

BAKERSFIELD, VERMONT

TOWN PLAN

2026-2034

DRAFT for 12/7/2026 Planning Commission Public Hearing with tracked changes from 2018 Town Plan

Adopted by the Bakersfield Selectboard on X X, 2026

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Survey Question: What do you like most about living in Bakersfield?

"My beautiful property, my wonderful neighbors"

"The history and people in the community who strive to make our town a better place while protecting our historic spaces"

VISION STATEMENT

"The quaintness, sidewalks, school, the village greens, music in the park, events that bring the community together like July 4th"

The purpose of this ~~Town Plan~~plan is to ~~ensure that~~ guide Bakersfield to a better future ~~growth in Bakersfield be at a pace the town can assimilate, that the unique and essential character of Bakersfield remains intact, and that our valuable natural resources, such as wildlife, forests, wetlands and agricultural lands will be protected and preserved.~~

~~Bakersfield has experienced significant residential growth in the past twenty years~~ while ~~the commercial and economic sector has declined. This Town Plan is intended as~~preserving what makes this community special. The following statement describes a ~~guide for reasonable and effective policies, procedures, and bylaws designed to guarantee that the rate and pattern of growth enhances the quality of life enjoyed~~future supported by Bakersfield residents~~.~~ and the Town that guides the goals and policies of this plan:

Bakersfield is a quiet, small town with a strong sense of community where people are friendly and neighbors know each other. The Town is Franklin County's gateway into the Green Mountains, where the natural landscape and beautiful setting provide scenic views, peace and quiet and opportunities for recreation. A working landscape of active forests and farms of all sizes continues to be an essential part of the Town's identity and economy. The village center is historic, walkable and supports small businesses that serve the needs of the community and provide places to meet with friends and neighbors.



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 which has involved the public in a variety of ways. Through this collective effort the vision and recommendations have been 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.

This Town Plan will help Bakersfield control its future by providing it with the means to direct 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 can help determine 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 Bakersfield 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 Bakersfield can be positively affected.

Bakersfield 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; and
- providing a foundation for amending the zoning and subdivision bylaws.

Policies 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 many of the goals and policies of this plan are long-term, it is expected that Bakersfield will re-examine them periodically and amend the Plan as needed and as required by law.

Authority

The town of Bakersfield 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~~eight 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 at any time.

~~Overview of the~~ Planning Program and Community Outreach

Planning and zoning in Bakersfield began with ~~a first town plan in 1992. Zoning~~zoning regulations ~~were~~adopted in 1966. The first Town Plan was adopted in ~~1966~~1992, and the Plan has been updated every 5-8 years since. The most recent major zoning update was in ~~1971, 1978, 1989 (interim), 1991 (interim), 1994, 2006 and 2009.~~ 2012. These are intended to be "living" documents which have been, and will continue to be, updated many times to reflect the ever-changing conditions in Bakersfield. The ~~2014~~2026 Bakersfield Town Plan builds on the previous town plans and furthers the effort to maintain a strong, vibrant community.



The Town Plan Update Community Workshop was held on November 6, 2025. Many updates to the goals and policies of this plan were based on the discussions that took place at the workshop.

The ~~2014~~2026 Bakersfield Town Plan ~~is a result of a planning process initiated in the fall of 2006. The 2009~~ update was completed with assistance from the Northwest Regional Planning Commission and support from a Municipal Planning Grant awarded through the Vermont Department of Housing and Community ~~Affairs.~~ Development. This planning process began with a survey of Bakersfield residents. More than ~~70~~80 Bakersfield residents responded to the survey and provided the planning commission with valuable input on their goals and visions for the community. Residents were also invited to participate in ~~two public forums,~~ a Community Workshop, which was held in ~~April 2007~~November 2025 and ~~April 2008 to discuss updates to~~attended by over 50 members of the ~~Town Plan and Zoning Bylaws. Further input was~~

~~also gathered by the Bylaw Review Committee.~~community. The ~~2014~~2026 Town Plan incorporates ~~revisions brought to the Planning Commission's attention over the five years since the 2009 Town Plan was adopted~~the feedback generated from these outreach efforts.

The town of Bakersfield continues to encourage public participation at all levels of the planning process. ~~-~~All Selectboard, Planning Commission and other town meetings are open to the public. Residents are encouraged to attend to offer input and voice their opinions. In addition, Bakersfield has adopted a Declaration of Inclusion which states a commitment to fair and equal treatment of everyone in our community.

The Structure of the Plan

The Bakersfield Town Plan is divided into chapters that address both the required elements of 24 V.S.A. Chapter 117 and other key areas of concern. ~~-~~Each chapter contains background information, including past trends, current status, and future needs intended to inform the town's planning efforts. ~~-~~At the end of each chapter is a set of goals and policies that have been developed by the Planning Commission which are based on the available information and intended to move Bakersfield toward the Vision as highlighted at the beginning of this plan. ~~-~~For the purpose of this plan, the terms "goals" and "policies" are defined below:

- **Goals** reflect the "desired future condition" – although some may not be attainable for many years;

- **Policies** are the strategies to ~~pursue in order to~~ attain the goals.

Bakersfield Declaration of Inclusion

"The Town of Bakersfield condemns racism and welcomes all persons, regardless of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, age, disability, or socioeconomic status, and wants everyone to feel safe and welcome in our community.

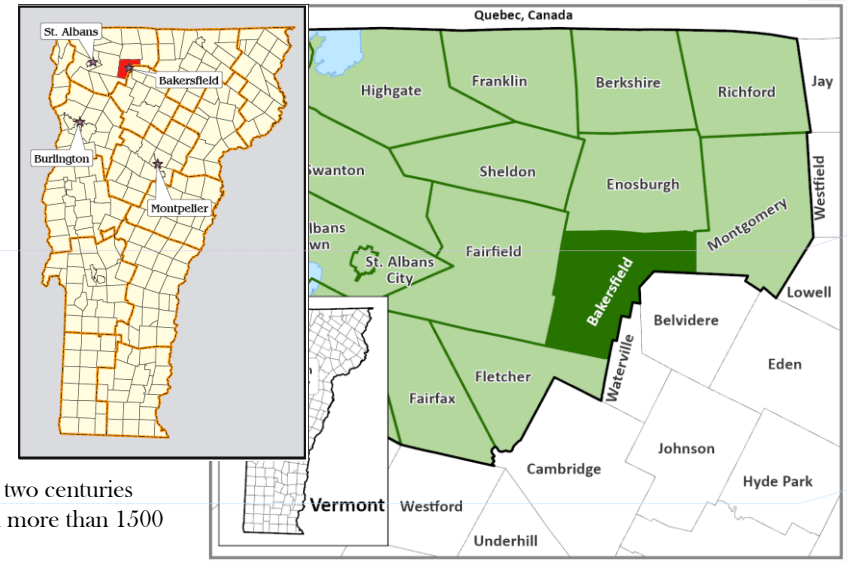
As a town, we formally condemn all discrimination in all of its forms, commit to fair and equal treatment of everyone in our community, and will strive to ensure all of our actions, policies, and operating procedures reflect this commitment.

The Town of Bakersfield is and will continue to be a place where individuals can live freely and express their opinions."

The Town Plan also ~~considers compatibility with the surrounding towns and the region as a whole, and~~ concludes with an Implementation Chapter that makes recommendations and identifies specific actions for the town to take in the next ~~five~~eight years and beyond.

~~Chapter 2.~~ Community Profile

The Town of Bakersfield is located in Franklin County in the northwestern part of Vermont. ~~-~~Bakersfield shares borders with the towns of Fletcher, Fairfield, Enosburgh, Montgomery~~,~~ in Franklin County, and Waterville and Belvidere ~~(~~in Lamoille County~~).~~. Bakersfield is within 20 miles of the City of St. Albans, ~~the regional growth center~~Franklin County's largest city, and approximately 40 miles from the City of Burlington, Vermont's largest City.



