where possible
- Encourage energy conservation by promoting patterns of development that utilize clustering and energy efficient site design whenever possible
- Encourage energy efficiency by making available information regarding groups and organizations in the State, which can provide consumers with information on how to become more energy efficient
- Support renewable energy systems that are appropriately sited and scaled and which are consistent with the environmental, aesthetic and cultural values of Montgomery and with considerations to no undue adverse impact upon the important scenic and natural resources outlined in this plan

TRANSPORTATION

GOAL: TO ENSURE THE DEVELOPMENT OF A FUNCTIONAL AND CONNECTED TRANSPORTATION NETWORK.

Policies

- Protect the health, safety, and welfare of the traveling public
- Promote safe, convenient, economic, and energy efficient transportation systems including public transit options and paths for pedestrians and bicycles
- Promote transportation activities that respect the natural environment
- Maintain the scenic character of the Town's rural byways
- Support public transit efforts of the Green Mountain Transit Agency to increase mobility and access of Town residents
- Provide appropriate provisions for bicycle and pedestrian use on designated routes, including sidewalks, paths, widen shoulders, proper signage and pavement improvements.
- Maintain good quality, safe local roads and streets, sidewalks, bridges, and equipment needed for their maintenance.
- Recognize the link between land use and transportation and coordinate transportation improvements to facilitate and complement the desired type, location, density, and timing of local development.

EDUCATION

GOAL: TO CREATE A LEARNING COMMUNITY THAT WILL PROVIDE OUR STUDENTS WITH THE TOOLS FOR LIFELONG SUCCESS

Policies

- Provide appropriate facilities and infrastructure for a variety of academic, athletic, social, cultural and community activities
- Broaden access to educational and vocational training opportunities for all ages
- Ensure that both motorized and pedestrian access to school is safe and convenient
- Support use of town lands, facilities, and resources for broad-based educational experiences

HOUSING

GOAL: TO PROVIDE SUITABLE LAND AREAS FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT THAT WILL SERVE THE NEEDS OF MONTGOMERY'S CURRENT AND FUTURE RESIDENTS

Policies

- Ensure adequate housing options for people of all income levels, ages, household types, and preferences
- Ensure that households and individuals with special housing needs, including the elderly, handicapped, and low-income households are able to attain suitable and affordable housing
- Promote low-density residential housing in areas without municipal services and higher densities in parts of town with existing services or close to existing service boundaries
- Conserve and protect the vitality and quality of existing neighborhoods
- Allow for innovative housing to promote low-cost, low-impact, consolidated, and resource efficient options.
- Accessory apartments are encouraged, as they provide needed income for the homeowner and needed small apartments for residents living alone
- Affordable housing should minimize long-term living costs through high quality design, efficient construction, energy efficiency, and proximity to employment
- Encourage land use patterns which are inherently more affordable by nature of cost of efficiencies associated with construction (e.g. shorter access roads, smaller lots, proximity to utilities)
- Existing housing in the floodplain should be flood-proofed for the safety of the residents and the Village as a whole

NATURAL RESOURCES

GOAL: TO PROVIDE FOR THE LOCAL GROWTH THAT IS COMPATIBLE WITH THE TOWN'S NATURAL FEATURES INCLUDING SOILS, LANDSCAPE, WATER RESOURCES & WILDLIFE

Policies

- Limit development in areas where soils have limited capacity to support structures or filter wastes and in areas where the slope is greater than 15%
- Maintain natural vegetative cover to the greatest extent possible where development occurs in Conservation Districts (Conservation I and II)
- Guide development away from productive agricultural or forest soils
- Protect the water quality of the Trout River and its tributary streams by preventing erosion along their banks and encouraging reduction of stormwater and agricultural runoff and non-point source pollution
- Protect groundwater quality by regulating uses that could introduce contaminants into the ground in the source water protection areas
- Limit the loss or degradation of wildlife habitat by maintaining significant features, including wildlife corridors and unique sensitive areas or natural communities, and protecting such areas from development that would demonstrably reduce the ecological function of habitat on the landscape scale
- Development shall be designed and sited in a manner to limit the fragmentation of large blocks of contiguous forest to the greatest degree possible
- Prohibit land development resulting in the loss of wetland and floodplain storage capacity
- Recognize the collective value in preserving natural resources throughout the town and encourage good land stewardship practices among private landowners in matters of soil health, biodiversity, and water quality
- Ensure the conservation and proper stewardship of significant natural communities and our forestland
- Avoid development and other encroachments – including fill, dredging, new structures, parking areas, infrastructure and utilities – within mapped river corridors
- Protect headwaters and the ecosystems they sustain from risk of degradation; to ensure high water quality, these areas shall be principally maintained for forestry and recreational uses
- Incorporate vegetated buffers from streams, rivers and ponds into Montgomery's zoning bylaws in order to better protect water quality

FLOOD RESILIENCY

GOAL: ENCOURAGE AND FOSTER A FLOOD RESILIENT COMMUNITY

GOAL: MITIGATE THE RISK FOR LOSS OF LIFE AND INJURIES THAT RESULT FROM FLOOD EVENTS

GOAL: REDUCE DAMAGES TO PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE RESULTING FROM FLOOD EVENTS THROUGH HAZARD MITIGATION PLANNING AND PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

Policies

- Encourage flood emergency preparedness and response planning
- Where development already exists in vulnerable areas, measures shall be taken to protect people, buildings and facilities to reduce future flooding risk
- New development shall be planned for and encouraged in areas that are less vulnerable to future flooding events
- Discourage new development in the Special Flood Hazard Area and river corridors; in areas where new development is allowed, it should not exacerbate flooding and fluvial erosion
- Encourage the protection and restoration of floodplains and upland forested areas that attenuate and moderate flooding and fluvial erosion; where feasible floodplain restoration and conserved land in vulnerable areas should be encouraged

LAND USE

GOAL: TO MAINTAIN MONTGOMERY'S RURAL CHARACTER AND SCENIC RESOURCES BY ENCOURAGING DEVELOPMENT TO FOLLOW WISE LAND USE PRACTICES

Policies

- Maintain the character of existing neighborhoods and avoid potential conflicts between incompatible land uses
- Limit development on slopes greater than 15% and maintain natural vegetation on slopes
- Protect scenic ridges by limiting development above 1,600 ft. in elevation
- Steer development away from areas where soils will not support it due to shallow depth to bedrock, instability, or high water table
- Protect public health, welfare, and safety by limiting development in the flood plain
- Protect water quality by limiting development in Wellhead Protection Areas, wetlands, and along stream banks
- Conserve productive lands by accommodating development in areas apart from most farming activity
- Recognizing the community's susceptibility to flooding, new development shall conform

strictly to floodplain regulations

- Promote new development in areas of existing infrastructure, such as roads, power, and water.
- Encourage sustainable agricultural and silvicultural practices to both protect the use of land and water resources, and keep a working rural landscape based on a practice of stewardship
- Avoid fragmentation of large forest blocks of contiguous forests that provide both economic opportunities for landowners as well as ecological and cultural benefits to the community, including wildlife habitat, water quality maintenance and recreation
- Promote anti-sprawl initiatives as a measure to maintain the appropriate use of our land resources
- Promote the enrollment of productive farm and forestland in the current use value appraisal program.

CHAPTER 4. Community Profile

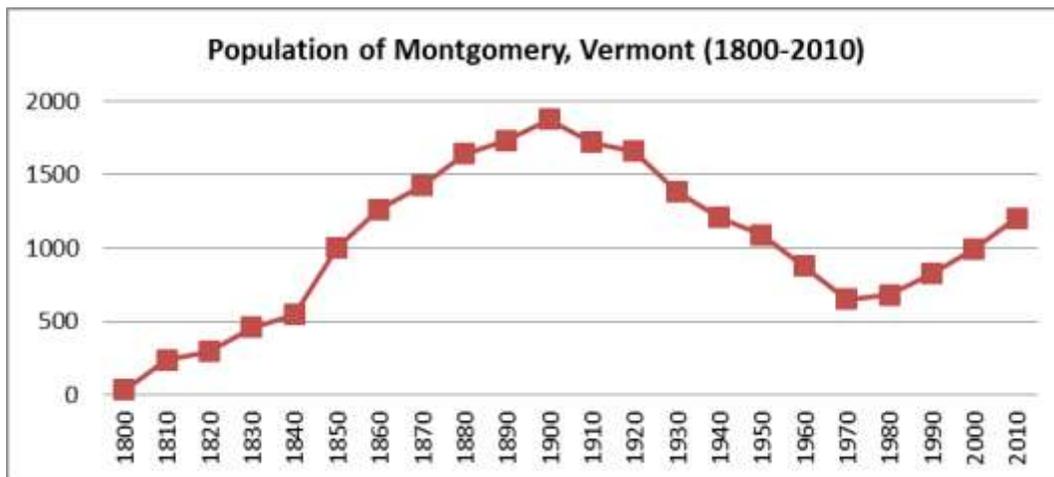
To understand and plan for a town, one must understand the people who live there. The members of a town will vary in age, place of birth, income, and occupation but all are members of a community. This chapter provides a snapshot of many social and economic indicators that will be discussed in greater detail in other parts of the plan. The purpose here is to understand the mix of individuals that make up the community as it exists today in order to plan for the future.

The Town of Montgomery is located in the northwestern part of the State of Vermont in Franklin County. It is bordered by the following eight towns: Richford, Enosburg, and Bakersfield, (all located in Franklin County); Belvidere and Eden (both located in Lamoille County – to the south of Franklin County); and finally, Lowell, Westfield, and Jay (all three are located in Orleans County – to the east of Franklin County). Montgomery covers a total of 57 square miles – which includes the Trout River and numerous streams and brooks. This amounts to 8.2 percent of the total area of Franklin County. The total area in Franklin County is 693 square miles, of which 56 square miles is water.

Past, Present and Future Population

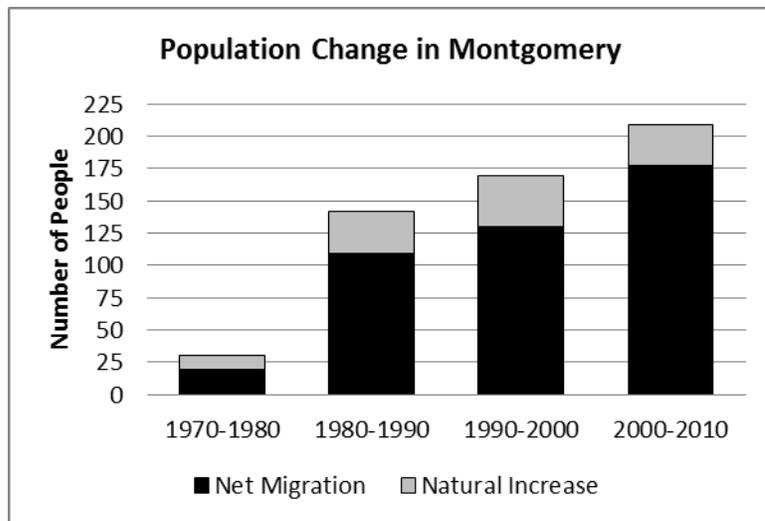
Planning is related to people and because of this, an understanding of their geographical distribution is essential. Population growth is the result of two factors: **natural increase** (where the number of births exceed the number of deaths) and/or **net in-migration** (where the number of people moving into a community exceeds the number of people moving out). The Town of Montgomery has experienced moderate growth in its population since the 1980’s. Population changes for the Town have occurred steadily over the years.

The graph below shows Montgomery’s population grew steadily from the year 1800 to the year 1900 where it peaked. In the early 1900s the population started to see a decline until 1980, where once again it has started to rise moderately.



Data Source: US Decennial Census

The small size of the population base makes long-term forecasting difficult, especially at the local level. Population trends since 1970 show that in-migration, driven in part by continued economic growth and development, will continue well into the next century, but natural increases will level off somewhat, given the overall aging of the population. Since the 1980s, the in-migration is accounting for the majority of the population growth.



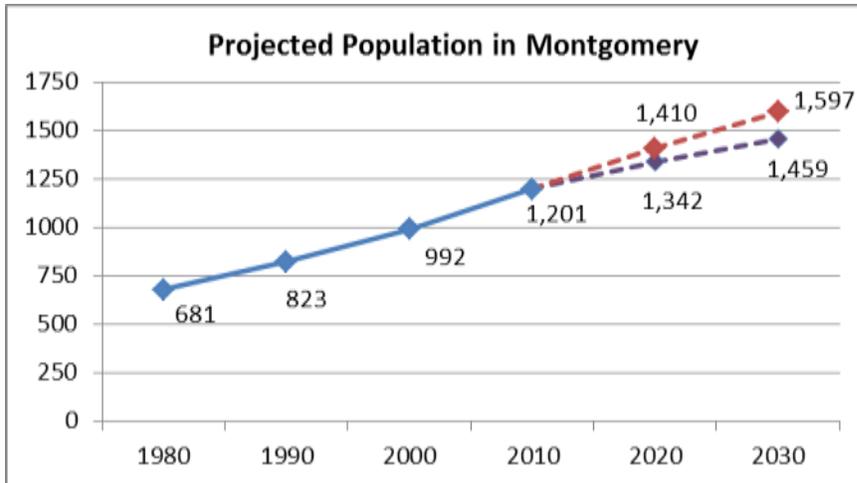
Data Source: Vermont Health Department, Vital Statistics

According to the U.S. Census reported population, Montgomery has been growing at a rate of twenty-one percent for the past three decades. The growth in Montgomery has been steadier than the surrounding communities leading up to 2010, and a much higher percent increase than Franklin County from 2000 to 2010 which saw a five percent population increase.

	1980	%	1990	%	2000	%	2010
Montgomery	681	21	823	21	992	21	1,201
Richford	2,206	-1.3	2,178	7	2,321	-0.6	2,308
Enosburgh	2,070	22	2,535	10	2,788	-0.3	2,781
Bakersfield	852	15	977	24	1,215	9	1,322
Eden	612	37	840	37	1,152	15	1,323
Lowell	573	4	594	24	738	19	879
Westfield	418	6	442	14	503	7	536
Belvidere	218	5	228	29	294	18	348

Data Source: US Decennial Census

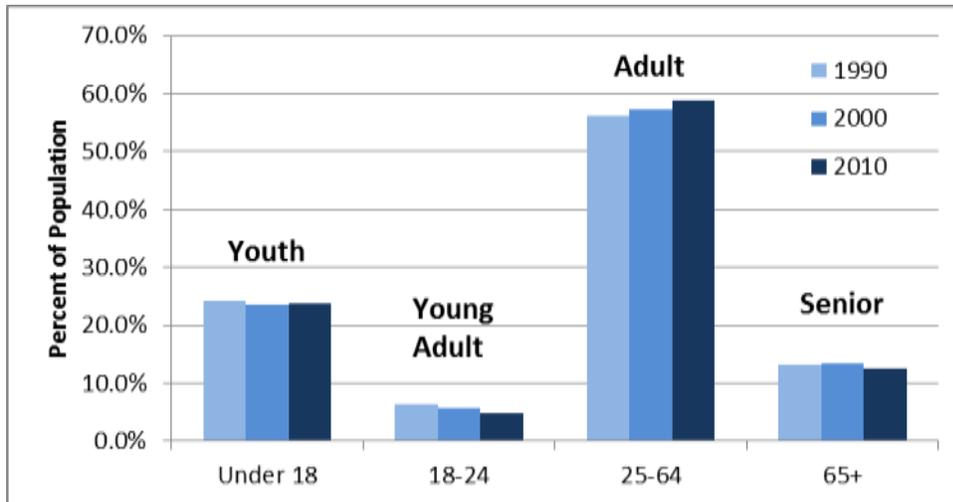
Population projections are based on past trends in birth, deaths and migration which provide reasonable estimates of future conditions. The Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development produced a report calculating projections based on past trends from two time periods; the 1990-2000 predict higher growth and 2000-2010 predicts lower growth. Based on these projections, Montgomery could experience continued growth of twelve to seventeen percent by 2020. Franklin County as a whole is projected to see closer to three to nine percent growth by 2020.



Data Source: U.S. Census; Vermont Population Projections 2010-2030 Report, released August 2013.

Age Distribution of Residents

The median age in 2010 for the residents of Montgomery was 42.5 years, an increase of 6.1 years since 1990. This trend is similar to other communities in Franklin County and the State of



Vermont as the population as a whole is aging. As noted previously, the total population of the community has been increasing however the proportion of the population in each age group has remained stable from 1990 to 2010.

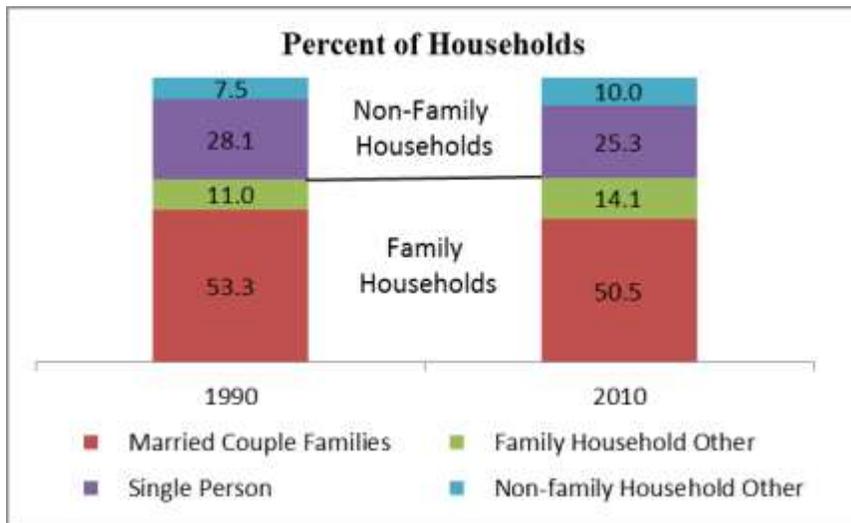
Data Source: US Decennial Census

Special Populations

The 2010 US Census provides information about the number of people with various levels and types of disabilities. Nineteen percent of the town population has a disability as classified by one of the six categories: hearing, vision (blind or having serious difficulty seeing, even when wearing glasses), cognitive, ambulatory (mobility), self-care difficulty, and independent living difficulty. Montgomery has a higher percentage of persons between the ages of 18 and 64 with disabilities (22.5% of this age group), than that of the county and the state.