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Population

The population of the Town of Bakersfield has fluctuated over the past two centuries (Figure ~~2.~~1~~).~~.1). In the mid-1800s, the town hit its peak population with more than 1500

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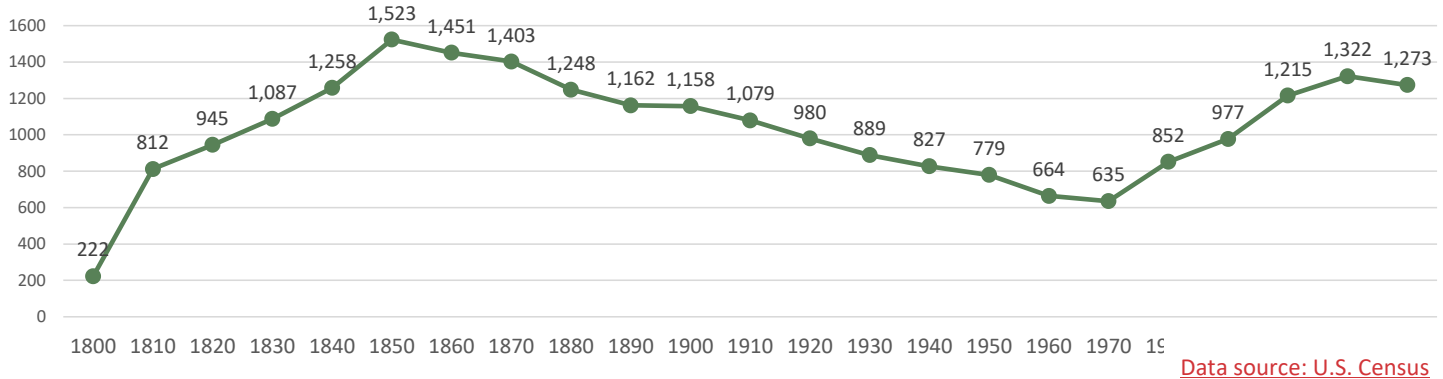
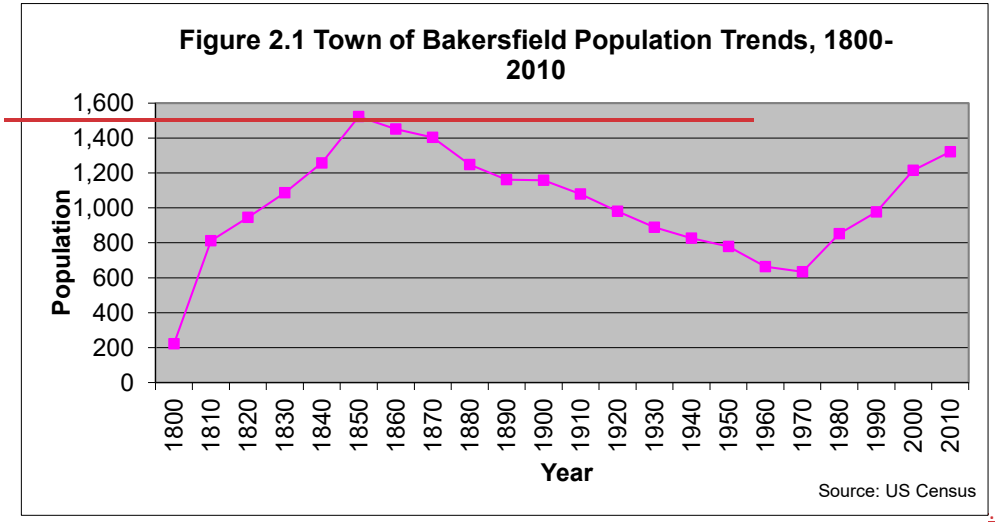
Figure 1.1: Bakersfield Population Trend, 1800-2020



Data source: U.S. Census

residents. -Following this peak, the population steadily declined until reaching a turning point in the 1970s.

Like many other towns in the ~~northwest region~~Northwest Region, the latter half of the 20th century brought significant growth to Bakersfield ~~(Table 2.1). .~~ From ~~1980~~1970 to ~~1990, its~~2010, the town's population ~~grew by 14.5 percent, and between 1990 and 2000 that increase jumped to 24 percent, nearly three times the rate of state~~more than doubled. However, growth ~~(Table 2.2). The~~has since leveled off, and the most recent 2020 Census reported a slight decline in Bakersfield's population ~~continued to grow between 2000 and 2010 to a total of 1322.~~



~~Table 2.1: Populations Trends for Bakersfield and its Surrounding Areas~~	
-	~~Actual~~

	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010
State of Vermont	444,731	511,466	562,767	608,827	625,741
Franklin County	31,281	34,788	39,980	45,417	47,746
Bakersfield	635	852	977	1,215	1,322
Fletcher	456	626	941	1,179	1,277
Fairfield	1,285	1,493	1,680	1,800	1,891
Enosburg	1,918	2,070	2,535	2,788	2,781
Montgomery	651	681	823	992	1,201
St. Albans City	8,082	7,308	7,339	7,650	6,918
St. Albans Town	3,170	3,555	4,606	5,324	5,999
Lamoille County	13,309	16,767	19,735	23,233	24,475
Belvidere	189	218	228	294	348
Waterville	397	470	532	697	673
Data Soure: U.S. Census					

Table 2.3: Percent Change in Number of Households, and Housing Units 1980-2000

	Households			Housing Units			2010
	1980-1990	1990-2000	2000-2010	1980-1990	1990-2000	2000-2010	
Bakersfield	29.2%	27.3%	12.8%	19.3%	21.5%	16.3%	
Fletcher	37.3%	38.3%			25.3%		8.3%
Fairfield	16.2%		12.5%		7.1%		5.1%
Franklin County	23.7%	17.0%	10.4%	19.3%	11.3%	12.5%	
Enosburgh	7.9%		22.5%		10.0%		0.3%
Vermont	18.1%	14.2%	6.6%	21.5%	8.5%	9.6%	
Montpelier	4.6%		0.9%				21.1%
St. Albans City	-9.6%		0.4%		4.2%		-9.6%

Data Source: US Census

As the population of Bakersfield has increased, so too have the number of households and housing units (Table 2.3). The percent increase in the number of households and housing units for the Town is greater than the figures for the county and for the state. The rate of growth in the number of households and housing units has declined between 1980 and 2010. The average household size held relatively steady at in between1990 (2.83 persons/household) and 2000 (2.77 persons/household). The average household size decreased in 2010 to 2.25 person/household. This reflects trends both county and statewide.

Table 2.4: Age Structure Comparison in Bakersfield and its Surrounding Areas

-	Year	% of Pop < 18 yrs	% of Pop 18-64 yrs	% of P	
Belvidere	1980	25	55		
Bakersfield	1990	21	59		
Waterville	2000	31	61	9	37.7
-	2010	28.5	61.7	9.9	39.2
Franklin County	1980	33	56	11	28.9
-	1990	29	60	11	31.7

Data Source: U.S. Census

Definitions:

A Housing Unit is a house, an apartment, a mobile home, a group of rooms, or a single room that serves as a separate living quarters.

-	2000	28.1	60.9	11	35.7
-	2010	27	61	12.2	38.9
State of Vermont	1980	28.4	60.2	11.4	29.4
-	1990	25.9	62.3	11.8	33
-	2000	24.2	63.1	12.7	37.7
-	2010	24	61.5	14.5	41.5
Source: US Census	-	-	-	-	-

Age Distribution

The median age in 2010 for the residents of Bakersfield was 39.2 years. This age is up from 37.7 in 2000 and 29.4 in 1980 (Table 2.4), but is comparable to the median age of Franklin County and

Figure 1.2: Population Change Since 1970, Bakersfield and Surrounding Area

Data source: U.S. Census

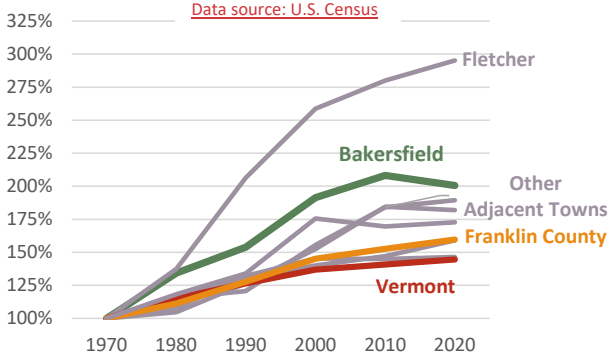


Figure 1.3: Median Age, 1980-2020

Data source: U.S. Census

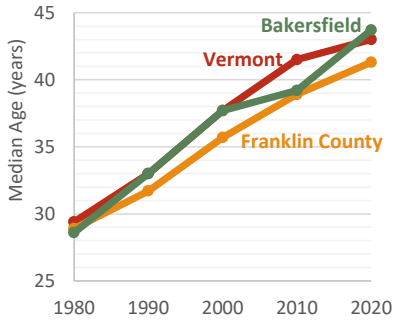
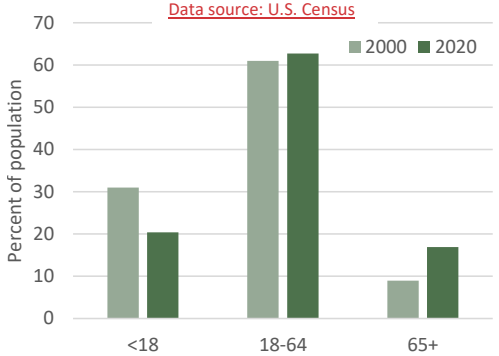


Figure 1.4: Bakersfield Population by Age Group, 2000-2020

Data source: U.S. Census



~~*Vermont residents, 38.9 years and 41.5 years, respectively. Bakersfield, Franklin County, and the state of Vermont have all seen an increase in their median ages since 1980. As in*~~*Age*

Like many towns in Vermont, the population of Bakersfield is aging. ~~The percent~~In 2020, the median age for Bakersfield residents was 43.7 years. This number has increased by over 15 years since 1980, a similar trend to Franklin County and Vermont as a whole. Bakersfield's 18-64 population has remained mostly steady since 2000, while the percentage of individuals under the age of eighteen has declined ~~since 1980, while the percent of the population between the ages of eighteen and 64 has seen a slight increase. Bakersfield has actually seen the population of those~~and the percentage age 65 and older ~~than 65 years remain steady since 1980~~has increased.

Additional Data

More data is available in the following chapters:

Households and housing units: pg. 69 (Housing Chapter)

Employment, income and educational status: pg. 74 (Economic Development Chapter)

Special Populations

The US Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS) provides information about the number of people with various levels and types of disabilities. The percentage of ~~. Data for disabled persons between the ages of 5 and 15 years old is no longer available for Bakersfield via the census, but was higher than previous county and state averages in the past (8.3 percent in 2000).~~ Bakersfield's population with a disability is 14%, roughly the same percentage as in Franklin County ~~(5.1 percent)~~ and ~~the state of~~ Vermont ~~(5.8 percent) have lower percentages as of 2012 per the American Community Survey (Table 2.5). Bakersfield has a higher percentage of disabled persons over the age of 65 (42.2 percent) as compared with the County (41.1 percent) and the state (34.6 percent).~~

~~Table 2.5: Percentage of Population by Age with Disability Status~~			
~~-~~	~~5-15 years old~~	~~16-64 years old~~	~~65 and over~~
~~Vermont~~	~~5.8%~~	~~11.0%~~	~~34.6%~~
~~Franklin County~~	~~5.1%~~	~~14.0%~~	~~41.1%~~
~~Bakersfield~~	~~Not Available~~	~~11.5%~~	~~42.2%~~
~~Source: 2008-2012 American Community Survey~~			

~~**Income and Economy**~~

~~Historically, the Bakersfield economy has relied heavily on agriculture, forestry and education. According to the 2012 American Community Survey, 716 Bakersfield residents age 18 and older are working. Of these, only 6 percent made their living through farm, forestry or mining occupations. (Figure 2.2).~~ More ~~than 23 percent of Bakersfield residents reported health care, education or social services. This represents a significant shift in the economy of Bakersfield and~~ specific information on disability status in Bakersfield is ~~expected~~difficult to obtain due to ~~continue in~~ the ~~coming years~~small sample size of the ACS.

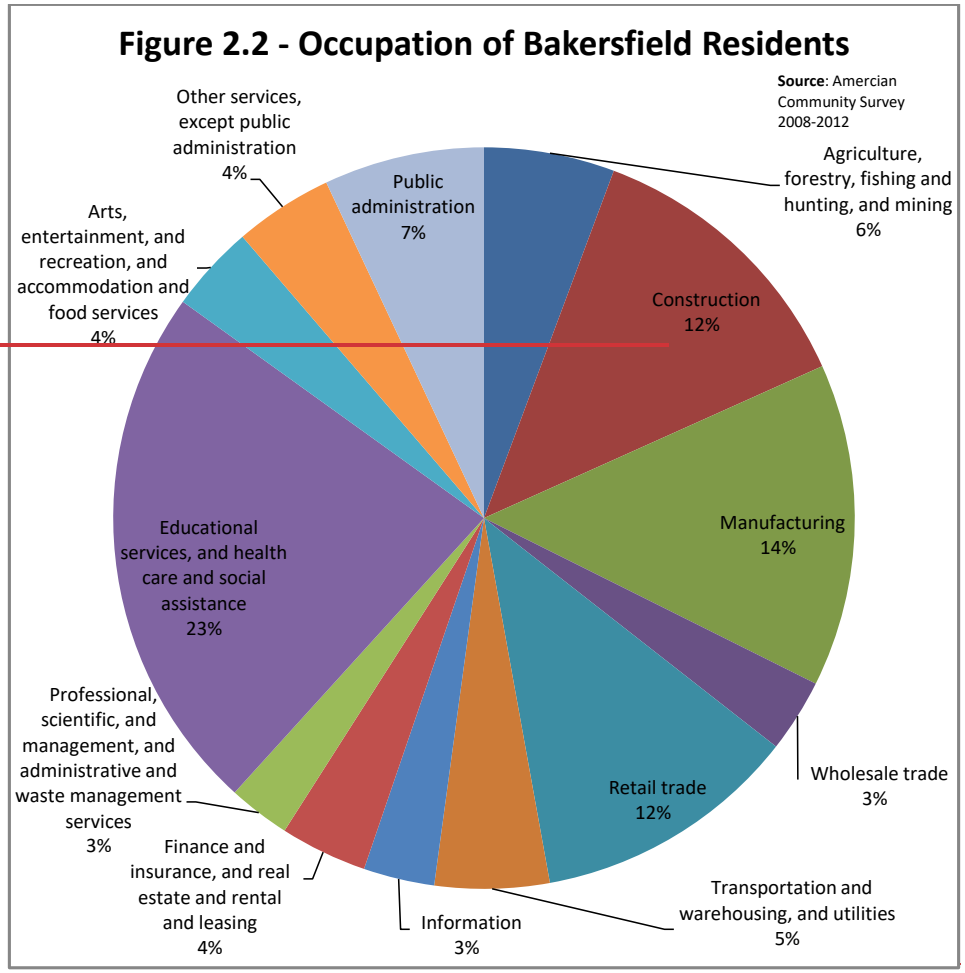


Figure 2.2 - Occupation of Bakersfield Residents
Source: Amercian Community Survey 2008-2012
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining 6%
Construction 12%
Manufacturing 14%
Wholesale trade 3%
Retail trade 12%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities 5%
Information 3%
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing 4%
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services 3%
Educational services, and health care and social assistance 23%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services 4%
Other services, except public administration 4%
Public administration 7%

The median household income for Bakersfield was slightly above the median household income for both Franklin County and for Vermont in 1989, but by 1999 had dropped to be slightly below and remains there as of 2012 (Table 2.6). The percent change in median household income in Bakersfield from 1999 to 2012 was significantly higher than that of Franklin County (62 percent as compared with 59 percent). Despite the fact that Bakersfield has a lower median income, the Town has a lower percentage of families with incomes below the poverty level (8.1 percent) as compared to the County (8.2 percent).