Households & Household Types

The way the population groups itself into households affects the demand for housing, community services, and employment. From 1990 to 2010, the percentage of family households to non-family households remained unchanged in Montgomery following a dip in family households from 1980 to 1990. Non-family and single households have continued to increase in the county and state.



Family Household - A householder living with one or more individuals related to him or her by birth, marriage, or adoption

Non-Family Household - A householder living alone, with an unmarried partner, or with nonrelatives.

Data Source: US Decennial Census

The increase in single-family households impacts the average number of persons per household. This number decreased in Montgomery from 2.41 to 2.36 since 2000. A decrease means that more units are required to shelter the same number of people. As the population continues to increase, we expect an on-going demand for housing units. The majority of the community’s housing units can be characterized as single-family structures.

In 2000, Montgomery needed approximately 412 housing units to house the 2000 population, while the Town held a stock of 441 year round housing units. With the 2010 household size of 2.36, 509 year round housing units would have been needed to accommodate growth and 558 units were reported by the Census. If one assumes household size stabilization at about 2.4 in Montgomery through the year 2030, and in consideration of population projections for the town, approximately 30 additional housing units will be needed by 2020 and 49 up to 78 new units to house the projected population for 2030.

	1980	1990	2000	2010	% Change 1980-1990	%Change 1990-2000	% Change 2000-2010
Total Households	253	345	412	509	36.4	19.4	23.5
Total Housing Units	485	556	666	791	14.6	19.8	18.8

Data Source: US Decennial Census

Economic Standing

Sixty-six percent of the population 16 years old and older is in the labor force as of 2013 (ACS 2009-2013) which equates to the proportion of the population that is 18-64 years old. Fifty-six percent of 25 to 64 year olds have attended some college or obtained a degree (Associates, Bachelors or higher).

The median household income for Montgomery is below the median household incomes for both Franklin County and Vermont. Montgomery does have an increasing percent of families that are below the poverty level, this percent has increased since 1999.

The Census defined Poverty Threshold in 2013 for a two-adult family with one child under 18 years old is \$16,057.

	Median Household Income			% of Families Below Poverty Level	
	1989	1999	2013	1999	2013
Montgomery	\$22,019	\$33,958	\$38,000	8.70%	14.00%
Franklin County	\$28,401	\$41,659	\$56,240	7.00%	7.70%
Vermont	\$29,792	\$40,856	\$54,267	6.30%	7.60%

Source: US Census of Population 1980-2000; American Community Survey 2009-2013

Commuting to Jobs

In the 1990s, the majority of Montgomery and Franklin County residents has less than a 20 minute commute to work. By 2013, the majority of residents still maintain a travel time of less than 30 minutes for work.

	Montgomery			Franklin County		
	1990	2000	2013	1990	2000	2013
Minutes to Work	Percent of Workers by Travel Time to Work (%)					
Less than 10 minutes	32.7	14.7	17.2	25.1	21.6	16.7
10 – 14 minutes	12.1	9.6	8.6	14.1	12.6	12.2
15 – 19 minutes	15.8	16.2	11.6	13.0	10.8	11.7
20 – 29 minutes	15.8	14.7	14.7	12.9	14.6	13.8
30 – 44 minutes	9.3	11.7	18.6	21.1	23.1	25.6
Greater than 45 min.	14.4	18.2	29.3	13.9	15.1	19.9
Mean Travel Time to Work (mins)						
	20.5	33.3	30.5	21.6	25.6	27.1

Source: US Census of Population 1990 and 2000; American Community Survey 2009-2013

The percentage of workers in Montgomery and the county who drove alone to work (using either a car, truck, or van) has been creeping higher since 1990. The Town does not have direct access to public transit; the closest service is in Berkshire on the transit route that connects Richford to

St. Albans City. The percentage of people who work from home or use non-motorized means of travel has continued on a downward trend.

Transportation Type Used in Commuting to Work	Montgomery			Franklin County		
	1990	2000	2010	1990	2000	2010
% who drove alone	64.4	70.5	75.5	66.7	73.3	77.6
% in carpools	12	14.5	12.3	17.4	16.5	12.7
% using public transportation	1	0.5	0	0.6	0.2	0.4
% using other means	1.6	0.9	0	1.3	0.3	0.9
% who walked, biked, or worked at home	21	13.7	8.4	13.9	9.7	12.2

Source: US Decennial Census

Grand List

The Grand List can give a town an idea of what the land is being used for and also, how the land uses have changed over time. It will show how many parcels there are and different types of housing (vacation, residential, mobile homes, etc.), and it will show the number of parcels for commercial, industrial, forestry, utilities, and farms. The Grand List also shows the appraised value of all of the parcel categories. The Town of Montgomery currently has a total of 943 parcels for the year 2014. The largest category is Residential with 631 parcels or 67 percent of the total. Woodlands (Forestry) is the second largest category with 144 parcels or 15 percent of the total, while Vacation/Seasonal is the third largest with 55 parcels or 6 percent of the total. The Residential category also has the highest appraised value (83%) followed by Woodland (forestry) (5%). Overall the grand list has stayed relatively similar since 2009; there has been a small decrease in the number of woodlands parcels. The Grand List for Montgomery (2014) which lists the categories and their appraised values can be found in the Table below.

2009 and 2014 Grand List for Montgomery, Vermont								
Category	# of Parcels		% of Total		Appraised Value of Category		% of Total	
	2009	2014	2009	2014	2009	2014	2009	2014
Residential	618	631	65.19%	66.91%	\$95,437,000	\$129,817,900	82.25%	82.52%
Mobile Home	37	31	3.90%	3.29%	\$2,053,700	\$2,161,800	1.77%	1.37%
Seasonal	55	55	5.80%	5.83%	\$3,036,900	\$4,108,459	2.62%	2.61%
Commercial	23	27	2.43%	2.86%	\$2,652,300	\$4,386,100	2.29%	2.79%
Industrial	0	0	0.00%	0.00%	\$0	\$0	0.00%	0.00%
Utilities	2	2	0.21%	0.21%	\$2,282,000	\$3,587,500	1.97%	2.28%
Farm	7	7	0.74%	0.74%	\$165,500	\$2,515,533	0.14%	1.60%
Woodland	159	144	16.77%	15.27%	\$7,119,700	\$8,455,311	6.14%	5.37%
Misc.	47	46	4.96%	4.88%	\$1,793,900	\$2,289,805	1.55%	1.46%
Other	0	0	0.00%	0.00%	\$0	\$0	0.00%	0.00%
Total	948	943	100.00%	100.00%	\$116,026,000	\$157,322,408	100.00%	100.00%

Source: Vermont Department of Taxes

CHAPTER 5. Archaeological, Historic, and Scenic Resources

GOAL: TO RECOGNIZE THE ROLE OF MONTGOMERY'S ARCHAEOLOGICAL, HISTORIC, AND SCENIC RESOURCES IN SHAPING THE TOWN'S PRESENT QUALITY OF LIFE AND FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES

Policies

- Protect sites of potential archaeological and/or historical significance.
- Promote community growth that maintains the land use pattern developed throughout the Town's history – densely settled villages separated by open agricultural and forest land.
- Promote the use of historic buildings for public purposes whenever feasible.
- Preserve the scenic beauty and rural character of Montgomery's ridgelines, forests, open lands, and roads.

Town History

The Town of Montgomery was named after Captain Richmond Montgomery, a hero of the American Revolution. It was chartered on March 13, 1780. Montgomery is situated within the northern Green Mountains and is dominated by steep, forested mountain slopes drained by the Trout River and its tributaries. The first people who moved to the Town of Montgomery settled along this area. Five small villages also referred to as hamlets, eventually formed along the river. These hamlets are known today as West Hill, Montgomery, Montgomery Center, Hutchins, and Hectorville.

Spurred by abundant waterpower and surrounding raw materials, the population grew steadily until 1900. At this time, the population started to decline until the 1970's, when it slowly started to rebound. Early economic activity in Montgomery centered on farming, sugaring, logging, and small wood related industries. As these industries changed, so did Montgomery's population. More recently, Montgomery's economy has begun to grow again due to the development of recreation and tourist industries. Since 2000, we have seen a shift from a greater percentage of vacation homes to a greater percentage of residential homes. The Town also receives a noticeable influx of retirees from other parts of the United States and Canada. This trend is likely to continue for the foreseeable future.

Cultural and Historic Resources

Covered Bridges

Vermont regards its covered bridges as one of its most treasured landmarks. The State has more covered bridges in proportion to its area than any other state. The bridges were covered for two purposes: to protect them from the elements of nature and to preserve the wooden trusses used in their construction. Unfortunately, many of the states' covered bridges have succumbed to the forces of nature and also to neglect. It is vital that the State takes active measures to preserve these valuable landmarks.

The Town of Montgomery has six covered bridges that are considered historic sites. They are the following: Fuller (1890), Comstock (1883), Hectorville (1883), Longley (1863), Creamery (1883), and Hutchins (1883). The Fuller Covered Bridge is also known as Black Falls and the Creamery Covered Bridge is also known as West Hill or Crystal Springs. The Jewett brothers, Sheldon and Savannah, built all of Montgomery’s covered bridges between 1860 and 1890. They operated a sawmill on West Hill which allowed them to mill the wood to their specific requirements. Stress, wind, and weight were all factors that had to be taken into account when designing the bridges. The brothers used their trademark method to design the bridges. First, the main bearing beams were positioned across the stream onto a pier foundation on either end. Then the lattice trusses were moved into position and the top beams tied. After this, the roof was secured. The Jewett brothers were able to build bridges that have lasted over a hundred years. All six of these bridges are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The following chart gives the location, type, the year built, and crossing for the covered bridges in Town:

Historic Covered Bridges in Montgomery				
Name	Location	Type	Year Built	Crossing
Fuller Bridge	South Richford Road Montgomery Village	Town Lattice	1890	Black Falls Brook and South Richford Road
Creamery Bridge	Creamery Bridge Road Montgomery Village	Town Lattice	1883	West Hill Brook and Creamery Bridge Road
Hectorville Bridge	Disassembled, and in storage awaiting a plan for restoration	Town Lattice	1883	South Branch of the Trout River and the Gibou Road
Comstock Bridge	Comstock Road Montgomery Village	Town Lattice	1883	Trout River and Comstock Road
Hutchins Bridge	Hutchins Bridge Road Montgomery Center	Town Lattice	1883	South Branch of the Trout and Hutchins Bridge Road
Longley Bridge	Longley Bridge Road Montgomery Village	Town Lattice	1863	Trout River and Longley Bridge Road
Source: Montgomery Historical Society				

Historic Buildings

St. Bartholomew’s Episcopal Church and the Montgomery House (formerly the Black Lantern Inn) are also listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Their years of inclusion are 1988 and 1992 respectively. The St. Bartholomew’s Episcopal Church, also known as the Union Church, was built in 1835 at a cost of three thousand dollars. Membership thrived at the church until 1882 when, for the first time, it started to decline. By 1920, the church was no longer being

used on a regular basis, and thus began a long, slow process of deterioration. The Town responded to the need to save the historic building for future generations. On November 23, 1974, the Town of Montgomery formed the Montgomery Historical Society. The Society then proceeded to purchase the church from the Episcopal Diocese of Burlington for the sum of one dollar. The church was later renamed Pratt Hall in honor of one of the founders, Larry Pratt. All the necessary repair work that was done on the building was funded through community donations and fund-raising events. See Chapter 16, Volunteer Community Organizations for more on the Montgomery Historical Society.

Smaller landscape features such as stone walls, old barns, outbuildings, corner stones, markers, trees, and old apple orchards and lilac bushes planted around former homesteads, all have historic value and importance but these unfortunately often go unnoticed. These features say as much about the region's rural and agricultural heritage as many of its more readily recognized historic landmarks, but are often disturbed, removed, or demolished without any thought. Recognizing the need for more public education, the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation published in 1994 *Stonewalls and Cellarholes: a Guide for Landowners on Historic Features and Landscapes in Vermont's Forests*.

Cultural and historic resources are at risk of degradation through improper earth resource extraction. This includes the accidental destruction of buried archaeological sites and diminished scenic qualities that may limit the future use of disturbed sites. Noise, dust, and increased traffic on roads near extraction sites all compromise the rural character and sense of place the Town enjoys.

Scenic Resources

The Northwest Region of Vermont is an extremely rich visual mosaic of diverse landscapes, from the sweeping agricultural views of the Lake Champlain islands, to the heavily wooded Western slopes of the Green Mountains. It is the visual language of the area which plays an important part in how a community is perceived.

Scenic highways and corridors link natural, cultural, and scenic resources to the historic landscape of the area. The visual character of Montgomery makes it an excellent place to live. Montgomery, like all other towns, should maintain the preservation of scenic vistas. The scenic qualities of a forested ridgeline or hillside can be compromised by poorly planned development, such as inappropriate building placement, site design, and excessive clearing. The Town should encourage innovation in design and layout of development so that the visual impact can be minimized. The use of vegetative buffers and other screening methods should be encouraged to help reduce the visual impact of development in the town.

Montgomery shall take measures to ensure that its natural features are conserved. These natural areas include the Trout River and its tributaries, its mountains such as Burnt Mountain, Big Jay, and Little Jay, as well as farm and forest land. These natural features play a big role in drawing people to the area and they should not be compromised.

CHAPTER 6. Community Facilities

GOAL: TO LOOK AHEAD AND PREDICT FUTURE NEEDS FOR PUBLIC FACILITIES BASED UPON COMMUNITY GROWTH AND CHANGE

Policies

- Promote efficient and functional use of existing municipal buildings and facilities
- Provide sufficient space and facilities to carry out essential municipal functions
- Provide a gathering place for the local population to address town business
- Conserve Montgomery's recreational resources, discourage incompatible land uses, and protect the scenic qualities that contribute to recreation
- Promote recreational areas and facilities in convenient and reasonable locations for the use and enjoyment of all residents and visitors
- Promote the protection and maintenance of public recreation trails within the town on private land, including the Catamount Trail, a cross-country ski trail that runs the length of Vermont
- Provide space for gatherings, functions, and events to provide educational, social, and civic opportunities to enhance community involvement and identity

Public Buildings (Town Office, Town Garage, Public Safety Building)

The **Town Office building** is located on Main Street in the Center. One half of the main floor of the one story building provides space for the Town Clerk's office with a walk in vault, and a large conference room which also serves as the Listers and Zoning Administrators offices. The remainder of the main floor is leased by the US Postal Service. The basement has a walk in vault for storage of Town records, and it has a furnace room; this space has been deemed unusable for records storage due to flooding concerns. The Town has identified that the current Town Office is not meeting the needs of the Community; there are space constraints in the Town vault, office space for staff and additional meeting space is needed. The Town is currently considering options for relocating the Town Office.

The former **Grange Hall**, located on Main Street in the Center, is now referred to as the Town Hall. It is used for Town meetings, by individuals and groups for social functions, large gatherings, and fundraisers.

The **Public Safety Building**, a one-story building located on Route 242, houses the Fire Department, Rescue Squad, Health Office, and Montgomery Town Library.

- The **Fire Department** has three large bays for trucks and equipment.
- The **Rescue Squad** has one ambulance bay and space for storage.
- There is also a kitchen, conference room, small first aid room, electrical room, utility room, and ample bathrooms.
- The **Library** consists of one large room and a storage room, a portion of which has been modified for a children's area. The library Board of Trustees would like to pursue an

expansion project to provide additional space for the growing collection of books, audios and videos; additional computers; a reading room for adults; and a larger children's area.

A **Public Works Building** was built in 2010 for the Town Highway Department. This building consists of a five-bay building and replaced the previous building from the 1970's. The building accommodates office space for the highway department and additional space for the highway equipment and the Water Department truck. The current site of the town garage is in the floodplain, the building was flood-proofed by elevating the building prior to reconstruction.

Recreation

Maintaining and developing Montgomery's natural beauty and resources for recreational purposes is an important part of the Town Plan. Montgomery has some of the most beautiful hiking, hunting, and fishing areas in the State and the Town should make a concerted effort to preserve these.

- Water quality, for swimming and fishing, should be protected against adverse impacts from development adjacent to streams and rivers.
- Commercial development that compromises recreational resources should be discouraged.
- Montgomery should encourage the development of recreation areas in the regions defined as suitable in the land use plan, as long as appropriate standards of attractiveness and supplemental protection are maintained.

Currently, the Recreation Board manages the Town's formal recreational activities. They work with other volunteer groups in town to provide and maintain recreational facilities for use by the entire town. For the purpose of this Plan, recreation is divided into three equally important categories: sport recreation, wildlife recreation, and other outdoor recreation.

Sport recreation involves activities such as tennis, baseball, and soccer. The recreation center, located near Montgomery Center on Route 118, has town tennis courts, a baseball/soccer field, outdoor ice rink, basketball court, and limited room for other activities. There is also a one-story log cabin with rest rooms and space for storage of equipment. A two-story memorial pavilion has been built. There is a ball field/volley ball court in Montgomery Village.

Wildlife recreation involves activities such as hunting, fishing, trapping, and wildlife viewing. The Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife administers over 95,000 acres of wildlife management areas which are open to the public for hunting and other outdoor recreational activities. Potential users of these areas are responsible for making themselves familiar with all rules, regulations, and restrictions before they can hunt or fish. Avery's Gore, located in the southern part of the Town, is one of these areas. It contains a total of 259 acres and has many different types of game available for hunting. Such game includes black bear, deer, wild turkey, gray squirrel, rabbit/hare, partridge, and woodcock.

Outdoor recreation activities include skating, downhill skiing, cross-country skiing,

snowmobiling, snowshoeing, hiking, swimming, mountain biking, and road biking. Within the borders of Montgomery, there exists Little Jay (elevation 3180 feet) and Big Jay (elevation 3780 feet). There are several natural swimming holes in Montgomery.

Recognizing Special Resources. Fifty miles of the upper Missisquoi River and 20 miles of the Trout Rivers were designated in 2014 as a Wild and Scenic waterbody. This designation excludes the section of the Missisquoi River with the Enosburg Falls dam. The National Wild and Scenic Rivers System was created by Congress in 1968 (Public Law 90-542) to preserve certain rivers with outstanding natural, cultural, and recreational values in a free-flowing condition for the enjoyment of present and future generations. This designation encourages river management that crosses political boundaries and promotes public participation in developing goals for river protection. In addition, it enables access to federal funding for projects to preserve the recreational, scenic, historic, cultural, natural, and geologic resources of these rivers. It should be noted that designation neither prohibits development nor gives the federal government control over private property; recreation, agricultural practices, development and other uses are permissible in this designated area.