Table 2.6: Median Household Income and Percent Change & Percent of Families Below Poverty Level

-	Median Household Income & Percent Change				Poverty Level and Percent Change		
-	1989	1999	2012	% change 1999-2012	% families below poverty level 1999	% families below poverty level 2012	% Increase
Bakersfield	$29,946	$40,417	$65,481	62%	6.12%	8.10%	1.98%
Franklin County	$28,401	$41,659	$66,186	59%	7.00%	8.20%	1.20%
Vermont	$29,792	$40,856	$69,033	69%	6.30%	7.30%	1.00%

Source: US Census of Population 1980-2000 and American Community Survey 2008-2012

~~Chapter 3.~~

2. HISTORIC AND ~~ARCHAEOLOGICAL~~ARCHEOLOGICAL RESOURCES~~1~~

Goals

- **To preserve important historic and archaeological resources in Bakersfield**
- **To recognize and respect Bakersfield's rich history in decisions regarding land use and development**

Policies

1. **Protect sites of archaeological and/or historical significance**
2. **Encourage the adaptive reuse of the Brigham Academy and other historic buildings to meet the needs of the Bakersfield community.**
3. **Encourage efforts to secure grants and raise funds for the preservation of historic and archaeological resources**
4. **Identify sites of potential archaeological and/or historical significance, and produce a document and map that locates and describes these sites**
5. **Encourage appropriate design and land use compatible with the historic character of the village**
6. **Encourage the planting of trees in the schoolyard and parks, and throughout the town**

Town History

~~The town of~~ Bakersfield ~~was originally chartered as Knowlton's Gore~~has a rich history, which is summarized in ~~1787. Approximately~~ this chapter beginning on the next page. Much of the text in this chapter was compiled by Nancy Hunt (1934-2020), who was a founding member of the

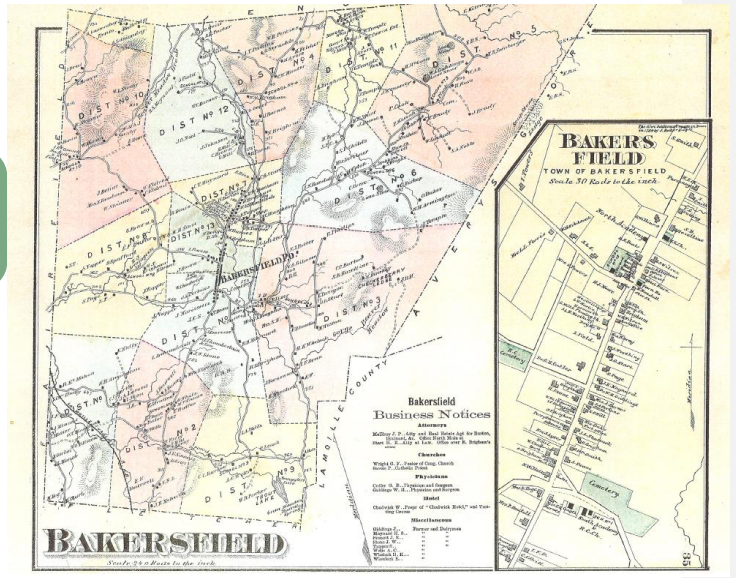
~~[1] Special thanks to Nancy Hunt for all of her work in compiling this chapter.~~

Bakersfield Historical Society.

Abenaki, Mahican and Iroquois people have lived in the area for thousands of years. The European settlement of Bakersfield began in the late 1700s.

1791: Charter granted by the State of Vermont

- 10,000 acres of land were granted to Luke Knowlton, a land surveyor~~.~~ ~~Soon after the charter was signed by Governor Thomas Chittenden on January 25, 1791, Knowlton~~, who then sold ~~the~~ ~~land~~it to Joseph Baker, a settler from a well-to-do family in Westboro, Massachusetts. ~~In 1792, part of adjoining Fairfield and Smithfield lying to the south and west of the present-day village common and St. George Cemetery, respectively, were annexed to Bakersfield.~~



Starting in 1800, Bakersfield's population began to grow rapidly. Over the next 50 years, the Town would grow from 200 residents to over 1,500. Many were families who emigrated from areas near Boston.

~~**Between 1800 and 1850 the population of Bakersfield increased from 222 to an all-time high of 1,523 inhabitants. By**~~ **1839**~~**, some of the early families who had emigrated from areas around Boston realized that their children and grandchildren needed more than the 8th grade education provided by the town's 12 school districts if they were to succeed in the rapidly changing economy of the mid-19th century.**~~ **: Bakersfield's first Secondary School, South Academy, is founded**

- Thirty-one townspeople contributed sums ranging from ten to seventy-five dollars to build South Academy (~~later St. George Church 1885-1977, and~~today's Bakersfield Historical Society ~~1997-present). The officers of the Bakersfield Academical Association hired Jacob Spaulding, a graduate of Dartmouth College, as the first headmaster/teacher (1840-1852). The catalogue of 1850 in the Historical Society's collection lists~~building). At its peak the school had 361 students from all over Vermont, New York, New England and Quebec~~, along~~

~~with the houses where they~~ who took room and board for $1.25 per week~~. Some of these~~ in Greek Revival houses ~~with their continuous additions~~along Main Street (some of which are still standing ~~along Main Street~~ today~~.~~).

- **1844: North Academy founded**
  - In 1844, the Methodists built a second academy, North Academy on a hill across the road from the Methodist Church ~~**(its frame structure deteriorated and was torn down years ago). They hired the Rev. H.J. Moore, a noted classical scholar from New**~~

This 1871 Beers Map shows the even distribution of the population in farms throughout the thirteen districts of Bakersfield and a concentration of residents in the village center.

In the mid-19th century, meeting the demand for goods and services needed by the student population brought economic prosperity to an otherwise agricultural town. Two stages a day made round trips to St. Albans. The instructors and graduates who continued to live in Bakersfield enhanced the cultural environment of the community for years.

~~**York State as its principal.**~~. The two academies competed for excellence and established Bakersfield as an exceptional center for secondary education in northern Vermont ~~**in the mid-19th century. Meeting the demand for goods and services needed by the student population brought economic prosperity to an otherwise agricultural town. Two stages a day made round trips to St. Albans. The instructors and graduates who continued to live in Bakersfield enhanced the cultural environment of the community for years.**~~.

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~~Even though Bakersfield experienced its first decline in population during and after the Civil War (1861-1865) the percentage of Irish and French Canadian residents was increasing. The drop in student enrollment at South Academy driven by the war and the availability of other secondary school opportunities in northern Vermont provided a place for the Roman Catholics to worship. Beginning in 1867 the Congregation of St. George bought South Academy floor by~~

~~floor until they owned the whole building in 1885. In 1906 the parishioners had transformed the post and beam Greek Revival school house and belfry into the neo Gothic church that today is the home of the Bakersfield Historical Society. In 1865, the Congregation of St. George also purchased a burial ground, which continues today as the Catholic Cemetery in Bakersfield, located at the head of the Avenue (West Street). Figure 3.1 shows the development patterns, including the boundaries of Bakersfield's 13 school districts, in 1871.~~

During and after the Civil War (1861-1865), Bakersfield experienced its first decline in population, while the percentage of Irish and French Canadian residents increased.