There are several public and private recreational resources available to the community:

The **Hazen's Notch Association** maintains about 40 miles of trails on over 2,000 acres. These trails are used in summer and fall for hiking and in winter for cross-country skiing and snowshoeing. The Association acts both as a local land trust for the Town of Montgomery, as well as a stewardship partner with other regional and statewide land trusts. The 300-mile Catamount Trail is a winter-use cross-country ski trail that passes through Montgomery as it traverses the length of Vermont from Massachusetts to Canada.

The **Covered Bridges Snowmobile Club** maintains an extensive snowmobile trail network throughout the town and works with landowners to maintain these trails and the permission for use by snowmobilers.

The Towns of Jay and Westfield, located to the east of Montgomery, are home to the **Jay Peak Ski Area** (elevation 3861 feet) which offers downhill skiing, cross-country skiing, and snowboarding. Jay Peak is an important asset to the area because of the amount of tourism activity that goes on at it. Although located in Jay, the Jay Peak Ski Area brings in more potential tourists to their town and its bordering neighbors like Montgomery. Jay Peak owns approximately 2,600 acres; of which 1,500 acres will remain forever wild by Jay Peak's choice and 1,100 of which is to be used for some type of development based on the Jay Peak Master Plan. Presently, Jay Peak has built an 18-hole golf course, an indoor ice rink, and an indoor waterpark since 2005. A four-season operation is vital to Jay Peak's future and will have a very positive impact on all of its neighboring communities as they provide more year round employment for its staff, many of whom reside in or around Montgomery. Hiking is possible throughout the Town and there are many trails for people to enjoy.

The **Long Trail** extends the length of the State of Vermont from Massachusetts to Canada. The local chapter of the Green Mountain Club maintains hiking trails associated with this trail.

Catamount Trail is a 300-mile, winter-use trail open to the public for skiing and snowshoeing.

CHAPTER 7. Community Services

GOALS: TO PROVIDE MUNICIPAL SERVICES, OR ENABLE OTHER ENTITIES TO MEET THE NEEDS OF LOCAL RESIDENTS OF ALL AGES WITHOUT UNDUE OR SUDDEN IMPACTS UPON LOCAL PROPERTY TAXES

Policies

- Provide emergency services to protect the health, safety, and property of local residents
- Provide library services to enable Montgomery residents access to information, resources, and opportunities for personal and community enrichment
- Encourage safe and affordable childcare facilities in the community

Police Protection

The Vermont State Police (VSP) is the primary law enforcement agency responsible for public safety in Montgomery; services are out of the St. Albans Field Station.

Fire Protection and Rescue Services

Firefighting and rescue services are two services that are absolutely essential for communities to function. The Town of Montgomery currently has the following fire and rescue equipment:

- 2010 Pumper
- 1977 Pumper
- Tanker: #1 1,500 gallons, 1 drop tank 1500 gallons, 1-4² 500 GPM, and 1-2 1/2² 250 GPM portable pumps
- Rescue Van: Set of air bags, 8 SCBA with 8 spare tanks
- Fire Protection Suits

Montgomery has a volunteer fire department located in the Public Safety Building on Route 242. There are currently 12 volunteer members who serve on the fire department. The equipment consists of two pumper trucks, one tank truck, one rescue van, and assorted smaller equipment, which is capable of fighting a fire in any accessible area of the Town. The smaller pumper is almost 40 years old and will need to be replaced within the next five years. The other future needs of the fire department include the replacement of the rescue van and purchase of new fire protection suits for the members.

The Town of Montgomery currently maintains an ambulance squad providing emergency medical services to Town residents and the surrounding area as needed. At the beginning of 2010, Montgomery Rescue had eight active members, all volunteer EMTs or First Responders. Richford Ambulance Service is contracted to provide EMS service to the Town when Montgomery Rescue does not have an available crew. The squad maintains an ambulance stocked with supplies and equipment to deliver advanced life support, and a rescue van with additional equipment used for incidents with multiple patients or hazardous scenes.

Montgomery has a Local Emergency Operations Plan (LEOP) to help organize the Town in case of an emergency. The LEOP contains basic emergency preparedness essential for responding to local emergencies. It includes critical phone numbers, contact persons, and critical facilities. Steps are listed in the Plan as to what to do in case an emergency arises. These plans also provide a framework that allows municipalities to work collaboratively to assist each other during a widespread event.

Library Services

The Montgomery Town Library Services includes five public access computers with high speed internet, printer, free Wi-Fi, copy and fax machine, and digital projector with large screen. The library houses approximately 9,000 items that range from books, audio books, movies, puzzles and maps. There is also an inter-library loan service, a community bulletin board, and year round programming for all ages. At present the library is open seven days a week, including volunteer staffing.

The Town library meets public library standards set by the Vermont Department of Libraries. The Library is supervised by a seven member board of trustees.

The library serves as a gathering spot for community groups to meet, sponsors art shows, hosts guest speakers, and participates with other local organizations in planning community events. Some examples of current offerings include:

- Family friendly presentations throughout the summer at the Rec Center
- A monthly Book to Film potluck supper and film showing
- A story hour playgroup for moms and young children, sponsored by Building Bright Futures.
- A fenced in play yard for young children on the library lawn was completed in Spring of 2010.

Municipal Website

The Town maintains a basic municipal web site at <http://www.montgomeryvt.us>. Information is available about a variety of Town Officers and Boards, including Warnings, Agendas and Minutes of Meetings, as well as ordinances, policies, permits, etc. This site should be continued and expanded, as time and expense allow, in order to better inform the public and improve communication.

Solid Waste Disposal

Montgomery has been a member of the Northwest Vermont Solid Waste Management District (NVSWMMD) since the district's inception in December 1987. The district operates a trash and recyclables drop off every Saturday at the Public Safety Building. Additionally, the district conducts special events for the disposal of problem wastes, such as tires, metals, bulky, and household hazardous wastes. The district accepts computers and peripherals, other electronic waste, and fluorescent bulbs at its Georgia facility.

It is the intent of the Town of Montgomery and the NVSWMD to improve solid waste management programs. This commitment will be aided by Act 148, the Universal Recycling law, that was passed in 2012 that aims to further reduce the amount of waste going to landfills by banning recyclables, food scraps and yard or leaf debris to be landfilled by 2020. The State, Municipalities and Waste Management Districts will have to identify changes to their services and programs in order to obtain this goal.

Childcare Facilities

Although full-time childcare is not a service provided by the community, it is a concern for existing and prospective families, both in regard to finding quality services and the cost of these services. The Recreation Center does provide free day camp three-days per week in the summer. According to State data, Montgomery does not currently have a registered home childcare provider. Montgomery elementary houses a pre-kindergarten program established by the Franklin Northeast Supervisory Union (FNESU) in the fall of 2007.

The 2013 American Community Survey data indicate that there are 280 children from birth to age 17 living in Montgomery. Sixty-nine percent of households with children under the age of 6 are in households where adult providers are working. Similarly, 67% of households with children 6-17 have working parents. The question remains whether the needs of children are being met in the community or forcing parents to find services outside the community.

Data on other options, such as out-of-town childcare providers, stay at home parents, family care providers, un-registered childcare homes, or other in-home childcare options are not available.

Teen Services

Montgomery and Franklin County both have alarmingly high rates of underage drug and alcohol abuse. Franklin County shares staggering rates of underage alcohol and drug use with the rest of the state, with 12% of 8th graders having consumed alcohol in the last 30 days and 4% of 8th graders having consumed marijuana in the past 30 days. These rates shoot up to 29% of 10th graders and 47% of 12th graders having consumed alcohol in the last 30 days and 16% of 10th graders and 27 % of 12th graders having consumed marijuana in the past 30 days (Data from 2013 VT Youth Risk Behavior Survey). While these numbers were down compared to the 2009 survey results, this information shows teens are still at risk for alcohol and drug abuse. It is important to prevent early use not only because of the problems it can cause with intellectual and emotional brain development, but also because the earlier a person begins to use alcohol and substances, the more likely they are to develop a dependence issue.

Montgomery has previously provided a Teen Center as a safe, supervised space for Montgomery youth grades 6 and up; it was available 2-3 days a week for around 10 hours a week. On average there were about 15-20 teens in attendance each day. Programs like the Teen Center, SAP programs in schools, church youth groups and the youth program being offered at the library, as well as community involvement and caring adults have been linked to reduction in early use. The Teen Center participated in many activities including movie nights, dances, and summer day

activities. The Teen Center closed in 2014 due to lack of financial support and reduced attendance when the Center moved out of the Town Office and off of Main Street due to a mold and mildew issue from a flooded basement. While the center was relocated to the Recreation facilities, there are no pedestrian facilities that link it to the village so walking to access the program was unsafe. Should adequate facilities be available in the future, the community should revisit the need for a Teen Center to provide services to area youth.

CHAPTER 8. Community Utilities

GOAL: TO PROVIDE PUBLIC UTILITIES TO SUPPORT CONCENTRATED COMMERCIAL, AND LIGHT INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Policies

- Protect the public water supply by restricting inappropriate development in the source protection area
- Operate the Montgomery Water System in an economic manner, while providing an adequate source of good potable water for the needs of the Village and Center
- Promote the expansion of telecommunications and electric facilities provided that infrastructure to develop these opportunities shall be located in appropriate areas; respecting the integrity of residential areas, aesthetic concerns, and natural resource issues

Water Supply/Systems

Since adoption of the 2005 Town Plan, Montgomery completed a nine year, multi-phase municipal water project:

- a. Phase 1 and 2 extended the municipal water distribution system from Montgomery Center to Montgomery Village where customers were previously served by a privately owned and operated water system. The Town purchased the abandoned Montgomery Village Water Works from its owner for the sum of one dollar in 1999. This portion of the project was done in two phases; extending the main line between the two population centers, and then replacing the feeder services to approximately 63 Village customers. This latter portion of the project was completed in 2003. Phase 1 and 2 of the project was funded by a bond paid by local taxes, user fees, and a grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).
- b. Phase 3: A new well was found on Town-owned property off the Fuller Bridge Road in 2004. It was certified by the State and then the Town built a new reservoir and a treatment plant on the property, supporting control systems and infrastructure, including new pump stations on Route 58 and near the school, and new water meters for the Center. Funding for most of this portion of the project was from a combination of: the remaining balance of the USDA grant, a new low interest USDA loan, monies reprogrammed from a Environmental Protection Agency waste water grant, and a new USDA grant. Completion for this phase was Spring 2009, although the Town and principals worked on several warrantee issues through October 2009.

Montgomery now has a system certified for about twice the capacity of the previous system, and has improved water quality, since the new source is low in iron, and manganese is being removed. There is also potential for even greater capacity if the need develops, but it would require additional State certification and possible expansion of the treatment facility.

The following description is from the system Source Protection Plan: The Montgomery Water System is a Public Community Water System that serves 165 connections to both residences and businesses. It is comprised of a submersible Gould 3-phase pump (10 HP) used in Well R. The raw water mains only include the 2-inch galvanized iron and 4-inch ductile iron supply line from the well into the treatment building to the filter system. There is no raw water storage. The distribution system is composed of 8-inch cement lined ductile iron water main, 4-inch cement lined water mains, and 2-inch copper service lines. Each of the service connections has an individual water meter. There are approximately 45 fire hydrants connected to the distribution system. The water system has three storage facilities:

Tank #	Tank Name	Size	Type
ST001	Fuller Bridge	150,000 gallon	Two cell, Partially Buried, Concrete
ST002	Route 242	240,000 gallon	Two cell, Buried Concrete
ST003	Regan Road	5,000 gallon	Buried Concrete

The water pressure is maintained by the elevation of each of the storage tanks in the system. The system requires a booster pump station to pump from the Fuller Bridge storage tank pressure zone to the Route 242 storage tank pressure zone. In addition, a booster pump station is required from the Route 242 storage tank pressure zone to the Regan Road storage tank pressure zone. The average daily demand (given in the permit and based on population calculations) is 38,000 gallons per day (GPD). Based on meter readings, the actual average demand is closer to 25,000 GPD. The maximum daily demand is 76,000 gallons per day. The system has disinfection by continuous chlorination and a second chlorine boosting facility to maintain the residual. After disinfection, the water is filtered through green sand to remove manganese.

The Public Water System Permit to Operate was issued by the Vermont Water Supply Division on March 13, 2009 and will require renewal on April 1, 2011.

Wastewater Disposal/Sewage Systems

Throughout the Town (including both the Village and the Center), the disposal of raw sewage is controlled on an individual basis, primarily by the use of septic tanks. For subdivisions it will be the developers responsibility to provide water and sewage facilities. The State of Vermont has set minimum standards for new development, and to meet them, professional consultation must be sought by developers on an individual basis. It would be adequate to require, as part of our zoning bylaw, a valid state wastewater permit prior to construction.

Presently there are no plans for a public treatment system. Sewage disposal is an issue in the village centers the and often dictates the density at which development can occur. The lack of a centralized sewage disposal facility has also been and continues to be an impediment to appropriate commercial development, such as restaurants, in the village district. As technologies improve, the town of Montgomery should continue to explore opportunities for shared wastewater systems within the village core.

Telecommunications

Telecommunications have become increasingly important to the security and economic needs of residents and businesses in the northwest region of Vermont as well as in all other sections of the State. Telecommunication towers and related infrastructure require careful consideration. These structures tend to be located in highly visible locations such as on mountaintops and ridgelines. The need for additional facilities is projected to increase dramatically in the coming years. The Federal Telecommunications Act of 1996 placed severe limitations over municipal control of these structures; however within those confines, in 2005, Montgomery approved a Telecommunications Facilities Bylaw to protect the Town's historic character, rural nature, and aesthetic beauty. Both AT&T and Verizon have cellular facilities at Jay Peak.

Fairpoint New England is the primary provider of local telephone access in Montgomery and provides the physical infrastructure (wires and switches) used for phone related services (long distance, DSL, etc). Comcast is upgrading their system, providing broadband cable service, which can be used for digital telephone service. Both companies provide broadband services but do not service all areas of Town. Broadband is also available from satellite and cellular providers. Comcast is the sole provider of cable television service in Montgomery but does not reach many rural areas. Satellite services are available as well as alternate internet services provided by Hughes Net.

Fairpoint does not provide any pay phones in Montgomery. This remains a concern to townspeople since cellular phone coverage has significant gaps and can be unavailable during an emergency.

CHAPTER 9. Economy

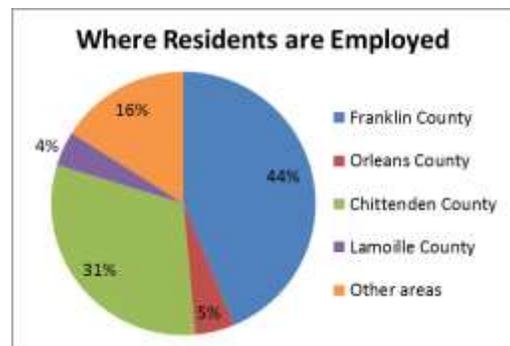
GOAL: TO FOSTER A DIVERSE AND STABLE ECONOMY BY HELPING TO ENSURE THE SUCCESSFUL OPERATION OF EXISTING ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES AND PROVIDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR NEW ONES

Policies

- Support and encourage sustainable and diversified activities to supply local and regional food needs
- Encourage businesses that complement recreation opportunities within the town
- Protect the vitality and importance of the villages as a community and regional asset
- Encourage commercial development that supplies local needs for retail, business, and personal services
- Encourage and develop resources for home occupations
- Encourage Montgomery’s growing arts community
- Encourage businesses and industries that use the skills of the local labor force
-
- Create an attractive, safe and friendly village environment that invites and supports safe pedestrian use, community events and an active lifestyle

The term “economy” for purposes of municipal planning refers to resources, production, jobs, income and activities in the town and region that contribute to the economic well-being of local residents, businesses and industries. Economic planning can assist in providing jobs commensurate with the skills and aims of local residents, a more balanced tax base to meet community needs, the protection of important economic resources, and the provision of services and products to support the local community. Poorly planned economic development can adversely affect the local environment, strain municipal services, cause dislocations of businesses and labor, and adversely impact community character.

The majority of Montgomery’s residents work outside of the community, and most of the existing businesses in Montgomery are small in comparison to other communities in the region. Excluding self-employment, approximately 3% of Montgomery residents work in Town and another 40% are employed in other parts of Franklin County. Montgomery and its neighboring towns house much of the region’s workforce as well as provide affordable housing opportunities. Providing a diverse housing stock, as prescribed in the Chapter 13 on Housing, will help to strengthen the local and regional economy.



Montgomery has numerous other assets that can strengthen its role in the regional economy. Each of the two Village Centers serve as hubs of culture, community, and commerce and offer unique opportunities for residents and local businesses. These Village Centers contain most of the Town’s important civic structures, iconic businesses, and historic landmarks such as the Black Lantern, Pratt Hall, and the Baptist Church. Montgomery contains several publicly accessible open spaces and recreation opportunities such as the Recreation Center with pavilion and fields, River Walk Park, community gardens and the village green. Montgomery also offers striking views of Green Mountains and a quality K-6 education system. These factors enhance the quality of life in Montgomery and provide a solid foundation for future economic development.

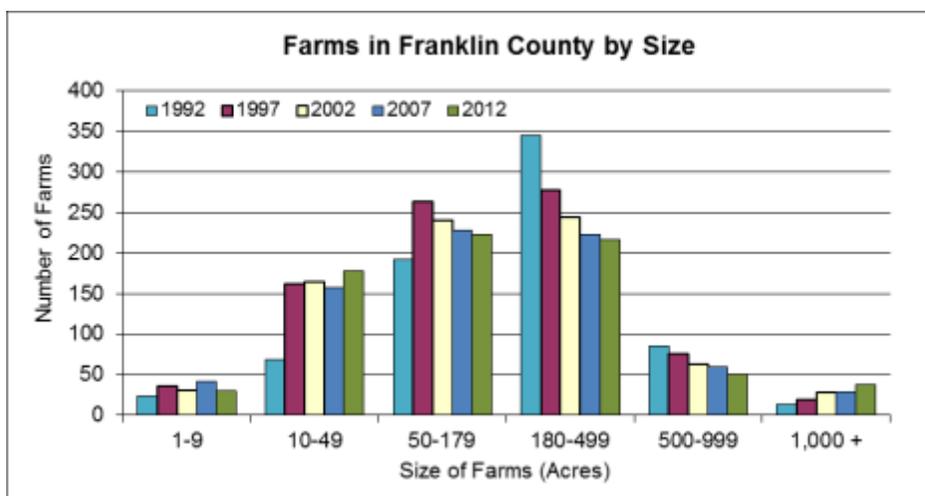
Elements of the Economy

The towns that comprise the Northwest Region of Vermont all generally have the same types of economies. They are usually made up of three different elements: agriculture, business and industry, and tourism.