~~When~~ **1867: South Academy converted into St. George Catholic Church**

1877: Brigham Academy established

- Peter Bent Brigham died in 1877, leaving a bequest of $30,000 for the improvement of education, and the townspeople voted to build a high school ~~**instead of dividing the funds among the 13 school districts.**~~ . Their decision was encouraged by Sarah Brigham Jacobs, his widowed sister, who purchased a tract of land in the village for the academy. The building was completed and dedicated in August 1879~~**, with President Buckham of the University of Vermont and almost 1000 people in attendance. When Sarah Jacobs died in 1891, she left an endowment of $100,000 that strengthened the school's financial resources as well as providing seven scholarships for graduates to attend the University of Vermont.**~~ . The north wing, built in 1900, doubled the size of the building~~**; it included a gymnasium for fitness training as well as four laboratories and classrooms to meet the needs of increased enrollment with an emphasis on scientific curriculum.**~~ .



Brigham Academy as it was constructed in 1879.

~~**The completion of the**~~**1877: St. Johnsbury and Lamoille County Railroad** ~~**in 1877, with a**~~**completed**

- A depot only a few miles away in East Fairfield~~**,**~~ provided convenient transportation for Brigham Academy students and their families, as well as access to larger markets across northern Vermont and beyond for local merchants, tradesmen and farmers.

- ~~By~~ 1878: Telegraph line reaches Bakersfield ~~residents received messages and news over a telegraph line~~
    - Line went from East Fairfield to the home of Mrs. Bradley Brigham (site of the present library) because she had learned Morse code. ~~-~~In 1899 that line was replaced with a telephone line to a public phone in the J.A. Perkins Variety Store (now an apartment block on Main Street opposite the Avenue). ~~Electrical power was available in the village in Bakersfield in 1924.~~



St. George Catholic Church, today's Bakersfield Historical Society building.

~~Bakersfield, in spite of a 43% decrease in resident population between 1870 and 1940, was a vibrant, self sufficient and prosperous community. The influx of students (as many as 160 in 1900) paid room and board in private homes, supported local stores and services, and entertained the townspeople with concerts, drama productions, athletic competitions, and literary publications. There were two venues for presentations and celebrations, one in the second floor auditorium of the Academy and the second, after 1909, on the second floor of the Town Hall for local gatherings. The latter had a curtain painted by C. Andrus for its stage. The town gave it to the Vermont Historical Society several years ago. There was a trotting park behind the Catholic cemetery where residents could train and race their horses. An elegant hearse carriage, now on display at the Shelburne Museum, was available to carry the deceased to a free burial plot in the village cemetery. It was stored in the rear of the Queen Anne style hearse house that had been built for it in 1890.~~

- ~~Agriculture flourished throughout Bakersfield until the middle of the 20th century. The earliest farms were self~~ 1888: Agricultural Census lists over 100 farms in Bakersfield

Earlier farms were self-sufficient sources of food including grains and livestock for family use with small surpluses to barter or sell. ~~There was a saw and grist mill on Browns Pond in the north and a tannery. Until the War of 1812, there was a market in Canada (Great Britain) for ship building timbers and potash salts, both by products of clearing the land. Cattle, especially oxen were prevalent, for hauling carts and clearing land. By the mid 19th~~

Despite a 43% decrease in resident population between 1870 and 1940, Bakersfield was a vibrant, self-sufficient and prosperous community. The influx of students (as many as 160 in 1900) paid room and board in private homes, supported local stores and services, and entertained the townspeople with concerts, drama productions, athletic competitions, and literary publications.

~~century when Bakersfield's population reached its peak, there were almost four times as many sheep as people. Farmers from earliest times boiled maple sap for sugar at first on arches in the woods and later in sugar houses.~~

~~It wasn't until after~~After the Civil War ~~(1861-1865) that farmers~~, farms began specializing in dairy cattle. ~~Child's agricultural census (1888) lists over 100 farms in Bakersfield with an average of 18 cows, which were distributed evenly throughout the town. Jersey cows were the preferred breed because of the high butterfat content for butter and cheese production. Resident laborers, tradesmen, farriers, blacksmiths, harness makers, cattle brokers, and doctors were readily available.~~ Over time, many local businesses such as tanneries, creameries, ~~slaughter houses~~slaughterhouses, farm implement and feed stores provided the infrastructure needed for a strong agricultural economy.



~~***The Malone Farm in East Bakersfield includes an 1850 house on the left and a high bank dairy built in 1890 on the right. Horses pulled hay wagons piled high with loose hay up the ramp or wharf. Hay was packed into the sides of the loft and dropped down to the dairy***~~

~~A decline in agriculture accelerated during the 20th century due to technological change and state/federal regulations. The availability of electricity and gas-powered machinery in the 1930's, though extremely beneficial to the lifestyle of farmers, often brought financial challenges to the sustainability of Bakersfield's farms. Refrigerated storage elevators, rail cars and trucks required capitalization and centralized processing that in turn caused dependence on a commodity market for fluid milk.~~

~~Today, there are five dairy farms in Bakersfield, including one very large operation with a methane digester on the northern boundary with Enosburgh. There is a growing number of small farms engaged in livestock and local/organic food production. Many maple sugar producers process and market their own syrup. There are also three tree farms that raise and sell Christmas trees. Increasingly, landowners with timber and open land not enrolled in current use are selling lots for development.~~

~~Except for loss by fire, many of the historic houses, public buildings, and barns in Bakersfield remain intact. The cultural dynamic, however, has changed dramatically in the last 50 years from a self-sufficient and vibrant community to that of a bedroom town. During the 1950's the dirt road to St. Albans was paved and became State Highway 36: Rte 108 was straightened and paved. By the end of the decade, a growing number of Bakersfield residents found better paying jobs at IBM in Essex and St. Albans as well as access to more goods and services. The completion of Interstate 89 to the Canadian border during the 1960's accelerated the daily exodus from the town.~~

"The automobile has changed many things… The cars whisk people off to work every morning…People used to sit on their porches to see their neighbors. Now, they look out at the forests and mountains behind their houses and have outdoor cookouts and picnics… There are two general stores where once there were five, but you can buy many things you never could before and at fairer prices…The town had two doctors. Now townsfolk go to the two hospitals in St. Albans…"

-- Elise Wells, *Bakersfield: The Way It Was* (1976)

During the 1950s and 60s, the automobile brought changes to Bakersfield. A growing number of residents found access to more goods and services in St. Albans, Essex, and elsewhere. The cultural dynamic changed from a self-sufficient and vibrant community to that of a bedroom town.

~~**In**~~

1950s: The dirt road to St. Albans is paved and becomes Rt. 36. Rt. 108 is paved and widened.

1967~~the~~: The town ~~voted~~votes not to make the state-mandated improvements to Brigham Academy, and it ~~was closed~~closes as a high school.~~ The academy building has been vacant since the~~

- A new K-8 school was built in 1987, and the Brigham Academy building has remained vacant since. The flow of students that had formerly brought prosperity and vitality to the village reversed course and left each ~~week day~~weekday for Enosburg, BFA in St. Albans or Essex.