Agriculture

The economy of the Northwest Region, particularly with regard to land use, remains predominantly rural and resource-based; however, it is in transition. In Franklin County, the number of farms between 1997 to 2012 decreased by twelve percent while the size of farms increased by ten percent in this same timeframe (Census of Agriculture).

The Montgomery agricultural economy has experienced both consolidation and diversification that is consistent with the trend statewide. In order to remain profitable, the average Vermont dairy farm has become larger which leads to a decrease in the number of farms while the amount of land being farmed may increase. This increase in large farm activity has led to environmental and health concerns at the local and state level. The available statistics also point to an increasing number of small farms that are diversifying the region’s agricultural economy, which for more than a century has been largely focused on milk production.



There are presently one operating dairy farm and two farms that raise and sell beef and/or pork in Montgomery. Montgomery also has several large sugaring operations and numerous hobby and small commercial producers. Several hobby beekeepers help keep local crops pollinated. Soil

and climate conditions present the opportunity for a more diversified agriculture.

Agriculture is extremely important to the regional and local economy. The agricultural industry exports goods from the Region and imports new dollars into the local and regional economy. Local farm operators tend to rely on other local businesses for their needs. By keeping things local, the multiplier effect of every new dollar brought into the area increases.

The Town should encourage efforts that support its agricultural base, including the protection of primary agricultural soils, support diversified agriculture, and support of tax abatement programs such as the Use Value Appraisal Program or Current Use.

Business and Industry

To complement the rural character of the Town and agrarian economy, small commercial enterprises, home occupations and light industry, in appropriate locations, should be encouraged. Montgomery does have a variety of businesses that serve both local needs and the needs of its surrounding areas. These businesses provide a mixture of employment opportunities for its residents and for residents from other towns. According to the 2013 American Community Survey, most of the employees in Montgomery worked in the educational, health and social services trade sector, followed by those working in the retail, construction and manufacturing trade sectors.

The Town of Montgomery has many different types of businesses and services for its residents and visitors. These include tourist orientated services, outdoor recreational services, retail stores, lodges, construction services, automotive services, financial advising services, and restaurants. These businesses all contribute to the local economy by providing jobs, tax revenues, lodging, dining, and other services for Montgomery's residents.

Business Associations. In 2009 a local business alliance, Montgomery Area Community Alliance (MACA), was formed to encourage business, economic development, and employment in the Montgomery/Jay Peak area. While this organization is not currently active, some of the economic development strategies discussed in this plan may be better implemented by such an association rather than by Town Government. A local businesses association would help to market Montgomery and Montgomery businesses, provide networking opportunities for local businesses, and advocate on behalf of local businesses.

Village Designation. Both of the Villages in Montgomery received state designation in August of 2003 as a way to support the revitalization of the existing traditional village centers. This designation supports the goals of the community by gaining access to several benefits as listed below as one tool to encourage investment in these settlement areas that will lead to enhancing the livability by expanding access to employment, housing, education and schools, services, public facilities, and other basic needs. Supporting our villages also aligns with the statewide planning goals of encouraging compact development and maintaining the historic settlement pattern as stated in 24 V.S.A. § 4302.

State Village Center Designated Areas in Montgomery

Montgomery Village



Montgomery Center



Benefits available for designated village centers are:

- Up to 20% Vermont income tax credit for substantial rehabilitation of certified historic buildings;
- Up to 50% Vermont Income Tax credit for code improvements to commercial buildings;
- Priority consideration for all grants through the state's Municipal Planning Grant Program, and the Consolidated Plan for HUD funding including the Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG);
- The State Buildings Department will give consideration and priority to designated village center locations when leasing or constructing buildings, in consultation with the community;
- A special assessment district in a designated village center may use funds for operating costs in addition to capital expenses

While village center revitalization is an ongoing process to improve a community's vitality and livability, village center designation is only one tool and its focus is on supporting commercial activity in the center of Vermont's villages.

Tourism

Many towns in the Northwest Region of Vermont depend on their natural features, their rural settings, and their history to attract tourists. The Town of Montgomery is no exception to this fact. See Chapter 6 – Community Facilities for discussions of tourism resources.

Historic & Cultural Tourism. Historic and cultural tourism promotes responsible travel to these sites and activities that educate the community and visitors by connecting us to our history and culture. Activities that could be explored in Montgomery include historic sites, agricultural tours, cultural events, performing arts center, and festivals. Covered bridges are an attraction that draws tourists to the Region and to the Town. The covered bridge is viewed as a treasured landmark in the State of Vermont for they represent each town's history and an appreciation of their cultural heritage. Currently, there are six covered bridges in the Town of Montgomery, all

of which can be found on the National Register of Historic Places (one is disassembled pending restoration). A description of these can be found in Chapter 5: Archaeological, Historic, and Scenic Resources.

Ecotourism. There is potential in Montgomery to promote ecotourism or nature-based tourism destination that acts as a tool for both education and community development and promotes the available outdoor recreation and rural serene environment. This type of tourism should ensure that travel to and use of the natural areas is done responsibly and sustains the well-being of the community while providing a quality experience that connects the visitor to nature. Ecotourism activities could encompass nature-based tours and attractions, wildlife viewing, and outdoor recreational activities such as swimming holes, hiking, boating, fishing and winter sports.

As noted in the Chapter 14 Natural Features, Montgomery contains several large blocks of unfragmented forestland which provide critical habitat for a diverse range of wildlife. According to the 2011 US Fish and Wildlife Service survey, \$704.4 million was spent in 2011 on fish and wildlife-based recreational activities in Vermont which includes activities such as wildlife observation, bird watching, fishing, and hunting, and fall foliage touring. Given the impact of these activities on the Vermont economy, conservation and protection of important wildlife habitat should be considered an economic development strategy as well as a natural resource conservation strategy.

The encouragement of both of these types of tourism support the Town's goals to maintain the natural environment, history, and cultural heritage of the area.

Home Businesses

In addition to providing local employment, home businesses also provide a cost effective way to start a new business. In general, a home business is defined as a business operating out of an existing home or accessory dwelling which is operated by the resident of the home. While there is little data available on home businesses currently operating in town, given the strong tourism industry in the area, this likely fills an important component of the town's economy. According to the 2009-2013 American Community Survey, 20% of the population over 16 reported being self-employed and 7.5% of the workforce reported working at home.

Challenges to Economic Development

The Town is faced with some challenges to local economic development created by infrastructure limitations. By working on these challenges, including sewer capacity, improving facilities for pedestrians and parking, and encouraging improvements to telecommunication, the Town will encourage the continued development of a healthy economy in the village areas. Many of these challenges are discussed in other chapters of the plan, but are referred to here as they relate to economic development.

Village Streetscaping. Improvements to the village streetscapes could help in attracting future development and businesses to the village centers, encourage tourism, and enhance the livability of its residents. While each village has a sidewalk system, the current infrastructure is narrow and

is often blocked by parked cars. The Town should identify options to improve the streetscape of the villages that consider safety and accessibility of all users.

Sewer Infrastructure. The lack of a public sewage disposal facility can inhibit development of the village centers. However certain commercial uses, such as office and retail stores, require significantly less wastewater capacity than residential uses, making commercial use of existing structures on small village lots a viable option for village redevelopment. At present, there is no plan to add public sewage disposal infrastructure in Montgomery.

Telecommunications & Technology. Many modern businesses rely on high-speed (broadband) internet access and cellular service which are currently unreliable parts of Town. The Town recognizes that a particularly effective means to encourage economic development would be to bring more reliable telecommunication service to residents and businesses throughout the Town. Expanding coverage throughout the community should be an economic development priority for the town. Broadband internet connections would encourage and enable small and home-based businesses, and enhance existing businesses in ways that current connections cannot. As technology evolves, Montgomery should continue to work the public and private sectors to improve the local telecommunication infrastructure to ensure that residents have fast, reliable network connections.

CHAPTER 10. Energy

GOAL: TO PROMOTE ENERGY CONSERVATION AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF LOCAL ENERGY PRODUCTION

Policies

- Make Town owned buildings as energy efficient as feasible
- Encourage the development of renewable energy resources, including the heating of municipal facilities
- Promote carpooling among area residents; encourage the use of informal park and ride lots where possible
- Encourage energy conservation by promoting patterns of development that utilize clustering and energy efficient site design whenever possible
- Encourage energy efficiency by making available information regarding groups and organizations in the State, which can provide consumers with information on how to become more energy efficient
- Support renewable energy systems that are appropriately sited and scaled and which are consistent with the environmental, aesthetic and cultural values of Montgomery and with considerations to no undue adverse impact upon the important scenic and natural resources outlined in this plan

Energy production is essential to human society and, at the same time, threatens the environment that sustains us. Most traditional energy sources have negative environmental impacts and the challenge for the future will be to reduce energy consumption in general, and to shift demand from the more harmful energy sources toward those that are renewable and have an overall low environmental impact. Energy conservation is an important step in developing a comprehensive energy plan for the future of Montgomery.

Land use patterns exert a strong influence on major end uses of energy, including transportation, heating and cooling of buildings, and the energy used in developing infrastructure. Vermont's energy use is divided into three main sectors: residential, commercial, and industrial. However, because the amount of energy that is used in transportation is significant, it is sometimes analyzed separately. For the Northwest Region of Vermont, transportation consumed 38 percent of the total delivered energy while the residential sector consumed nearly 29 percent, the commercial sector along with the industrial sector consumed a combined amount of 33 percent (NRPC Regional Plan Pg 36).

Local Energy Consumption

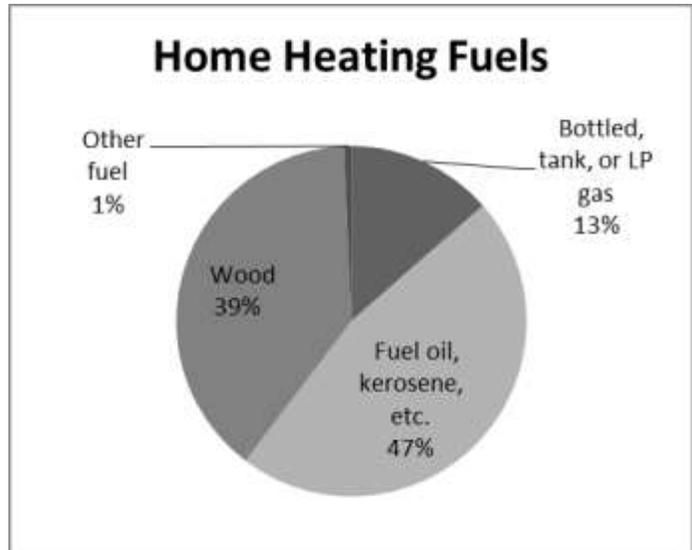
According to the 2009-2013 American Community Survey, fuel oil and kerosene are the most popular home heating fuels followed by woody biomass.

The Vermont Electric Co-op is the sole commercial provider of electricity to Montgomery.

Energy Conservation

At the local level, energy conservation concerns generally fall into four categories:

- energy efficiency of town-owned or town-maintained buildings;
- promotion of energy conservation techniques for residences and businesses;
- efficient development patterns; and
- energy used for transportation.



Increasing Energy Efficiency of Structures

The Town of Montgomery, like all towns, can promote energy conservation in many different ways. Replacing fixtures and components with energy efficient units can save the Municipality money in heating and lighting while helping to protect the environment. Montgomery can also work with local utility companies and programs like Efficiency Vermont to promote energy conservation programs provide technical assistance, and offer weatherization for residences and businesses, with the aim to reduce energy demand, save money, and preserve natural resources.

Montgomery can also promote energy conservation and efficiency through development controls. Subdivisions and developments in Town that come under Act 250 review are required "to reflect the principles of energy conservation and incorporate the best available technology for efficient use or recovery of energy." The Town currently does not have subdivision regulations or a building code.

Efficiency with Land Development

Energy efficient development means more than just well-constructed buildings utilizing the best technology. For example, development that is clustered together provides for greater efficiency.

Clustering means fewer miles of road are needed to connect the homes or commercial buildings, school buses and snow plows travel smaller distances, and electric utility lines need not extend as far. In addition, other public services such as fire and ambulance, as well as sewage and water, should they become a municipal service, are all made more efficient by "well planned" new development. Carefully considered **placement of a building on a lot** adds to the efficiency of any new development by increasing passive solar gain and decreasing wind pressures. While the clustering of development helps decrease transportation costs, it is not the only answer.

Reducing Transportation Load

Over half of Montgomery's residents travel to Enosburg, Richford, St Albans, Franklin and Chittenden Counties for employment, entertainment, medical needs, or supplies. Carpooling is beneficial for these residents not only because it conserves fuel, but also because it reduces wear and tear and maintenance costs on individual vehicles. One important component of any carpooling program is finding a suitable location where carpoolers can leave their vehicles. Currently, there is no formal designated "park and ride lot" in Northern Franklin County. The closest lot designated by the State of Vermont, in St. Albans on VT104, is inconvenient for Montgomery commuters and is often very full. This makes it necessary to either develop a new formal "park and ride lot", or encourage the formation of informal "park and ride lots." These are parking lots at locations such as churches, where weekday park and ride needs do not usually conflict with the parking needs of the particular location. There are some informal locations along VT 105, however their continued use is dependent upon the property owners and is therefore unreliable for planning purposes. The Town should consider dedicating a portion of the Riverwalk Park for use as a formal or informal park and ride for Montgomery residents.

Renewable Energy

The development of siting standards in the municipal plan would enable the Town to have a stronger voice in the siting of renewable energy facilities through the Public Service Board's Certificate of Public Good Process. While careful placement of renewable generation facilities is important to consider, the use of renewable energy resources from local sources may potentially provide cost-savings and reduce environmental impacts in Montgomery. Local, renewable energy sources include wind, solar, biomass and methane digesters. Energy can be generated from these sources at different scales. Grid-tied energy generation facilities require a Certificate of Public Good under Section 248 and are exempt from local zoning. Locally generated power that does not connect to the grid is subject to local zoning.

CHAPTER 11. Transportation

GOAL: TO ENSURE THE DEVELOPMENT OF A FUNCTIONAL AND CONNECTED TRANSPORTATION NETWORK.

Policies

- Protect the health, safety, and welfare of the traveling public
- Promote safe, convenient, economic, and energy efficient transportation systems including public transit options and paths for pedestrians and bicycles
- Promote transportation activities that respect the natural environment
- Maintain the scenic character of the Town's rural byways
- Support public transit efforts of the Green Mountain Transit Agency to increase mobility and access of Town residents
- Provide appropriate provisions for bicycle and pedestrian use on designated routes, including sidewalks, paths, widen shoulders, proper signage and pavement improvements
- Maintain good quality, safe local roads and streets, sidewalks, bridges, and equipment needed for their maintenance
- Recognize the link between land use and transportation and coordinate transportation improvements to facilitate and complement the desired type, location, density, and timing of local development

Transportation Planning

Transportation planning at the State, Regional, and local level should have two primary functions. The *first purpose* is to ensure that people and goods are able to move freely, safely, and efficiently using all modes of transportation. This includes, where applicable, highways, local roads, railroads, airports, bicycle paths, pedestrian routes, ferry systems, and public transit. Transportation efficiency includes consideration of energy use, economic and social costs, and time. People and goods move with the assistance of more than one mode, therefore transportation planning should consider how the different modes of transportation could complement each other.

The *second purpose* of transportation planning is to help guide growth in appropriate locations identified through land-use planning. Growth management can be assisted by directing construction or transportation improvements in coordination with local and regional plans into areas favorable for growth and away from environmentally sensitive areas.

Town of Montgomery is an active participant in the Regional Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC). The TAC serves to advise the Northwest Regional Planning Commission's transportation planning program, acts as a liaison between local communities and the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans), and provides local and regional input regarding transportation issues important to the region

Highway System

The Transportation System Map shows the state and local highways; combined the Town and Village have approximately 48.8 miles of local roads and 14.3 miles of State Highway along Route 118 and 242. Vermont classifies roads into four categories based on the role that a road plays in serving the flow of travel through the road network. Factors such as average speed, convenience, access and the adjacent land use, and the types of travel a road carries all affect how the roads function and serve the needs of its diverse users.

Miles of Road	
Class 1	-
Class 2	6.680
Class 3	34.680
Class 4	7.440
VT 118	10.498
VT 242	3.816

Zoning regulations should encourage growth closer to roads along existing highways. Zoning regulations should be amended to reflect the conclusions drawn from GIS mapping of areas within the Town most suitable for future development. The Town should consider encouraging these areas of development by creating new or extending existing Town roads.

Many Town and State roads follow fresh water streams and rivers, therefore, a minimum of road salt and sand should be used in winter road maintenance as the runoff goes directly into these waters. Road salt also accelerates the deterioration of paved roads.

Traffic flow will vary depending on various factors such as the time of day, the day of week, the season, the location of the road, and the weather conditions. The major influences on the traffic flow in Montgomery are local businesses, local civic and social functions, recreational activities at Jay Peak Ski Area, and seasonal activities such as hunting, fishing, skiing, hiking, and foliage viewing. The table below shows the annual average daily traffic (AADT) count for Montgomery’s major routes. Route 242 had the largest increase in traffic volume from 1994-96 to 2010-2011 with a 103% increase in vehicles along this route which can be tied to increase activity at Jay Peak Resort.

A comparison of observed Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) counts on major highways in Montgomery (1994-2013)							
Route	Observation Point	2012-13 AADT	2010-11 AADT	2007-08 AADT	2003-04 AADT	1998-99 AADT	1994-96 AADT
TH-2 (58)	Hazens Notch Road 0.2mi E of VT118		380	260	340	240	250
TH-1	Fuller Brook Road 0.9mi N of Green Mtn Road	300		380	380	350	320
118	0.3mi S of Hazens Notch		1000	1000	970	1000	880
118	0.2mi S of Dreamers Road (TH13)		2300	2000	2100		1900
118	1.0mi N of Longley Bridge Road	1600	1600	1800	1700	1200	1500
242	W of Lutz Road (TH16)		1300	1000	920	790	640

Source: VTrans, AADT 1975-2014 for VT State Highways

The Town identified the intersection of Route 242 and 118 as being in need of an evaluation to consider options to improve traffic flow and safety. This area includes two steep hills that contain the entrances to a church, the Public Safety Building and Library, as well as homes. Access management is also an issue by nearby businesses with open parking areas. An all-way stop was recommended by VTrans in the past for this intersection however the Town was not interested in this solution. The Town should work with the State and NRPC to review this intersection and identify potential improvements.

State and Town Bridges

Montgomery has seven State bridges and fourteen Town bridges, six of which are covered and considered historic sites. The covered bridges draw considerable tourist attention and add to the scenic beauty of the area.

The Vermont Agency of Transportation uses a sufficiency rating method to evaluate the conditions of the bridges with a numerical score of 0 (low) to 100 (high). This score takes into account bridge condition, geometry, traffic, ability of water to pass underneath the bridge. A bridge with a rating of zero to fifty is eligible for replacement, a bridge with a rating of 50.01 to eighty is eligible for rehabilitation, and a bridge with a rating of 80.01 to 100 is considered structurally sound. A low sufficiency rating does not necessarily mean the bridge is unsafe or in need or immediate repair. A bridge may receive a low rating because of such factors as clearance in width or height as it typically the case for Vermont’s covered bridges. Table below shows the Federal Sufficiency Ratings for Montgomery’s Town Bridges that have a score below 70.0. The State bridge (B20) along Route 118 over West Hill Brook experiences annual issues with ice dams due to a low bridge clearance.

Bridge Sufficiency Ratings for Town Structures					
Bridge #	Route Carried or Road Name	Location	Feature Crossed	Year Built	Sufficiency Rating
5	Fuller Bridge Road (TH-1)	0.05 MI TO JCT VT 118	Black Falls Brook Fuller Covered Bridge	1890	19.9
36	Black Falls Extension (TH-10)	0.3 MI TO JCT C3 TH 6	Black Falls Brook	1919	19.9
33	Longely Bridge Road (TH-4)	at JCT W VT118	Trout River Longley Covered Bridge	1863	20.9
41	Comstock Bridge Road (TH-42)	0.2 MI W. OF JCT VT 118	Trout River	1988	27.4
34	Hutchkins Bridge Road (TH-27)	0.1 MI TO JCT VT 118	S. Branch Trout River Comstock Covered Bridge	1883	35.0
32	Creamery Bridge Road (TH-25)	0.1 MI TO JCT C3 TH 12	West Hill Brook Creamery Covered Bridge	1883	37.8
4	Hazens Notch Road (TH-2)	3.8 MI E JCT. VT.118	Wade Brook	1927	69.9
Source: VTrans Bridge Sufficiency Ratings					

Maintenance of the Local Transportation Network

In addition to the 49 miles of local highways, the Town is responsible for maintaining a network of bridges and culverts that assist in the conveyance of stormwater runoff and ensure the safe passage of motorists, pedestrians, and other travelers. General maintenance of the local transportation network is the responsibility of the Town Highway Department.

The Town Highway Department has 3 employees and owns the following equipment:

2004 International 7600 tandem truck	2009 International 7600 tandem truck
2009 Ford 350 one ton dump	2005 Cat grader 140
2012 John Deere loader 524K	1976 John Deere tractor/mower/broom

A new Public Works building was built in 2010 with 5 bays and accommodates space for the highway department as well as houses the Water Department truck.

To guide highway construction and maintenance, VTrans recommends the adoption of “*Town Road and Bridge Standards*”. These standards have provisions to ensure investments in town highways are protected with proper drainage, ditching and construction techniques while also improving safety, reducing long-term costs and addressing environmental concerns.

Transit, Air Travel, and Rail

The Town of Montgomery is not serviced by a fixed public transit route; the closest stop is in East Berkshire on the Richford to St. Albans route. Green Mountain Transit Authority (GMTA) provides public transit for Franklin County. GMTA also coordinates Medicaid and elderly transportation services. Passenger bus service to destinations beyond Franklin County is available on Greyhound Lines from St. Albans.

The nearest airport is the Franklin County Airport in Highgate, which supplies local air service. Larger interstate and international flights are available at the Burlington International Airport, Plattsburgh International Airport, and at Mirabel and Trudeau airports in Quebec.

Presently the nearest rail service for freight is in Richford (Montreal, Maine, and Atlantic Railway) and St. Albans (New England Central Railroad). Amtrak passenger service is available in St. Albans via a route that travels south to New York City and eventually Washington D.C.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

Cyclist traffic in and around the Town has increased in recent years and has become a popular seasonal activity. Montgomery has become a favorite destination for both bicycle tours and road riders from Quebec, Canada and other parts of Vermont. In 2004, an off-road path was developed connecting the end of the sidewalk in the Center to the Recreation Center in an attempt to keep pedestrians off the road at the dangerous curve.

Montgomery Center has stretches of sidewalk along both sides of Route 118 in the village. These sidewalks provide safe and accessible routes for walkers throughout the village area.

The Planning Commission noted that the following areas that need to be addressed for sidewalk improvements and/or expansion:

- Maintain sidewalk facilities for winter use
- Prohibit cars from parking on sidewalks
- Improve the streetscape of the villages to allow for safer travel by pedestrians and signaling to motorists they are entering a village area. In Montgomery Center this could include modifications to create a separation between the roadway and the sidewalk
- Add facilities (shoulder or sidewalk) to connect to the Public Services Building and Library to ensure that all residents have access to municipal facilities and services

In 2011, Vermont enacted “Complete Streets” legislation, mandating that new and renovated paved roads be designed to safely accommodate motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians of all ages and abilities. Roadways that are planned and designed using a Complete Streets approach may include: sidewalks, bike lanes (or wide paved shoulders), comfortable and accessible public transportation stops, frequent and safe crossing opportunities, accessible pedestrian signals, curb extensions, and narrower travel lanes. The community should keep these principles in mind as future road improvements are considered.

CHAPTER 12. Education

GOAL: TO CREATE A LEARNING COMMUNITY THAT WILL PROVIDE OUR STUDENTS WITH THE TOOLS FOR LIFELONG SUCCESS

Policies

- Provide appropriate facilities and infrastructure for a variety of academic, athletic, social, cultural and community activities
- Broaden access to educational and vocational training opportunities
- Ensure that both motorized and pedestrian access to school is safe and convenient
- Support use of town lands, facilities, and resources for broad-based educational experiences

Montgomery Elementary School, located on School Drive, is the sole public school facility in town. The school houses pre-kindergarten through eighth grade, and was built in 1992-1993 with an official capacity of 125 students. An addition was built during the 2005-06 school year, increasing the capacity to 185. The building has eleven classrooms, one science lab, and space for one-on-one instruction. The State Education Department calculates that Montgomery's Education Spending per Equalized Pupil is \$11,168, below both the county and statewide averages. There are currently thirteen faculty members, eight para-educators, and fourteen substitute staff.

Since there is no high school in Montgomery, parents choose to which school they send their children. In the fall of 2014, Montgomery's fifty-two high school students attended the three Franklin County high schools as well as other public and private schools across the state. Table 14 shows the area high schools that Montgomery students attend, as well as the current enrollment and billed tuition.

In the Fall of 2014, 138 students were enrolled in the Elementary School. The student population has stayed fairly constant over the past decade. The pupil to classroom teacher ratio for 2014-2015 was 13.94:1 and the average class size was fourteen students. The Montgomery Elementary School has Internet access and all of its classrooms are equipped with it. The total student to computer ratio for 2014 was 1:1.

The cost of educating Montgomery's students is covered by revenue raised through state assessed property taxes, state general fund transfers, federal grants, and some local income.

Other Educational Facilities

Community College of Vermont (CCV) offers courses and degree programs in Burlington, St. Albans, and Newport. CCV is part of the Vermont State College System and has links to other higher education facilities around the State. The University of Vermont, St. Michael's College, and Champlain College are located in the Burlington area, and Johnson State College is in Johnson. Vocational education is offered at the Cold Hollow Center in Enosburg Falls. The Center offers a wide range of programs for high school students, as well as providing evening

classes for adults.

During the 2014, Montgomery had 11 registered home-school students in the K-8 program. No numbers are available for high school-aged home school students. Montgomery’s public school system supports home-schooled students by providing curriculum support, use of school facilities and access to course offerings. A home study student can legally take up to 40% of their classes at a public school. Access is also available to sports and other extra-curricular activities. To enroll as a home study student you must provide the Vermont Agency of Education with a minimum course of study for them to deem complete or incomplete.

High Schools Attended by Montgomery Students Fall 2014			
School	# of Students (As of Oct 1, 2014)	Tuition Per Pupil (FY2015)	Expected Tuition Payments
Enosburg Falls Middle and High School	23	\$ 14,500	\$ 333,500
Richford Jr./Sr. High School	5	\$ 13,253	\$ 66,265
North Country Union High School	10	\$ 13,600	\$ 136,000
Lamoille Union High School	2	\$ 12,775	\$ 25,550
BFA St. Albans	2	\$ 15,100	\$ 30,200
St. Johnsbury Academy	3	\$ 15,750	\$ 47,250
Stanstead College (day student)	7	\$ 19,990	\$ 139,930
Total	52		\$ 778,695

CHAPTER 13. Housing

GOAL: TO PROVIDE SUITABLE LAND AREAS FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT THAT WILL SERVE THE NEEDS OF MONTGOMERY'S CURRENT AND FUTURE RESIDENTS

Policies

- Ensure adequate housing options for people of all income levels, ages, household types, and preferences
- Ensure that households and individuals with special housing needs, including the elderly, handicapped, and low-income households are able to attain suitable and affordable housing
- Promote low-density residential housing in areas without municipal services and higher densities in parts of town with existing services or close to existing service boundaries
- Conserve and protect the vitality and quality of existing neighborhoods
- Allow for innovative housing to promote low-cost, low-impact, consolidated, and resource efficient options.
- Accessory apartments are encouraged, as they provide needed income for the homeowner and needed small apartments for residents living alone
- Affordable housing should minimize long-term living costs through high quality design, efficient construction, energy efficiency, and proximity to employment
- Encourage land use patterns which are inherently more affordable by nature of cost of efficiencies associated with construction (e.g. shorter access roads, smaller lots, proximity to utilities)
- Existing housing in the floodplain should be flood-proofed for the safety of the residents and the Village as a whole

Adequate and affordable housing is an important concern to residents in every town. Differences can be seen across Franklin County in the supply and demand for affordable housing. Towns that are located in the southern tier of the County, closer to Chittenden County have a relatively small percentage of families below the County median income. Therefore, there is little housing that would be affordable to households earning the County median income. Towns that are more rural in nature, often provide a large portion of the Region's affordable housing.

Changes in Population, Households, and Housing Units

New housing unit growth is not keeping pace with high population growth and decreasing household size in Franklin County and many other parts of the state; however, this is not the case for the Town of Montgomery. The data available suggests that Montgomery is providing an adequate supply of new housing units for its population. The gap between estimated units needed (total population divided by the occupancy rate) and the actual number of year-round housing units increased in Montgomery, while in Franklin County it decreased. Montgomery also has a high vacancy rate of 8.8% compared to that of Franklin County and the state.

The average household size, or occupancy rate, has decreased in Montgomery from 2000 to 2010, as it has been in the nation, state, and county. The occupancy rate dictates the number of units needed to house a population, the smaller the occupancy rate, the more housing units needed. The occupancy rate in Montgomery has been decreasing since 1970.

Housing Unit Availability	Montgomery			Franklin County			Vermont		
	2000	2010	% Δ	2000	2010	% Δ	2000	2010	% Δ
Population	992	1,201	21%	45,417	47,746	5%	608,827	625,741	3%
Average Household Size	2.41	2.36	-2%	2.67	2.55	-4%	2.44	2.34	-4%
Year-Round Housing Units	441	558	27%	19,191	19,548	2%	251,322	272,341	8%
Occupied Housing Units	412	509	24%	17,251	18,513	7%	240,634	256,442	7%
Actual Vacant Units	29	49	69%	1,940	1,035	-47%	10,688	15,899	49%
Percent Annual Vacant	4.4%	8.8%	102%	10.1%	5.3%	-48%	4.3%	5.8%	37%
Estimated Units Needed	412	509	24%	17,010	18,724	10%	249,519	267,411	7%
Estimated Unit Surplus	29	49	67%	2,181	824	-62%	1,803	4,930	173%
Data Source: U.S. Census (2000, 2010)									

Montgomery has a high percentage of second homes; forty-four homes second homes were developed between 1990 to 2000. Second homes are primarily related to the ski area, Jay Peak, which is only miles from the Town. The percentage of second homes in Montgomery is higher than many of the Towns who border Lake Champlain, including St. Albans Town, Swanton, and Highgate. Franklin, North Hero, and Isle La Motte are the only communities in the region with higher percentages of second homes.

Seasonal Housing Units	Montgomery		Franklin County		Vermont	
	2000	2010	2000	2010	2000	2010
Total Housing Units	666	791	19,191	21,588	294,382	322,539
Seasonal Units	225	223	1,940	2,040	43,060	50,198
Percent Seasonal	34%	28%	10%	9%	15%	16%
Data Source: U.S. Census (2000, 2010)						

Affordable Housing & the 30% Rule

Owners: Housing that is **owned** by its inhabitants whose gross annual household income does not exceed 80 percent of the county median household income...and the **total annual cost of the housing**, including principal, interest, taxes, insurance, and condominium association fees **is not more than 30 percent of the household's gross annual income.**

Renters: Housing that is **rented** by its inhabitants whose gross annual income does not exceed 80 percent of the county median income...and the **total annual cost of housing**, including rent, utilities, and condominium association fees, **is not more than 30 percent of the household's gross annual income.**

(VT State Statutes Title 24, Chapter 117, Section 4303)

Affordable Housing Needs

The demand for affordable housing is something that needs to be addressed in all communities. According to Vermont Statute, housing is considered affordable when a household earning not more than 80 percent of the county median income or the metropolitan statistical area's median income, if it applies, pays no more than 30 percent of their income on housing. All municipalities in Franklin County are deemed part of the Burlington-South Burlington Metropolitan Statistical Area; however, the figures for median income do not paint an accurate picture for many of the municipalities within Franklin County, including Montgomery. The 2010 median household income for the Burlington-South Burlington MSA was \$61,763, while it was \$56,240 in Franklin County. For this reason, the Northwest Regional Planning Commission has used the county median household income to compute affordability statistics.

Lower income households have to get by on tighter budgets and because housing is a basic need that people cannot do without, high housing costs place a greater strain on lower income households than on households that are economically better off. Therefore, affordable housing initiatives generally emphasize the importance of providing affordable housing to households that are at or below the median income of the area.

The *regional affordability* compares the median cost of housing locally to the regional or county median income. *This allows the community to see how affordable the housing is to the average household in the region.* **The affordability gap for Montgomery is the difference between the maximum affordable mortgage and the median sale price for single-family homes.** In Montgomery, low-income households can afford a mortgage, with monthly payments not more than 30 percent of their monthly income, or not more than \$153,719. This figure is higher than the 2014 median sale price for single-family dwellings of \$135,000. This means these households can afford the median home price and have \$18,719 remaining, ruling that affordable housing is available in Montgomery according to the definition of affordable housing in Title 24 VSA, Chapter 117, Section 4303. Households earning less than 80 percent of the county median income may face hardship in locating housing. The median household income in Montgomery is \$38,000 as of 2013; these households would face a shortfall of \$18,194 to meet the median sale price for a home.

Percent of Franklin County Median Household Income	30% of Income		Taxes and Insurance	Income Available for Housing /Month	5% Down Payment	Maximum Affordable Mortgage	Median Sale Price for Primary Residences (2014)	Affordability Gap
	Per Year	Per Month						
Moderate-Income 100% \$56,240	\$16,872	\$1,406	\$365	\$1,041	\$6,750	\$213,100	\$135,000	\$78,100
Low-Income 80% \$44,992	\$13,498	\$1,125	\$365	\$760	\$6,750	\$153,719	\$135,000	\$18,719
Very Low-Income 50% \$28,120	\$8,436	\$703	\$365	\$338	\$6,750	\$64,647	\$135,000	-\$70,353

Data Source: Median income based ACS 2009-2013 estimates; taxes and insurance are an estimate; median sale price for primary residences in Montgomery was obtained from the Vermont Department of Taxes; all other figures computed by the NRPC. Maximum affordable mortgage rates include a 4% mortgage rate.

Specialized Housing Options

Communities also need to account for providing housing to individuals and families with special housing needs. The elderly, families with children in poverty, and disabled individuals are examples of groups with special needs that are present in most communities. Different measures will be needed to accommodate these groups ranging from modifications to existing housing stock (to meet handicapped accessibility), while others need assisted living arrangements or financial assistance. If these housing options are not available, it may force some residents to relocate outside of Montgomery as they age or need additional levels of care.

The following is a list of population groups with special needs and an evaluation of how well their needs are being met in Montgomery.

Seniors - Currently, the Town of Montgomery does not have specific group housing for senior citizens that can be classified as independent or assisted living arrangements. As of the 2010 US Census, 12.6% of the Town residents are age 65 and older. Because the population is aging as a whole, with the median age in Montgomery of 42.5 years, steps need to be taken to ensure that there is adequate and affordable housing available for senior citizens.

Persons with Disabilities – Of the population that is older than 65 years old, 51% of the age group is classified as having some type of disability (as identified in the Community Profile). Twenty-three percent of the population age 16-64 has some form of disability. The needs of these groups need to be considered as a part of future housing development.

Families in Poverty – Currently, 14% of families are considered to be below the poverty level. The Town will want to evaluate the current affordability of the town’s housing stock to ensure that there are opportunities for all incomes to find safe and adequate housing.