Commented [A4]: Sentence structure is a bit confusing- reads like the K-8 building is vacant

Most of the population growth since the 1970s has occurred in the rural areas of town, especially to the north and east of the village. The improved highways that enabled long time Bakersfield residents to leave the town for better jobs, goods and services also allowed people from Chittenden County to move to Bakersfield and commute to their jobs. Landowners with timber and open land sold lots for residential development to meet this demand. Even though the population has doubled, commercial activity in the village is limited. **Many of the historic houses, public buildings, and barns in Bakersfield remain intact.**

~~Elise Wells in her history of Bakersfield (1976, pp 120-121) noted how "the automobile has changed many things… The cars whisk people off to work every morning…People used to sit on their porches to see their neighbors. Now, they look out at the forests and mountains behind their houses and have outdoor cookouts and picnics… There are two general stores where once there were five, but you can buy many things you never could before and at fairer prices…The town had two doctors. Now townsfolk go to the two hospitals in St. Albans…"~~

~~Even though the population has doubled since the 1970's, commercial activity in the village is limited, mostly to support commuters and weekend recreation. There are two convenience stores with limited takeout, one of which has gas pumps, two car repair shops, and a sales and service business for recreational vehicles.~~

~~Most community activities are focused on fund raising and take place in the school cafeteria/gymnasium. The town meeting luncheon and bereavement receptions are held in the Historical Society building. For many years the fire department has sponsored Homeland Days in September with a parade down Main Street that is followed by a chicken barbecue, musical entertainment, cow plop, and games on the B Brigham lawn. In 2009, the town sponsored Bakersfield's own 4th of July celebration with activities on the village green, street dancing and fireworks by the town garage. This continues today, and Homeland Days was merged with the 4th of July in 2015.~~

~~Most of the population growth since the 1970's has occurred in the rural areas of town especially to the north and east of the village. The improved highways that enabled long time Bakersfield residents to leave the town for better jobs, goods and services also provided urban dwellers in Chittenden County and beyond greater access to former farms and large tracts of woodland at a relatively low cost. Increasingly, due to recent price increases, landowners with timber and open land not enrolled in current use are selling lots for development.~~

More information on the Town's history is available from the Bakersfield Historical Society at historicbakersfieldvt.org.



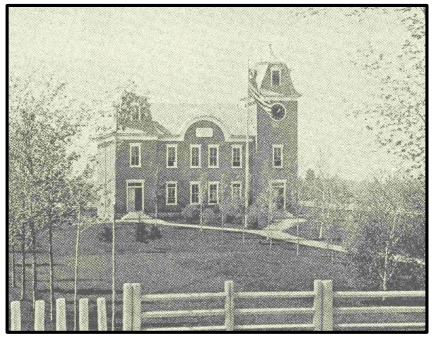
Since 2009, the Town has sponsored Bakersfield's own 4th of July celebration with activities on the village green, a parade, and fireworks by the town garage.

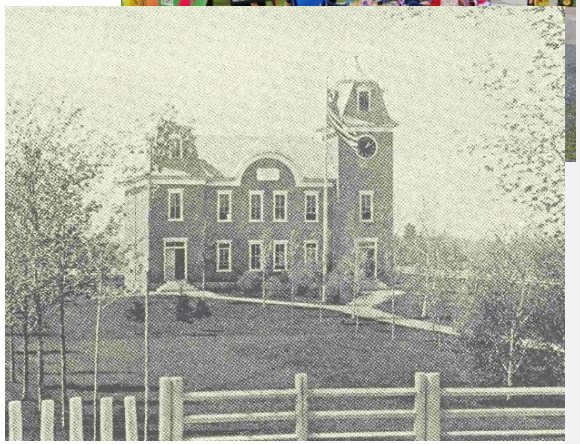


Historic Resources

Historical cultural and archaeological resources are irreplaceable and provide a sense of continuity between the past and the present and help us identify who we are. It is important to preserve and promote these resources whenever possible.

The Bakersfield Historical Society was established in 1997 as a 501(c)(3) non-profit cultural and educational organization dedicated to community awareness and the preservation of Bakersfield's heritage. A grant from the Vermont Museum and Gallery Alliance guided the organization in developing a collection management policy to properly conserve its extensive archive relating to the people, places, things and events in Bakersfield. The Historical Society has the only existing comprehensive collection of Brigham Academy catalogues, programs, photographs, and literary publications.





The Brigham Academy as it was constructed in 1879. Credit: Bakersfield Historical Society

They reveal the quality and extent of the academy's curriculum and student activities including athletics, plays and musicals. -The building is open ~~on a regular basis from May to October or~~ by appointment. ~~The Board of Directors meets~~Members meet monthly to plan programs and exhibits that have included participation in the Vermont History Expo. -It publishes four newsletters a year and depends upon memberships, donations and fundraisers to maintain its building for community use.

State and National Historic Register

There are over 100 ~~public~~ buildings, houses and barns in the town of Bakersfield that are listed on the Vermont State Register of Historic Structures (as conducted in 1985). The full list of structures on the State Register is included in Appendix A of the Town Plan. So far, two of these structures are also listed on the National Register of Historic Places and one ~~nomination~~structure is ~~pending~~potentially eligible.

- ***Brigham Academy (listed 1995~~),~~):*** The Brigham Academy Restoration Plan, completed in 1995, found that the building continues to be structurally sound and with proper renovation would be appropriate for educational and community services, or potentially elderly housing. So far, the clock/bell tower has been repaired and the roof replaced with grants from the Preservation Trust of Vermont/Vermont Division of Historic Preservation and the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board (VHCB), respectively. -In 2003, voters approved the Brigham Academy agreement at a warned joint meeting of the Bakersfield Town and School district to renovate 75 percent of the building for school use and 25 percent for town use. -The VHCB holds an easement to retain the front lawn of the Academy building as an open space including its alley of maple trees. A Municipal Planning Grant from the Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development was used in 2012 to assess the Academy Building for future renovation. The architectural firm conducting the assessment reported the foundation and other infrastructure were sound enough for complete or partial renovation of the building for future uses. In 2013, the Board of the Bakersfield Elementary and Middle School voted to sell its share of the Academy to the Town. Execution of this sale was completed in September 2014. As of 2026, the Town of Bakersfield has a purchase and sales option with a firm to convert the building into senior housing.

- ***South Academy/St. George's Church (listed 2001~~).~~):*** Saving the South Academy/St. George's Church from demolition was the first project of the Bakersfield Historical Society. ~~-~~Taxpayers provided $10,000 as seed money so that funds could be raised through grants (Preservation Trust of Vermont, Vermont Division of Historic Preservation, and the Vermont State Legislature via the Cultural Facilities Coalition) as well as a capital campaign to repair the hand-hewn post and beam structure and bell tower, replace the roof and chimney, upgrade the lighting and electrical systems, install a kitchen as well as a code compliant bathroom and handicapped ramp. ~~-~~The masonry on the main building still needs to be repaired and the newer bricks on the 1906 addition need to be replaced. The Bakersfield Historical Society is currently located in the building.



The historic hearse house (1890) sits in the village cemetery, while its carriage is on display at the Shelburne Museum.

- ***Hearse House (~~nomination pending~~).potentially eligible):*** The Hearse House, owned by the Town and maintained by the Bakersfield Cemetery Commission, ~~has been~~was nominated by the UVM Historic Preservation Program for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. ~~Reportedly it~~It is a unique funerary structure; its elegant hearse carriage that was stored in the rear is on display at the Shelburne Museum. ~~Currently its windows are broken and the beam between the front rooms and the rear garage needs to be replaced.~~ The Cemetery Commission uses the space for storage of cemetery benches and urns; the mower is stored in the rear. ~~One year~~The outside was repainted by high school students ~~painted it~~ as part of a Community Service project.

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Other ~~significant sites:~~ Significant Sites

Residents and visitors entering Bakersfield from the South on ~~Rte~~Rt. 108 are welcomed to Bakersfield at the Fletcher line by ~~an~~a historic ~~farm stead (see frontispiece).~~ farmstead. Two other barns reveal changes in agricultural technology that took place during the 19th and 20th centuries. ~~-~~Old Stage Road on the east side of Town is an ancient road that continues up Kings Hill past stone foundations to the District 9 School House.