Options to Increase Housing Variety and Affordability

Standards provided in zoning regulations should be reviewed to identify if they are promoting opportunities to allow for a variety of housing types, especially in the core Village areas, while providing standards to maintain the character of the area and ensure adequacy of services. To accommodate a diversity of housing types and development near existing services, lot size and setbacks minimums should allow for more flexible design for development within village settings. Other forms of housing development that can be economically and structurally viable for affordable units are planned unit developments and other forms of cluster housing, accessory apartments, and multifamily housing. Mobile homes also are an important source of affordable housing. Vermont land use law does not allow municipalities to discriminate against or segregate mobile homes. Mobile homes in a town can provide an opportunity for those who cannot afford conventional housing.

Public infrastructure contributes to the availability of low cost housing. In particular, shared sewer and water connections allow for higher densities and lower land costs by minimizing the amount of land that is necessary to accommodate new development. Affordable housing developers often depend on these public facilities to reduce building costs. The expense of drilling wells and designing individual septic systems significantly increases the price the developers require for their efforts.

Montgomery can also promote housing variety and affordability by promoting programs such as HomeShare Vermont. HomeShare Vermont assists elders and persons with disabilities to live independently in their own home by bringing them together with persons who are seeking affordable housing and/or care giving opportunities. This program represents an opportunity to expand housing opportunities while maintaining open space and other sensitive areas such as floodplains.

CHAPTER 14. Natural Resources

GOAL: TO PROVIDE FOR GROWTH WITHIN THE COMMUNITY WHILE MAINTAINING A HEALTHY AND INTACT FORESTED LANDSCAPE WHICH SUPPORTS A STRONG LOCAL ECONOMY, PROTECTS CORE WILDLIFE HABITAT AND CONNECTIVITY, AND MAINTAINS WATER QUALITY AND KEY NATURAL FEATURES SENSITIVE TO ADVERSE IMPACTS OF DEVELOPMENT

Policies

- Limit development in areas where soils have limited capacity to support structures or filter wastes and in areas where the slope is greater than 15%
- Maintain natural vegetative cover to the greatest extent possible where development occurs in Conservation Districts (Conservation I and II)
- Guide development away from productive agricultural or forest soils
- Protect the water quality of the Trout River and its tributary streams by preventing erosion along their banks and encouraging reduction of stormwater and agricultural runoff and non-point source pollution
- Protect groundwater quality by regulating uses that could introduce contaminants into the ground in the source water protection areas
- Limit the loss or degradation of wildlife habitat by maintaining significant features, including wildlife corridors and unique sensitive areas or natural communities, and protecting such areas from development that would demonstrably reduce the ecological function of habitat on the landscape scale
- Development shall be designed and sited in a manner to limit the fragmentation of large blocks of contiguous forest to the greatest degree possible
- Prohibit land development resulting in the loss of wetland and floodplain storage capacity
- Recognize the collective value in preserving natural resources throughout the town and encourage good land stewardship practices among private landowners in matters of soil health, biodiversity, and water quality
- Ensure the conservation and proper stewardship of significant natural communities and our forestland
- Avoid development and other encroachments – including fill, dredging, new structures, parking areas, infrastructure and utilities – within mapped river corridors
- Protect headwaters and the ecosystems they sustain from risk of degradation; to ensure high water quality, these areas shall be principally maintained for forestry and recreational uses
- Incorporate vegetated buffers from streams, rivers and ponds into Montgomery’s zoning bylaws in order to better protect water quality

Though once standing higher than the Rocky Mountains, Vermont's Green Mountains now reach heights within the Northern Region of almost 4,000 feet. The Green Mountains today present an impressive barrier along Franklin County's eastern border. The Town of Montgomery is part of

the County's eastern border, and because of this, it is surrounded by steep, forested mountain slopes that are drained by the Trout River and its tributaries.

Montgomery, like many towns in the State of Vermont, is fortunate to have a landscape that is filled with so many different types of natural features.

Biophysical Region

Montgomery lies at the intersection of two biophysical regions, the **Champlain Valley** and the **Northern Green Mountains**. Thousands of years ago, as the glaciers retreated to the north, the Champlain Valley was lying under first the fresh water glacial Lake Vermont and then the salt water of the Champlain Sea. The water had a profound impact on the soils found here today. Many of the soils found in the valley are “lacustrine”, or water deposited. These soils are made up of fine sediment, sand and gravel that were carried in the water. Water moving at fast speeds is able to hold larger pieces, like gravel, but as the water slows down the largest pieces fall out. Fine sediments lay in the water until it is nearly motionless. This is why there is gravel and rocks in streambeds and clays and fine sediments in lake bottoms. As the glaciers retreated, salt water flowed in from the north, converting the lake to a smaller sea and depositing the sand we can find mixed in the soils today. The underlying bedrock is composed of carbonate-rich rock with some quartzite. The carbonate rich bedrock weathers easily and releases calcium and other important nutrients into the soil, making it very fertile. Glacial rebound gradually diminished the inland reach of the sea water to its present extent. The sea was eventually cut off from the St. Lawrence Seaway, and in time the salt water was replaced by the fresh water of Lake Champlain. The hills within the Champlain Valley were not flooded by either Lake Vermont or the Champlain Sea, but were scoured by the glaciers as they retreated north. This left the glacial till that the soils in these areas are made up of. The soils found on hilltops have much in common with those found in the Northern Green Mountains. Today, the Champlain Valley is low, warm, and comparatively dry. The soils, climate, and vegetation have more in common with the lowlands surrounding the Great Lakes than the Green Mountains.

The summer temperatures in in the **Northern Green Mountain** biophysical are often 20 degrees cooler than the Champlain Valley. The Northern Green Mountains have the shortest growing season, and the coldest winter temperatures in Vermont are found on northern slopes. Annual precipitation can also be much greater, receiving up to twice as much as in the Champlain Valley. The present formation of the Greens is the result of glacial activity that carved the older metamorphic bedrock of these mountains 20,000 years ago.

Topography

Upland areas (areas of 1,000 feet or more in elevation) include a good majority of the Northwest Region of Vermont. These areas include most of the Region's more prominent mountains, hilltops, and ridge lines. Many of these are highly visible from public vantage points and contribute significantly to the Region's scenic beauty. These areas also include drainage divides, steep slopes, shallow soils, and exposed, fractured bedrock. These areas are important for upland drainage and groundwater recharge. They also support significant wildlife habitat, forestry, and outdoor recreation but they generally prevent all but low-density development.

Slope is one of the most important factors that determine if the area is suitable for development. The Natural Resources Conservation Service provides general guidelines for assessing slope imitations and these are listed in Table 18. The slope of an area should be taken into account when deciding if the land is capable of supporting potential development.

Slope Classifications	
0-3%	generally suitable for most types of development but may require drainage
3-8%	most desirable for development because these areas generally have the least restrictions
8-15%	suitable for low-density development with particular attention given to erosion control, runoff, and septic design
15-25%	unsuitable for most types of development and septic systems, construction costly, erosion and runoff problems likely
>25%	all types of construction should be avoided, careful land management for other uses is needed

Soils

Soils are the most important environmental factor that governs the use of land in rural areas. Soils are classified on the basis of structure, form, composition, and suitability for various types of development. Four characteristics are of primary concern when doing land use planning: bearing capacity, erodibility, drainage, and resource value. The Town's agriculture depends upon the availability of high quality soils in large, adjoining parcels to allow for economical hay and field production.

The Natural Resources Conservation Service provides soil survey information; maps and a description of each type of soil can be found in the *Soil Survey of Franklin County, Vermont* and online on the NRCS's *Web Soil Survey*. Each soil type has a soil interpretation sheet that describes the properties and the suitability of the soil for different uses. The soil survey is a tool that can be used to inform decision making such as:

- helping farmers locate the best land for crops and pastures;
- helping developers locate areas of least limitation for basements, septic tank disposal fields, and associated uses;
- helping engineers in planning the best location for highways, buildings, and the like; and
- helping communities with the planning of economical, attractive, and trouble-free developments.

Because soils vary widely in their potential for major land uses, the soil survey maps should be carefully looked at when deciding what the land should be used for.

The general soil map shows the soil associations that represent a distinct type of soil landscape for each town in Franklin County. The Town of Montgomery is home to soils that formed in

glacial till in the Green Mountains and on uplands. The most common soil associations that are found in Montgomery are the Lyman-Marlow-Peru association and the Peru-Marlow association.

Primary agricultural soils, as defined by Vermont's Land Use and Development Law (Act 250), include soils which, based upon their chemical and physical properties, are considered especially suited for agricultural use. These are subdivided into “prime” soils having a very high potential and few limitations for producing food, feed, forage or fiber crops; and “good” soils of statewide importance that have good potential, but one or more limitations that may restrict the choice of crops and require more careful management. The Vermont Agency of Agriculture also recognized “local” soils with agricultural potential, but which are not regulated under Act 250. This classification does not consider location, current land use, and parcel size. Prime, statewide, and local agricultural soils are shown on the Agricultural Soils Map.

Earth Resources

Earth resources, including sand and gravel deposits, are critical regional resources, especially because of their use in road maintenance and construction. As Montgomery develops, more of the earth resources will be needed to meet the needs of growing infrastructure. This is common with all towns in the State. The extraction of these resources can cause a problem if they are located in rural areas where residential development is increasing. Improper or excessive extraction can damage cultural resources, natural resources, and scenic resources of the area.

Surface Waters

The Northwest Region of Vermont is home to many types of surface waters. They offer sustenance, scenic beauty, recreational opportunities, and livelihood to the residents and visitors of Franklin County. Water is one of the basic necessities of life; and because of that, it must be appropriately respected, managed, enhanced, and preserved to ensure the future vitality of the Region and its inhabitants.

The Missisquoi River traverses through most of Franklin County. The Trout River, which runs through the Town of Montgomery, is one of its many tributaries. It is a valuable natural and cultural resource. The Trout River provides many beneficial uses such as providing a place for recreation activities. Maintaining the quality of the Trout River is of extreme importance. Not only does it affect the Town, but also it has the potential to directly affect the Missisquoi River Delta and consequently, Lake Champlain.

Montgomery is home to a natural feature that attracts people from all around. This natural feature is the swimming holes that are located throughout the Town. They offer great recreational opportunities for residents and visitors alike. The swimming holes should be recognized because they contribute to the overall quality of life that is enjoyed by the residents of Montgomery.

Ground Waters

Groundwater is the source of over 90% of the drinking water for rural areas in Vermont. It is replenished through rain and surface water that percolates down through the soil. Vermont's groundwater policy declares that the State "shall protect its groundwater resources and maintain high quality drinking water" and "shall manage its groundwater resources to minimize the risks of groundwater deterioration" (10 VSA 48 1310). Risks to groundwater, as stated in the statute, are associated with human activity in the vicinity of the aquifer. There are State programs which are designed to protect groundwater. These include those aimed at hazardous materials management, agricultural plant industries, public water supply, well drilling, wastewater management, road de-icing management, and land use regulation.

Groundwater is a critical resource that must be managed effectively. Groundwater quality in the Northwestern Region of Vermont is considered generally good but there is always the potential threat of it being contaminated. The Vermont Agency of Natural Resources identified the following as potential threats to groundwater resources: animal feedlots, fertilizer applications, irrigation practices, land application, landfills, material stockpiles, pesticide applications, pipelines and sewer lines, septic tanks, surface impoundments, and waste piles. As described in the Community Utilities section of the plan, Montgomery does have public water supply that should be protected.

Wetlands

Wetlands are areas of land where soils are saturated with surface or groundwater frequently enough to support specific types of vegetation that require these conditions for growth and reproduction. Vermont's wetlands have been well documented as serving critical ecological and socio-economic functions. Wetlands cover 6.2 percent of Franklin County's total land area. In the Town of Montgomery, there are 607 acres of wetlands. This amounts to less than 1.7 percent of the total land cover in the Town. Wetlands serve many different functions and these are listed below:

- Flood Control: wetlands associated with streams slow flood waters, provide flood storage, and reduce peak flood levels
- Shoreline Anchoring: wetlands provide erosion control
- Water Quality: wetlands process heavy metals, pesticides, and other toxic substances and they remove nutrients from run-off water (i.e. agricultural run-off)
- Habitat: wetlands provide habitat for a wide variety of plants and animals including a high number of threatened or endangered species
- Socio-economic Value: wetlands are utilized by humans for their recreational, scenic, historic, educational, and cultural values

Given the importance of wetland systems and the beneficial function stated above, they should be protected from encroaching development, including roads and driveways, and disturbances harmful to wetland-dependent wildlife by restricting development and specific activities in wetlands and by maintaining and/or establishing undisturbed, naturally vegetated buffers around their edges.

Floodplains

Floods are inevitable and uncontrollable natural events which occur sporadically and affect lands adjacent to watercourses. It is therefore in the public interest to plan for floods, and to implement land use strategies which will protect these areas and minimize the risks to public health, safety, and property. Floodplains, lands adjacent to watercourses, are periodically inundated by heavy rains or during spring thaws. Their soils are porous and can absorb considerable water before reaching flood stage. Floodplains make excellent agricultural land but are poorly suited for development, because of their propensity for flooding. Montgomery has 550 acres of mapped floodplain, which is roughly 1.5% of the community's total land area.

The 1997 flood made all Montgomery residents aware of the power inherent in a flood and is an urgent reminder of the need for proper management and appropriate use of critical floodplain areas. Development within floodplains poses significant risks and should generally be avoided. River channels and floodplains function as a single hydrologic unit, periodically transferring floodwaters and sediment from one to the other. Appropriate uses of floodplains are those that can accommodate this cycle. Examples of uses that are appropriate to floodplains include agriculture, open space, and recreation.

It is also recommended that the following actions be implemented to maintain the function of the floodplain:

- support stream bank stabilization efforts that reduce the risk of erosion
- vegetative buffer strips should be used
- development of new structures in the floodplain should be limited

Significant Wildlife Habitat

Montgomery's residents are fortunate to share the community with a variety of animal species that depend on a variety of habitat types – and connectivity between habitats – for their survival. Maintaining viable populations of native wildlife is an important goal of town residents. To achieve this, residents and local officials should understand the habitat needs of different species, where those habitats are found in the community, and how land use and human activity can best be guided so that the function of important habitat is not diminished. Conducting an inventory of important habitats would greatly assist the town to better maintain habitat. Despite the lack of a comprehensive inventory, however, several types of significant habitat have been identified in the town.

Deer Yards.

Deer wintering areas provide critical habitat for white tail deer and other forms of vertebrates.

These areas of hemlock, spruce, fir, cedar, and pine species provide shelter from deep snows, and they also permit easier winter travel for deer and other species. The combination of elevation, vegetation, and solar aspect significantly increases the survival rates of deer populations and also impact the landscape ecology and recreation. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service have targeted these areas for protection.

There is an extensive amount of deer wintering areas identified in the heavily forested areas of eastern Franklin County - this includes the Town of Montgomery. Large, contiguous wintering areas exist along the Trout and Tyler Branch of the Missisquoi River. These areas exist mostly in the Towns of Montgomery and Richford. Deer yards, aside from providing winter range, are essential for year round species migration. Careful management of these areas is of extreme importance in order for the species to thrive.

Black Bear Habitat.

Black bear prefer mountainous and forested landscapes just like those found on the slopes of the Green Mountains. The location of most bear habitat is in eastern portion of Franklin County; the entire Town of Montgomery has been identified as potential habitat. Black bear have a significantly large home range and because of this, their survival rate decreases when larger areas are divided up into smaller units and into isolated forestlands. When land is developed in scattered locations throughout the Town, the black bear habitat areas are decreased. In addition to needing large blocks of un-fragmented forests, bears are especially dependent on concentrated stands of mast producing trees that provide concentrated fruit or nut production.

Both deer wintering areas and productive/seasonal bear habitat cover Montgomery's landscape, unlike the landscape that is found in the western portion of Franklin County. The town should encourage the management of these habitats—where they occur—in a manner that does not threaten the ability of the habitat to support these desired species.

Rare, Threatened and Endangered Species

Threatened and endangered species are protected by Vermont's Endangered Species Law (10 V.S.A. section 5401 et. seq.). The Vermont Non-Game and Natural Areas Program maintains an inventory of the locations of rare, threatened or endangered plants, animals and natural communities. The precise locations are made available to town planners, although they are not published or made available to the general public. Endangered and threatened species are presently mapped in town in areas associated with the high elevation natural communities of the upper elevations of Jay Peak and along the town borders with Lowell and Bakersfield. Subsequent additions to the Non-Game and Natural Areas inventory should inform planning and development decisions in town to conserve or otherwise protect those species and the habitats necessary for their continued survival.

Forest Fragmentation

Approximately 84 percent of the Town is covered in forest land. Continued management of these forest lands is an important community goal. Forest land and its traditional uses (timber

extraction, wildlife habitat, recreation, scenic resources, etc.) help define the rural character of the Town.

Forests provide habitat to a diverse population of wildlife, which is negatively impacted when forested land is fragmented through development. Forest fragmentation affects water quality, fish and wildlife populations, and the biological health and diversity of the forest itself. When many small habitat losses occur over time, the combined effect may be as dramatic as one large loss. Fragmentation results primarily from the construction of roads and associated development and can result in a disruption in animal travel, promote the invasion of exotic vegetation, expose interior forest habitat, and create more conflict points between people and wildlife.

Wildlife Travel Corridors

“Travel corridors” is a term used to describe land that links larger blocks of core habitat within a landscape, allowing the movement, migration, and dispersal of animals and plants, which is crucial in maintaining biological diversity, and the long term viability of breeding populations in the face of climate and habitat change. Riparian habitat along streams and rivers, strips of forest cover between developed areas, and even hedgerows/fencerows all represent potential connecting habitat. Included are areas where land use and landscape features allow wildlife to move across roads to and from habitat areas (e.g., undeveloped areas with forest cover close to each side of the road). Travel corridors can serve local populations of wildlife, or species with wide ranging habitat requirements.



The red arrows show potential wildlife travel corridors or connections between forest habitat blocks.

(Source: Staying Connected Initiative)

In 2011, the Vermont Staying Connected Initiative identified seven habitat connectivity areas in Montgomery. These areas are considered “connectivity areas” as they are the remaining links between large forest blocks necessary for wildlife travel between habitat areas. One critical connectivity area is along Route 242 that has been documented as utilized by black bear, moose, deer and fisher cat. These connectivity areas are very important to maintain in order to prevent forest fragmentation of our forests and wildlife habitat.

Water Resources

As noted elsewhere in this plan, rivers and streams, riparian areas, and wetlands – including vernal pools – all provide important habitat to a number of species.

CHAPTER 15. Flood Resiliency

GOAL: TO ENCOURAGE AND FOSTER A FLOOD RESILIENCY COMMUNITY

GOAL: TO MITIGATE THE RISK FOR LOSS OF LIFE AND INJURIES THAT RESULT FROM FLOOD EVENTS

GOAL: TO REDUCE DAMAGES TO PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE RESULTING FROM FLOOD EVENTS THROUGH HAZARD MITIGATION PLANNING AND PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

Policies

- Encourage flood emergency preparedness and response planning
- Where development already exists in vulnerable areas, measures shall be taken to protect people, buildings and facilities to reduce future flooding risk
- New development shall be planned for and encouraged in areas that are less vulnerable to future flooding events
- Discourage new development in the Special Flood Hazard Area and river corridors; in areas where new development is allowed, it should not exacerbate flooding and fluvial erosion
- Encourage the protection and restoration of floodplains and upland forested areas that attenuate and moderate flooding and fluvial erosion; where feasible floodplain restoration and conserved land in vulnerable areas should be encouraged

As of July 1, 2014, municipal plans must address flood resiliency. This chapter identifies flood and fluvial erosion hazard areas 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 property.



Photos of flood damage from the 1997 Montgomery Flood

Flood Risks

Montgomery is characterized by rolling foothills that ascend to the steeper slopes of the Green Mountain Range. The development patterns follow along the Trout River, West Hill Brook and Jay Brook, tributaries of the Missisquoi River whose headwaters begin along the Green Mountains.

Floods of large magnitude have occurred in Montgomery on a more frequent basis since the 1970s. The flood of 1997 was the worst flood recorded in Montgomery’s history and resulted in the collapse of the Route 118 Bridge over the Trout River. Minor flooding occurs nearly every spring particularly along the Trout River, when melting snow combined with spring rainfall flows from the surrounding mountains. While the minor events do not have the same town-wide impact as the larger declared disasters, reoccurring events impact the town’s capital budgeting. Spring flooding in 2013 damaged a section of Regan Road necessitating improvements of less than \$50,000 and in 2014 damages along roadways in town were approximately \$120,000. The Town of Montgomery Hazard Mitigation Plan contains further information on flood resiliency and all hazard mitigation.

Timeline of flood events in Montgomery:

Major Events	1888	1895	1927	1973	1976	1983	1997	2011			
Minor Events							2002	2006	2007	2013	2014

Floodplains

Flooding is a natural occurrence and happens when water rises in a stream after storm events and inundates the floodplain which is the adjacent low-lying land. This floodplain provides important functions including the storage of water after events and slowing the velocity of the water in the river channel. This in turn can reduce the amount of streambank erosion and downstream flooding.

River channels and floodplains function as a single hydrologic unit, periodically transferring floodwaters and sediment from one to the other. Appropriate uses of floodplains are those that can accommodate this cycle and such as agriculture, open space and recreation. Development within floodplains poses significant risks and should be avoided.

To identify a community’s flood risk, FEMA developed Flood Rate Insurance Maps (FIRMs). Montgomery’s maps were updated in 2001 after the 1997 flood. These maps outline the special flood hazard area (SFHA) also known as the 100-year floodplain, this area has a 1% or greater chance of flooding in a given year.

A “100-year flood” can sound deceiving as this refers to the probability that a flood of that magnitude will occur in any given year based on historical data. However a 100-year flood could occur twice in one year.

Currently there are 103 structures within the 100 year floodplain in Montgomery, which represent 14% of all structures in the community. Sixty-nine percent of these structures are residential dwellings. Owners of buildings within the designated SFHA are required to carry flood insurance in order to get a federally backed mortgage. According to FEMA's National Flood Insurance Program as of March 31, 2014, the Town of Montgomery had only 31 flood insurance policies in force.

Montgomery's adopted Flood Hazard Bylaw adheres to the minimum development standards allowed by the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). Montgomery should review the standards for land development in the floodplain to ensure public safety and reducing future risk to infrastructure and investment.

Potential strategies to be considered include:

- Prohibition on New Development – this would prohibit new structures in the Flood Hazard Overlay District.
- Increasing Standards – Communities can choose to increase the requirements for new developments in the floodplain while still allowing all or most forms of development. For example:
 - Limit the amount of fill or impervious surface.
 - Require structures be elevated such that the lowest floor (including basement) is at least two (2) feet above the base flood elevation. This requirement also can result in major reductions to flood insurance premiums

River corridors

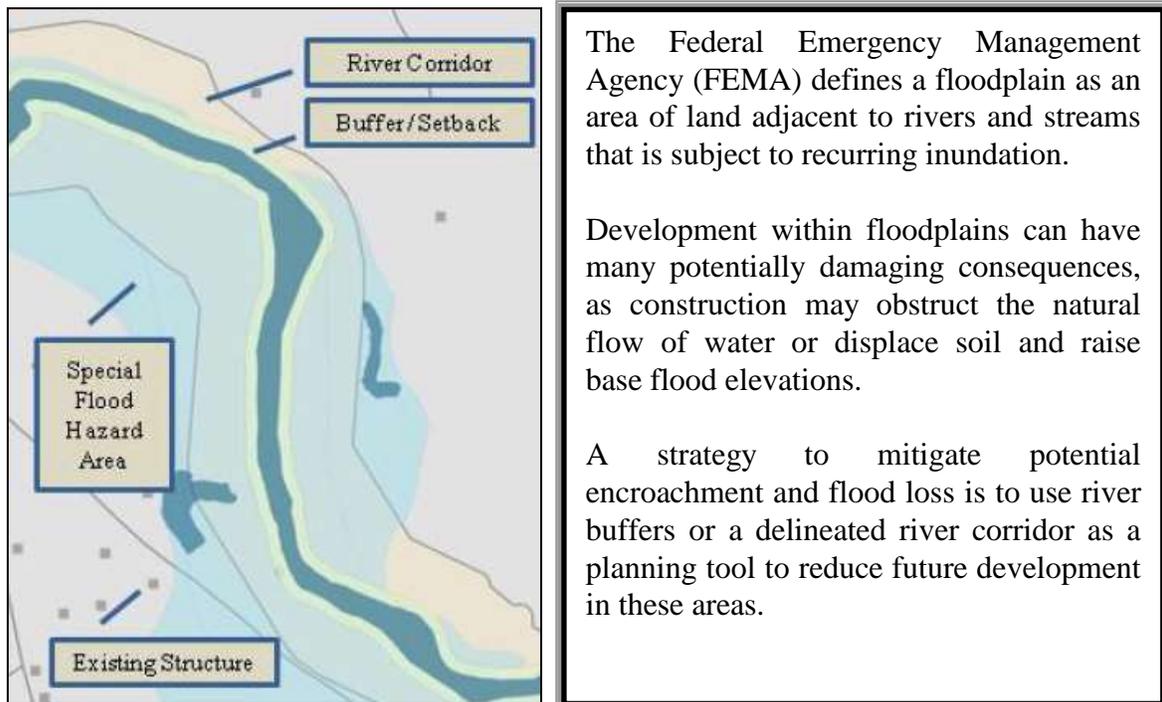
About two-thirds of Vermont's flood-related losses occur outside the mapped floodplains, revealing a fundamental limitation of the FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs). A mapped floodplain makes the assumption that a river channel does not change position or scour down and build up with material. However, river channels are constantly undergoing a physical adjustment process that result in stream bank erosion or sediment deposition.

Land nearby streams is particularly vulnerable to erosion damage by flash flooding, bank collapse, and stream channel changes. The Vermont Agency of Natural Resources has identified River Corridors, which consist of the minimum area adjacent to a river that is required to accommodate changes to the river over time and a vegetative or riparian buffer. Similar to floodplains, keeping development out of the river corridors reduces the vulnerability of these structures to erosion.

The VT ANR recommends that the community identify and regulate development in River Corridors in order to reduce the risk of erosion damage. River corridors for streams with a watershed of 2 square miles or greater are delineated at 2 to 3 times the channel width and for streams with less than 2 square miles watershed a minimum 50 foot setback on either side of the stream. Communities have two options for protecting river corridors, which can include adopting a River Corridor Overlay District that extends beyond the mapped flood hazard areas or adopting a standard setback or buffers from rivers in all parts of the community. Montgomery should

explore these options to identify how the community can protect these areas.

Limiting development within flood and river corridor areas will minimize risk and provide streams the opportunity to reestablish a stable, equilibrium condition. Maintaining vegetated buffers around waterways also helps to minimize risk to property and provides water quality benefits.



Depiction of the Special Flood Hazard Area, River Corridor and Riparian Buffers

Promoting Hazard Resilient Measures

There are several additional steps a community can take to reduce the risk of damages and increase the safety of the community. Measures can be taken that consider directing new development and capital improvements outside these sensitive areas. Additional measures should be utilized to reduce the potential for future damages and increase preparedness for disaster response.

In October 2014, the state outlined minimum measures communities should take to reduce flood-related risks and prepare for emergencies. Communities that adopt these measures will receive a reduced local match to public assistance funds from Vermont's Emergency Relief and Assistance Fund (ERAF). The four minimum mitigation measures include:

1. Adopt the most current Town Road and Bridge Standards (see VTrans Orange Book: Handbook for Local Officials).

2. Adopt flood regulations that meet the minimum standards for enrollment in the National Flood Insurance Program.
3. Annually adopt and maintain a Local Emergency Operations Plan (LEOP).
4. Adopt a FEMA-approved Local Hazard Mitigation Plan.

Montgomery has adopted all four measures and is eligible for a reduced match of 12.5%. *(As of the writing of this document the Hazard Mitigation Plan is still pending approval by FEMA so current match rate is 17.5%)*

There are several areas in town that are or have been prone to flooding and erosion issues as listed below. The Town should continue to identify opportunities to reduce the risk to critical infrastructure, transportation and vulnerable settlements in these areas.

- Regan Road
- Rushford Valley
- Longley Bridge Road
- North Hill Road
- Black Falls Road
- West Hill Road
- Hill West Road
- Brook Road
- Deuso Road

An area in town that sees repetitive issues is near West Hill. When there are high waters in the spring, residents along West Hill and Hill West become isolated. The Enosburgh Mountain Road is not maintained in the winter and other roads are class four.

In order to identify other areas in the community that are prone to flooding or identify areas that are undeveloped and provide current flood storage, the community should hold community outreach events to gather input and feedback from the community. Areas identified can be reviewed for mitigation actions and potential conservation.

CHAPTER 16. Land Use

GOAL: TO MAINTAIN MONTGOMERY'S RURAL CHARACTER AND SCENIC RESOURCES BY ENCOURAGING DEVELOPMENT TO FOLLOW WISE LAND USE PRACTICES

Policies

- Maintain the character of existing neighborhoods and avoid potential conflicts between incompatible land uses
- Limit development on slopes greater than 15% and maintain natural vegetation on slopes
- Protect scenic ridges by limiting development above 1,600 ft. in elevation
- Steer development away from areas where soils will not support it due to shallow depth to bedrock, instability, or high water table
- Protect public health, welfare, and safety by limiting development in the flood plain
- Protect water quality by limiting development in Wellhead Protection Areas, wetlands, and along stream banks
- Conserve productive lands by accommodating development in areas apart from most farming activity
- Recognizing the community's susceptibility to flooding, new development shall conform strictly to floodplain regulations
- Promote new development in areas of existing infrastructure, such as roads, power, and water
- Encourage sustainable agricultural and silvicultural practices to both protect the use of land and water resources, air quality, and keep a working rural landscape based on a practice of stewardship
- Avoid fragmentation of large forest blocks of contiguous forests that provide both economic opportunities for landowners as well as ecological and cultural benefits to the community, including wildlife habitat, water quality maintenance and recreation
- Promote anti-sprawl initiatives as a measure to maintain the appropriate use of our land resources
- Promote the enrollment of productive farm and forestland in the current use value appraisal program

Over the years, Vermont's economy has changed from natural resource based businesses to technology based businesses. As the types of businesses have changed, the value of land has also changed. Previously, the productivity of a piece of land for farming or timber largely determined its economic value. Today, features such as access to major transportation networks; infrastructure such as water and sewage systems; and proximity to qualified labor markets all help in determining the value of land for economic development.

Much of Franklin County's eastern section is wooded, hilly, and well suited for forestry. This includes the Town of Montgomery. Forested areas are beneficial for both the economic livelihood of the rural communities and for the natural habitat they provide. Uses of land, such as wildlife habitat and watershed protection, provide substantial benefits to society, ranging from

the economic returns arising from tourism to the benefits of water purification and flood control. Technological change has an impact on land use and conservation. Modern machinery and financing allow projects to be accomplished on a grander scale and more rapidly than in previous times. The construction of roads and the use of transportation technology allow people and materials to move more rapidly and reliably over the landscape. Care should be taken to prevent inappropriate development at the expense of our natural environment. Advances in telecommunication and computer technologies erase geographical limitations.

Land use planning involves the consideration of the many possible types of land uses and the goals of the land users. The impacts of growth, development, and environmental change on the land should be taken into consideration before any changes are made to the land. These changes will have a lasting effect on the community for years to come.

Current Land Use

Montgomery's total land area is 57 square miles or 36,436 acres. The majority of land cover in the Town is comprised of forest land (approximately 84 percent) with agriculture the second dominant land cover (less than 10 percent).

The Town of Montgomery has two unique village areas: Montgomery Center and Montgomery Village. Both of these are considered assets to the Town. The Center and the Village need to be promoted and preserved, and this can be done by encouraging historic preservation, economic development, and the adaptive reuse of existing structures. The majority of residential homes are located in these two villages.

The two major routes in the Town are Route 118 and Route 242. By looking at the Land Cover/Land Use Map for Montgomery, it can be seen that most of the land use in Town occurs along the two routes. Land use types include residential, agriculture (such as row crops and hay or pastures), and communication and utility lines.

Constraints to Development

Areas with steep slopes (15% or greater), shallow soils, high water table, or within the floodplain are poorly suited for development. These site conditions may entail high maintenance costs, and pose a burden to municipal taxpayers as well as hazards to public health and safety. Development in these areas may also compromise the quality and quantity of ground and surface waters and other natural resources, and therefore should be restricted.

Proposed Land Use Districts

The development of the Proposed Land Use Districts are based on existing land use patterns, traffic patterns, the intensity of proposed uses, physical constraints of the land, the resident's vision for the community, and several long range planning goals and objectives. The villages are expected to provide the services needed by the businesses and residents in order to maintain the village densities.

The aim of this plan is guide future development. To further the goals, policies, and recommendations set forth in this Plan, the following five (5) land use districts and one (1) overlay districts describe the current zoning districts in Montgomery, shown on the Proposed Land Use Map.

Village Districts (Village I and Village II). The Village Districts encompass the historic village areas of each of Montgomery’s Village Centers – Montgomery Village and Montgomery Center. The Districts are intended to further growth and economic development in keeping with Montgomery’s traditional village character. Consistent with the historic development pattern, development is allowed at higher densities and intensities in the village areas. Historic buildings are a significant contributor to village character and are encouraged to be preserved and adapted for re-use. New development should be consistent in siting and scale with the surrounding historic structures in the villages. Enhancing the pedestrian friendly streetscape is a high priority in the village areas.

Rural Residential District. The Rural Residential District provides for rural residential and business land uses at lower densities than the village centers to preserve the traditional working landscape and to maintain Montgomery’s rural character. Rural residential, small-scale commercial and light industrial land uses are balanced with the natural landscape of forests, rivers and streams, meadowlands and agricultural fields. Home-based occupations and industries are common throughout the Rural Residential District. The Rural Residential District encompasses the areas outside of the village centers along Class 3 town roads and state highways (excluding those portions of Rt. 58 east of Amadon Road), and including those lands comprising smaller forest blocks in town where natural resource concerns are not a primary concern (as in the Conservation I & II Districts).

Conservation I District. The purpose of the Conservation I District is to preserve the ecological, cultural and economic value and function of forest blocks and the natural resources they encompass as detailed in this Plan. These include:

- To maintain healthy, viable populations of native wildlife;
- To support active forest management as a means of supporting the local wood products industry;
- To enhance outdoor recreation valued by residents and visitors alike;
- To provide for the protection of source waters which feed rivers and streams, including important aquatic habitats; and
- To maintain the aesthetics associated with the agricultural and forested landscape.

Conservation II District. The Conservation II District consists of forest blocks at 1,600 feet in elevation and above. Placing restrictions on development is essential due to the sensitive resources located there, including wildlife habitat, steep slopes, shallow soils, headwaters, and the potential for development to affect erosion or flood hazards downstream. Protection of these areas also serves the ecological, cultural and economic benefits associated with the rural character as described above.

Flood Hazard Area Overlay. The purpose of this overlay district is to prevent increases in flooding caused by development in flood hazard areas, to minimize future public and private

losses due to flood, and to promote the public health, safety, and general welfare. This includes all areas in Montgomery identified as areas of special flood hazard on the National Flood Insurance maps located at the Town Office building.

Given Montgomery's topography and hydrological characteristics, the town is at great risk of erosional hazards – as evidenced by the 1997 floods that caused a lot of damage in the Town. To protect against property loss and public infrastructure damage (especially the many gravel roads and culverts located on or near steep gradient streams) from stream channel movement, Montgomery should limit development in areas of high erosion risk (as indicated on Agency of Natural Resources River Corridor maps).

The Town of Montgomery, like all other towns, needs to look at the consequences of growth and development for its local community and also with the Region and State. Growth and development can greatly affect the town's land use, and towns need to plan for this potential change. Montgomery is expected to see a steady population growth through the year 2020 of twelve to seventeen percent (see Community Profile) which is a higher rate of growth than is expected at for Franklin County. This could affect the future land use patterns as the Town grows to accommodate this new population.

One thing that needs to be addressed is sprawl. Sprawl is defined as “a regional land use pattern of scattered, low-density, single use development...it is land consuming, auto dependent, energy and resource intensive, economically exclusive, and is initially some distance from existing infrastructure” (source: The History of Sprawl in Chittenden County). Growth can occur without sprawl by redeveloping existing village centers and developing new compact growth centers. Recognizing that the two current village areas contain significant wastewater limitations, the community should identify areas that are appropriate for higher density development.