A concentration of mostly historic village houses begins with the Daniel Dean place across from Larry's Tree Farm and continues north to the landmark federal brick houses at the four corners. -To the east is a row of public buildings:- Town Hall (1909) with its paneled and tin-clad interior, Congregational Church (1845) and South Academy (1840; remodeled 1906)/Bakersfield Historical Society. -This road continues out to East Bakersfield and the historic Malone farm (1850, 1890~~).)~~, Cook Cemetery and more.

Main Street continues north on ~~Rte~~Rt. 108 past the village cemetery/hearse house/village common, and the iconic Brigham Academy building (1879/1900) with its deep lawn and alley of maple trees.- Across Main St. to the east is the town library (1950) as well as a row of mostly historic and well maintained private houses on both sides of the street. -The Methodist Church (1854) ~~and the Hazeltine house (1800) mark~~marks the northern end of the historic village, yet a keen eye will spot other houses on the Vermont State Register on the east side of the road until its end at the Albert Brigham house at the fork. -There are many historic ~~farm houses~~farmhouses, including two stone houses, the site of the former Johnson saw mill and more on the Joyal and Witchcat roads. -There are many historic farms and barns along Egypt and Lawyer roads as well.

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There are many other historic buildings and landmarks in Bakersfield not included on the historic register. -Smaller landscape features that often go unnoticed are increasingly considered of historic value and importance. -These include old barns and outbuildings~~;~~, stone walls, corner stones, markers, ~~and~~ "witness trees~~;" and~~," old apple orchards ~~and~~, lilac bushes planted around former homesteads, and clumps of orange day lilies.- 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 in 1994 published Stonewalls and Cellarholes: a Guide for Landowners on Historic Features and Landscapes in Vermont's Forests.

~~In 1990 a~~A study conducted by UVM's historic preservation program found that incremental changes over time, including cumulative alterations to historic structures, and the abandonment, deterioration and demolition of outbuildings and barns, ~~had~~have a profound impact on historic character and significance. ~~They noted~~It notes that the removal of agricultural buildings in particular ~~suggested the~~suggests a failure to connect the preservation of buildings with the preservation of rural and community character. -In Bakersfield, many historic homes and farms are under

private ownership.- There is currently little incentive or financial assistance to encourage the preservation of these structures. -The Vermont Division of Historic Preservation does offer grants of up to $~~10~~20,000 for the restoration and repair of historic agricultural buildings.

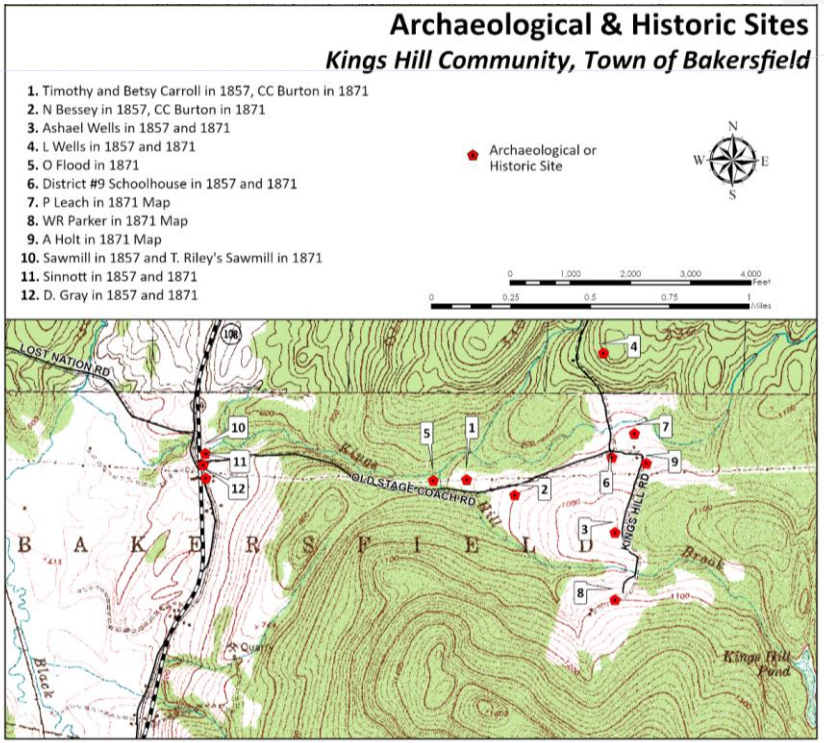
In 2011, Bakersfield was granted ~~Village~~ Center designation by the Vermont Department of Housing and Community ~~Affairs~~Development. This gives the Town and residents access to tax credits for ~~various improvements~~historic preservation projects in the village center. In 2026, Bakersfield also received a Neighborhood designation that gives additional benefits to the area immediately surrounding the village. More information on the designation program is available in the Economic Development chapter.

Commented [A8]: Needs to be updated with the new FLU designations Center & Neighborhood

Archaeological Resources

Figure 2.1: Archaeological and Historic Sites in the King's Hill Area

Archaeological resources provide evidence of human habitation ~~dating~~starting from prehistoric times. ~~-~~A number of important archaeological sites have been found in Northwest Vermont.~~-~~ These include evidence of several types of prehistoric habitation and use, including villages, hunting and fishing camps, trails and trade networks, and burial grounds. ~~-~~Other archaeological sites include remnants of historic settlement and use, such as old foundations and cellar holes; quarry, mill, kiln and foundry sites, and unmarked cemeteries and roads. ~~-~~Although these sites are often buried and no longer visible on the land, they are nevertheless important for the story they tell of the collective past of the area.



The Division for Historic Preservation maintains listings of known archaeological sites within the state, which is made available on a "need to know" basis in order to protect their integrity. ~~-As of 1995,~~At least 312 recorded archaeological sites ~~were~~have been identified in Franklin County.~~-~~ This figure likely represents only a small fraction of all significant sites in the region, since intensive investigation of site locations has not been undertaken. Archaeological sites are protected under state and federal law, including Act 250, the Vermont Historic Preservation Act (22 VSA, Chapter 14), and under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

For planning purposes the Division has identified more broadly defined "sensitive areas," using modeling based on known site conditions, in which archaeological sites are known or expected to occur. ~~-~~These include a 200 foot buffer along all major rivers and tributaries in the region, particularly in the vicinity of major confluences, and the Lake Champlain shoreland, which is considered highly sensitive. ~~-~~Development in known or anticipated sensitive areas should be reviewed with particular attention given to the possibility of buried sites. ~~-Vermont's Archaeological Heritage, prepared for the Division of Historic Preservation in 1988,~~The Vermont Archeological Society estimates that most of Vermont's archaeological sites have not

Commented [A9]: And more recent times? E.g. much evidence of Abenaki settlements is from much more recent time period

yet been found.- A Predictive Model, developed by the State Agency of Transportation, has greatly improved the ability to predict where historic and prehistoric sites are likely to be found.



In Bakersfield, the Kings Hill area in the southeastern portion of town has a notable number of cellar holes and stone foundations along Stage Coach Road and at the junction with Kings Hill Road. -These sites provide intact archaeological evidence of a 19th century community that is described on 1857 Wallings Wall map and 1871 Beers Atlas. -This area includes the high fieldstone wall of the C. Bessey stage coach inn and the foundation of Betsey and Timothy Carroll's farmstead (Betsey Carroll's papers are in the Vermont Historical Society Collection). -In this same vicinity, the District No. 9 schoolhouse still stands intact, and serves as a camp to a local forester. -On Kings Hill Road ~~is~~are the ~~complete farmstead in~~ fieldstone foundations of Lucien ~~Wells~~Wells' complete farmstead, including a farmhouse, barn, silo, and ~~a~~ well.

There are also anecdotal accounts of cellar holes and other artifacts in the area of East Bakersfield and Sornborger Place, but they are not as significant as the Kings Hill area. -The Sornborger papers are available in the "Special Collections" at the University of Vermont.