The community recognizes the value of working lands to the regional farm and forest products economy and to the local and regional community's ability to conserve and provide stewardship for its cultural heritage and natural resource of fish, wildlife, plants, ecological systems, and the myriad public values therein. Therefore, the town will explore all reasonable and feasible opportunities to support and promote those lands that are greater than 25 acres and meet any of the following criteria – (i) enrolled in the Vermont current use program; (ii) owned by persons willing to consider the sale and application of a conservation easement; (iii) are being managed in accordance with a forest management plan that has been reviewed and approved by a professional forester, wildlife biologist, or other appropriate and related professional; or (iv) owned by persons willing to consider other non-regulatory mechanisms that promote sustainable forest management or seek to otherwise conserve the lands.

CHAPTER 17. Volunteer Community Groups

Montgomery has long been known for its strong sense of community. Its residents join together for many purposes. The following organizations are currently active in community life:

Churches

St. Isidores Church (Catholic)

Services 9:30 a.m. Sunday

Wednesday Eve Rosary 7:00 p.m., Mass 7:15 p.m.

Montgomery United Methodist Church, Inc.

Services 9:30 a.m. Sunday

Sunday School during service

Grateful Treads Mountain Bike Club

The Grateful Treads is a mountain bike and trails advocacy group based in the villages of Montgomery, Jay and Westfield, sixty members strong, and growing, TGT is busy building new trails, maintaining existing trail networks, and working with local officials and landowners to develop new opportunities for riding.

Hazen's Notch Association (HNA)

The Hazen's Notch Association is a non-profit, member-supported, conservation organization located in Montgomery. From its office at the HNA Welcome Center on Vermont Route 58, the Hazen's Notch Road, the Association serves 40 communities in northern Vermont.

The HNA was founded in 1994 to promote and engage in:

- Conservation of Forest and Agricultural Lands and Recreational Trails
- Environmental Education Programs for Schools and the Public
- Recreational Trails for Hiking, Snowshoeing, and Cross-Country Skiing
- Stewardship of Natural and Historic Cultural Resources
- Research of the Environment

The cross country ski touring center at Hazen's Notch is blessed with a topography that is ideally suited to Nordic skiing - rolling meadows, soft hills, our own 2,800' mountain and views of mountains in all directions. Forty miles of groomed and marked trails pass through 2,500 acres of mixed maple, birch and evergreen forest and across gentle, open meadows.

As a conservation land trust and environmental education center, HNA designs and manages its x-c ski trails to be in harmony with the landscape. Monthly moonlight snowshoe walks are also offered during the winter months.

The Hazen's Notch Association maintains a network of 15 miles of trails and woods roads for hiking in summer and fall. The trails pass through a variety of interesting habitats that include

meadows, forests, orchards, and beaver ponds. Trails range from restored woods roads that have gentle to moderate grades to narrow footpaths with steep climbs.

Summer Day Camp is offered for ages 6-12, and Overnight Camp for ages 10-14 are offered in the summer. The Hazen's Notch Summer Camp has gained a reputation for excellence in developing in children an awareness and respect for the environment, outdoor skills, self-confidence, cooperation and leadership. Summer Camp programs provide healthy outdoor recreational activities designed to stimulate inquiring minds, develop friendships, and create lasting positive memories of each child's summer camp experience.

Missisquoi River Basin Association

The **Missisquoi River Basin Association** (MRBA) is an active non-profit group of volunteers dedicated to the restoration of the river, its tributaries, and Missisquoi Bay, and to the clean, healthy state they once enjoyed. We bring together diverse interest groups within the community – teachers, farmers, summer residents, loggers, business owners, environmental experts, and outdoor enthusiasts; municipal officers, woodland owners, and concerned citizens. MRBA members sit on the current Upper Missisquoi and Trout River Wild and Scenic Study Committee, that also includes appointed representatives from Montgomery and other surrounding towns.

Our activities are many and varied – from fieldwork to stabilize stream banks, and planting trees in buffer areas, to assessing stream bank conditions. We clean up trash along the banks, cost-share with farmers in a nutrient management program, lend educational tools to local teachers, and are launching a volunteer-led water sampling program.

Montgomery Area Community Alliance (MACA)

Formed in 2009, MACA is a non-profit corporation that encourages business, economic development and employment in the Montgomery / Jay Peak area. In the first few months of operation, MACA was instrumental in getting the Montgomery area registered as a major focal point for persons utilizing the Northern Forest Canoe Trail.

This group is currently inactive. For more information please call 802-326-4306.

Montgomery Conservation Commission

The Montgomery Conservation Commission's mission is to "To promote land as a community to which we belong". The Commission has five principal functions as described below.

- **Inventories** - The Commission may prepare and maintain an inventory of the natural resources of the Municipality.
- **Land Acquisition** - The Commission may, on the basis of the inventories or other appropriate study, recommend to the legislative body the purchase of, or the receipt of as a gift, specific land and/or property rights (including easements) or other property for the purposes set forth in Article II of the Commission's bylaws.
- **Land Management** - The Commission shall exercise stewardship responsibility for properties and/or rights acquired by the Municipality for conservation purposes.
- **Public Presentation** - To the extent permitted by law, the Commission may represent the public interest in any matter which it determines may have a significant impact on the

natural or social resources of the Municipality.

- **Education and Information** - The Commission shall be responsible for the conduct of educational activities pertaining to local natural and social resources.

Montgomery Covered Bridges Garden Club

The Covered Bridges Garden Club is organized for charitable and educational purposes to further our knowledge of all aspects of gardening and use our knowledge and industry in our homes and community, and to encourage an interest in gardening and good environmental practices.

Community projects include maintaining the Historic Garden at the Montgomery Village Green and the Town Library Garden, planting the Flower Barrels and Bridge Flower Boxes in the Village and the Center, supporting the Junior Gardeners Program at Montgomery Elementary and sponsoring the August Harvest Fest.

The Covered Bridges Garden Club is a member of the Federated Garden Club of Vermont and the National Garden Clubs.

Montgomery Historical Society

The Society is located in Pratt Hall, a former Episcopal church (built in 1835), which houses its collections of photographs, albums, tools, and items of local interest. The Society's mission is to:

- Preserve Pratt Hall, artifacts, structures and memorabilia of historical interest
- Provide a venue for local exhibits and artisans to share their talents
- Sponsor programs that assist in preserving town history and cultural events
- Award scholarships to students on an annual basis

The Society maintains and preserves the church which is used for a variety of community programs. Activities include historical speakers, programs, summer concerts, art shows, exhibits, an annual Christmas carol, and a scholarship program. Pratt Hall is renowned for its stained glass windows and is also made available to the community for wedding ceremonies and memorial services. The society was formed in 1974 and is open to all upon payment of the annual dues.

Montgomery Town Association

The mission of the MTA is to work toward preserving the former First Baptist Church building while simultaneously moving toward having the Church property converted to the general use and benefit of the community at large.

Montgomery Quilting Circle

Everything about quilts for quilt lovers of all ages, beginners to expert. Meet at the Public Safety Building Conference Room. Meet every second Thursday of the month at 6:30 p.m. Small fee per meeting.

Riverwalk Community Garden

In the spring of 2010, at the request of community members, the Town Selectboard agreed to dedicate a portion of land at the bottom of West Hill to a community garden.

Several volunteers agreed to serve on the initial board and as of this writing plans are underway to develop 12 plots for local residents who wish to grow fresh vegetables. The plan is to be as organic as practicable.

CHAPTER 18. Compatibility with Neighboring Towns

The Town of Montgomery is located in the northwestern part of the State in Franklin County. Eight different towns, three of which are in Franklin County, border it. The Town of Richford borders Montgomery to the north, the Town of Bakersfield borders Montgomery to the south, and the Town of Enosburg borders Montgomery to the west.

Land use patterns in all of these towns can affect one another in many different ways. It is important that all of their development patterns are compatible with each other. It is also important that each town's future development plans do not adversely affect their bordering neighbors' plans. The Montgomery Town Plan does not propose any major changes to its land use districts, and because of this, no substantial conflicts with adjoining town plans should arise.

Population growth or decline is an important aspect that needs to be taken into account when planning a town's future. It can greatly affect how a town does its land use planning. The decision to develop the land should depend on its physical characteristics, projected needs of the community, existing municipal services, and compatibility with existing land uses. The following sections discuss the land use patterns of the seven towns that border Montgomery - Richford, Enosburgh, Bakersfield, Westfield, Lowell, Eden, and Belvidere. Though the land use patterns in each town may be referred to by different names, each town does have a plan that is compatible with that of Montgomery.

Compatibility with Richford

The Town of Richford borders Montgomery to the north. Richford divides its land use into the following districts: Agricultural, Commercial, Commercial and Industrial, Conservation 1, Conservation 2, Industrial, Rural Residential, Village Residential, and Water Supply Protection. The majority of the Richford side of the shared border is zoned Conservation 1, while the remaining portions are Agricultural. Montgomery's proposed uses and minimum lot sizes are compatible with Richford's existing and proposed land uses.

Compatibility with Enosburgh

The Town of Enosburgh borders Montgomery to the west. Enosburgh is expected to see a slightly lower growth rate through the year 2015 than Montgomery is. Because of the larger population, it is expected that Enosburgh will have more residential areas in town. While the Enosburgh Town Plan has divided their land into four following proposed land use districts, only the Forest and Conservation and Rural/Agricultural Areas are adjacent to Montgomery.

1. Wellhead Protection Area
2. Forest and Conservation
3. Rural/Agricultural Area
4. Flood Hazard Area

Montgomery's proposed uses and minimum lot sizes are compatible with Enosburgh's existing and proposed land uses.

Compatibility with Bakersfield

The Town of Bakersfield has seen much more of a population change since 1970 than the Town of Montgomery. Even though their populations were relatively the same back in 1970, the Town of Bakersfield is expected to see much more of a population change than Montgomery. Bakersfield has divided its land use into eight different zones. They are the following:

1. Aquifer District;
2. Conservation District;
3. Flood Hazard District;
4. High Density Residential;
5. Low Density Residential;
6. Rural District;
7. Village District; and
8. Watershed District

The adjacent portions of the two communities are both designated as conservation districts. The allowed uses and minimum lot sizes, according to zoning bylaws and town plans, are similar. Therefore the Montgomery Town Plan is compatible with the Bakersfield Town Plan and Zoning Bylaws.

Compatibility with Westfield

The Town of Westfield has divided its land use into three different districts, Village, Recreational-Residential, and Rural-Agricultural Districts. Their Recreational-Residential district is adjacent to Montgomery's Conservation II district. The remaining adjacent portions of Westfield are classified as the Rural-Agricultural district, which are border on Montgomery's Agriculture/Residential, Conservation 1 and Conservation 2 districts.

Although Westfield's Recreational-Residential district allows slightly more intensive development, the existing and proposed land uses do not conflict.

Compatibility with Lowell

The Town of Lowell has divided its land use into four different zones, including Village, Rural Residential/Agricultural, Conservation-Mountain, and Industrial districts. Only the Conservation-Mountain District borders with the Town of Montgomery's Conservation 2 District.

Both Montgomery's and Lowell's existing and proposed land uses are compatible with each other.

Compatibility with Eden

While technically the Towns of Eden and Montgomery are adjacent, they share only a small border. Further, Eden does not identify or propose specific land uses or districts. Because this area of Montgomery is designated as Conservation 2, the uses are seen as compatible.

Compatibility with Belvidere

The Town of Belvidere has not established zoning bylaws, but it has identified specific districts in their town plan. These districts include the Development, Natural Area, Forest, and Cold

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Hollow/Laraway Mountain Districts.

Existing and proposed land uses for both communities do not conflict with each other.

Compatibility with the Regional Plan

The Regional Plan was adopted in July of 2015. Though the goals and policies listed in the Regional Plan are consistent with the goals and policies that each town has listed in their own plans, they may be tailored somewhat to each town. This includes the Town of Montgomery, and because of this, the Montgomery Town Plan is considered compatible with the Regional Plan.

CHAPTER 19. Implementing the Plan

One of the most important steps in developing a Town Plan is how the recommendations in the Plan are to be implemented. Goals and policies were established for the following chapters of this Plan:

- Chapter 5: Archaeological, Historic, and Scenic Resources
- Chapter 6: Community Facilities
- Chapter 7: Community Services
- Chapter 8: Community Utilities
- Chapter 9: Economy
- Chapter 10: Energy
- Chapter 11: Transportation
- Chapter 12: Education
- Chapter 13: Housing
- Chapter 14: Natural Features
- Chapter 15: Flood Resiliency
- Chapter 16: Land Use

When combined together, the goals and policies should support the “Visions for the Future of Montgomery” set forth by the Plan in the beginning. The Town Plan should also be compatible with other plans in the surrounding communities. It should be noted that some of the goals set forth by the Plan may take a substantial amount of time to complete. The goals may also require funding which may take time to acquire.

The Town of Montgomery can work with other agencies and organizations such as the Northwest Regional Planning Commission, the Vermont Agency of Transportation, the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, the Vermont Agency of Housing and Community Affairs, and the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation, to name a few. These agencies and organizations can help the Town in achieving the goals that were set forth in the Town Plan.

Citizen involvement is also a tool that should be used and encouraged. Citizens should be involved in local planning issues that may arise for they will be the ones most likely affected by any changes that occur in the Town. Their input, ideas, opinions, and concerns should be taken into account when dealing with planning issues since they are the ones who have the most to gain from the Plan. Input from residents is very useful in deciding what the most pressing issues are in Town and also where the Town should most likely be headed in the future.

Planning to address future needs and improvements can be facilitated by the development of a municipal capital plan to guide decisions typically over a five-year period. These plans can cover various topics such as detailing community-wide needs and assigning a priority to address them to the scheduling of maintenance and improvements as well as equipment replacement. Considerable expected capital expenditures are outlined in this plan. Capital funds have been

established to address these expected costs; however, other creative solutions should be pursued in order to keep the local tax rate from sudden significant increases.

Planning is an ongoing process that will require the efforts of many different people. The Plan will change over time and these changes should be taken into account on how they will affect the needs of the community in the years to come.

Implementation Plan

One of the most important aspects of a planning process is to identify how the goals and policies contained in this Plan will be implemented. The Implementation Plan identifies actions that the community should take over the next several years to implement the goals and policies in Chapter 3 and Montgomery's Vision in Chapter 2. Many actions will require funding and it may take time to obtain financial resources. Some actions may require several years to implement. The Planning Commission shall reevaluate this Implementation Plan each year to measure progress and to establish priorities of the coming year.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL, HISTORIC, AND SCENIC RESOURCES

- Identify and prioritize scenic areas (ridgelines, open space) and roads in town
- Develop and implement plans to protect and encourage protection of identified scenic areas and roads of highest priority
- Require new development to be located and designed in a manner that minimizes its impacts on the town's identified scenic resources
- Identify ridgelines and review proposed development on or adjacent to them in order to minimize impacts on the town's scenic character
- Limit clearing of existing vegetation on development sites
- Encourage and promote the preservation and rehabilitation of historic public and private buildings

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

- Rebuild or relocate the Town Office to accommodate the needs of the municipality for office space, safe records storage, meeting space, and to make the facility more ADA compliant

ECONOMY

- Reinvigorate the local economic development committee to explore the niche market Montgomery businesses can fill in the region
- Evaluate the idea of supporting or developing a community arts center or an Artist in Residence Program
- Maintain Village Center designations and encourage private landowners to utilize the financial incentives of the program
- Explore village enhancements that incorporate traffic calming, parking and streetscaping in the village centers as a way to increase safety and accessibility while supporting our businesses

ENERGY

- Consider the adoption of a stand-alone screening ordinance for solar generation facilities. This will require updating screening standards for commercial development in the bylaws per Act 56
- The Planning Commission will study impacts of renewable energy generation facilities upon the community (environmental, economic, aesthetic, etc.) for the next two years. The PC will then consider amending the town plan to incorporate siting standards for renewable energy generation facilities

TRANSPORTATION

- Evaluate the safety and flow of traffic at the intersection of Route 118 and 242
- Work with VTrans and NRPC to assess the parking and access management needs along the Route 118 corridor in Montgomery Center
- Pursue funding to conduct a feasibility study on providing pedestrian access from Route 118 to the Public Works Building and Library

EDUCATION

- Promote the use of the schools for adult education and other community activities
- Develop a *Safe Routes To School Program* through partnerships among schools, local municipalities, parents and other community groups

HOUSING

- Town will support Hazard Mitigation Grants and other applications providing funding for property owners to undertake flood-proofing or to buyout flood-prone properties
- Town will support efforts to educate homeowners and renters about flood mitigation and flood safety
- The Town should support efforts by housing agencies and private developers to create additional affordable and market rate owner-occupied entry-level housing
- The Planning Commission should work with regional agencies to find ways to ensure working residents have housing they can afford
- The Village should work with housing agencies and others to investigate the development of senior housing in the village centers

NATURAL RESOURCES

- Consider requirements of a naturally vegetated buffer strip between any development and the shoreline of the Trout and streams with an average channel width of 10 feet or more
- Conduct a Natural Resource Inventory of the town to identify important natural resource features, including habitats and natural communities, to assist the town in planning for future development
- Update a multiple use forest management plan for the Town Forest
- Provide educational materials and assistance in planning to prevent or minimize destruction of core habitat and wildlife connectivity areas
- Promote enrollment of private forest and/or agricultural land the Use Value Appraisal program, as well as encourage the application of voluntary Conservation Easements on parcels of significant resource value

FLOOD RESILIENCY

- Hold a community meeting to review the mapped floodplain and river corridor areas
- Develop River Corridor Maps and utilize them for planning purposes to guide future development and minimize losses from flooding and erosion
- Strengthen flood hazard bylaws to increase public safety and reduce future damages
- Consider river corridor protection bylaw standards that consist of a 50 foot setback from a watercourse in smaller watersheds to discourage future development in high risk areas for flooding and erosion hazards
- Maintain a current Local Emergency Operations Plan (LEOP) and Hazard Mitigation Plan
- Incorporate mitigation measures when developing improvements or expansion to municipal infrastructure
- Support river corridor and floodplain restoration efforts by watershed organizations, the state and others

LAND USE

- Develop guidelines and criteria to identify land that is physically capable of supporting development
- Make inventories and maps of all protected natural resource areas readily available to all residents, landowners or their agents
- Promote, through incentives in land use regulations, the clustering of residential housing with the goal of preserving larger contiguous parcels for farming, forestry and the preservation of open space
- Implement strategies to enhance the long-term viability of agricultural and forestlands.
- Strengthen the bylaw language to limit development in special flood hazard areas and river corridors