Right: The former District No. 9 schoolhouse is evidence of the settlement that was once in the King's Hill area. Credit: Nancy Hunt

Below: Evidence of the Wells farmstead built ca. 1845 and burned in 1934 can still be found in the King's Hill area. Credit: Bakersfield Historical Society





3. COMMUNITY ~~UTILITIES, FACILITIES AND~~ SERVICES AND SPACES

Goals

- To provide municipal services and facilities that adequately support~~protect~~ the health, safety and welfare of the people of Bakersfield.
- ~~To provide for the physical safety of residents with high quality fire, emergency medical, and law enforcement services~~
- To promote communication of Bakersfield residents with each other and with a wider community.
- To provide code-compliant interior spaces that support community activities.
- To provide exemplary educational services to the children of Bakersfield.
- To broaden access to educational and vocational training opportunities sufficient to ensure the full realization of the abilities of all Vermonters.
- To promote ~~ensure that regulation of land development in Bakersfield does not negatively impact the availability of~~ safe and affordable childcare in Bakersfield.

Policies

Overall

~~Look ahead and predict the town's future needs in regard to public facilities and services based on patterns of growth and development~~Ensure that the town's utilities, facilities and services have sufficient capacity and quality to accommodate the rate of growth.

- ~~Consider other growth control measures, including development of a capital budget, a yearly limit on the maximum number of building permits, and phasing of building construction, to reduce the impact of development on municipal services~~

1.
2. Identify and plan for municipal equipment and facilities that need replacement, retrofit, or upgrade and develop methods of financing the replacement. This may include a capital budget and program or similarly effective method.~~Identify equipment and facilities that need to be upgraded and develop methods of financing the replacements.~~

~~•~~

3. Evaluate the extension of municipal services based on system adequacy, ~~and~~ fiscal feasibility and supporting the patterns of growth outlined in the Land Use chapter.

Additional policies related to specific services are listed throughout the chapter.

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Publicly funded community services and spaces provide for the health, safety and well-being of Bakersfield residents. ~~Facilities and services are provided by a municipality for the benefit of its residents and are supported by the community as a shared responsibility.~~ In a small, rural community such as Bakersfield, the ability to provide a broad range of municipal services is limited. To address the need for services, ~~However, with continued growth and development there is increasing demand for these services. To address this demand,~~ the T~~t~~own P~~p~~lan includes a goal of establishing ~~public polices~~policies that balance development with the town's ability to provide services. These policies may include managing the timing of development so that town services can keep pace, or ways to increase services to make sure they continue to meet the needs of the community. ~~.~~

~~Municipal Utilities and Services~~

~~*Municipal Water*~~Water and Wastewater

Policies

- **1. Explore opportunities to provide shared ~~coordinate in the provision of~~ septic services for buildings within the village core.**
- **2. Consider if and when a municipal wastewater system would be appropriate and cost effective to service the village area. Consider purchasing or conserving land near the Village for a leach field.**
- **3. Ensure that the municipal water system continues to provide adequate, healthy, clean drinking water for village residents and that the water supply remains public and is not privatized.**
- **4. Consider opportunities to expand access to the public water system.**

Water

Bakersfield has a municipal water system, under the jurisdiction of Fire District #1, located on Kings Hill southeast of the village. There is a 120,000-gallon concrete reservoir located northwest of the village. Access to the municipal water system is limited to areas closest to the village. The most recent upgrade was in 2007, when an additional well and pump was added, covered by a rate increase. ~~In order to continue to meet demand, the Fire District identified a need for an additional well and pump for the water system. In 2007, the Fire District raised their rates in order to cover the cost of this upgrade.~~ It is the goal of the Fire District to ensure a safe and unchlorinated water supply.

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The Bakersfield Zoning Bylaws designate a protective zone, the "Aquifer Overlay District" around the source of the municipal drinking water supply. This zone is consistent with the source water protection area identified by the state of Vermont Drinking Water Supply Division. No new construction is permitted in this district in order to protect the quality of the community drinking water.

For residents not on the village water system, Bakersfield can be a difficult area to find a reliable water supply. In recent years, residents in the East Bakersfield Road area outside the village have had problems with running out of water in private wells. The Town should consider opportunities to expand access to the public water system, including drilling a second well if necessary to meet demand.



The Methodist Church (1854), a well-preserved historic building, is at risk because it lacks sufficient land for a septic system as well as space for parking.

WastewaterSewage

There is no municipal sewer system in Bakersfield and disposal is handled through individual septic systems. Presently there are no plans for a municipal sewer plant due to the expense and the population size in Bakersfield.

Sewage disposal is an issue for everyone in town, including the town hall, historical society, and Congregational Church. In 2002, the historical society upgraded the septic system on property owned by the school. The lack of sewage disposal facilities has been and continues to be an impediment to the growth of small businesses appropriate commercial development, such as restaurants, in the village district. As technologies improve, the town of Bakersfield should continue to explore opportunities for shared wastewater systems within the village core.

Solid Waste Management

Policies

1. **Support efforts to educate residents about solid waste disposal options, currently available through the Northwest WSolid Waste District (NWSWD), in order to reduce junk and hazardous materials from being disposed of improperly.**
2. **Prohibit the unregulated storage of junk cars and other waste on properties in Bakersfield and require clean-up of existing sites.**
3. **Consider the establishment of a transfer station for processing junk vehicles for transportation to a local, permitted junkyard.Collaborate with NWSWD and other partners to establish programs that can help residents dispose of bulk trash and junk vehicles.**

Bakersfield is a member of the Northwest Vermont Solid Waste Management District (NWSWD), which has a regional solid waste management plan and a certified regional facility. The district operates a drop off site at the old fire station every Saturday morning. The Northwest Solid Waste District also sponsors many activities such as “special collections” (bulky items, scrap metal, and tires) and Household Hazardous Waste

(HHW) collections (oil based paints, solvents, cleaners, pesticides, and other chemicals that would be harmful to the environment if not handled properly).~~ The district operates a drop-off site at the old fire station every Saturday morning.~~

One goal of the District is to make solid waste disposal as convenient as possible for residents and reduce incentives to dump or burn garbage illegally. Recycling and food waste drop-off are free, and household trash has a small fee.

Residents and Town leadership have identified issues with large amounts of junk vehicles and other bulk waste stored outdoors on certain properties throughout town. This is likely due to the cost and difficulty of transporting these items. Cleaning up these sites would bring a public benefit to residents, and collection of vehicles and scrap metal would likely be profitable for businesses as well. The Town should coordinate with NWSWD, local scrap businesses and residents to organize the collection of junk vehicles and bulk waste. Bakersfield should also look to neighboring communities for examples in dealing with this issue.~~so that compliance with the regulations are high. By making pick up and drop off of garbage easy and recycling virtually free (there is currently a $1.00 handling charge), there should be less incentive to dump or burn garbage illegally. The special collection of bulky and hazardous materials keeps these materials out of the waste stream and disposed of properly. The state of Vermont has set a goal of reducing the amount of waste needing disposal by 50 percent. In order to help meet this goal, the district has adopted regulations making it mandatory in district towns to separate certain recyclable materials from waste going to landfills.~~

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Fire, Emergency and Police Services ~~Protection and Emergency Rescue~~

Policies

1. **Identify and pursue opportunities for funding to enhance police protection in Bakersfield.**
2. ~~**Continue to recruit and train volunteers for fire and emergency services.**~~
3. ~~Consider opportunities for the adaptive reuse of historic buildings~~

Commented [LS10]: Repeated in Historic and Archeological Resources chapter

Bakersfield is served by a volunteer fire department that includes a First Response Program.~~ ~~In the 2025 Town Plan Survey the fire department was the highest rated public service, with 75% of respondents rating fire and emergency services in Bakersfield as good or excellent. Bakersfield is proud of the high standard of service provided by our fire department.~~ There are approximately 12-15~~28~~ volunteer members who serve on the fire

department, including first responders.– The equipment consists of a 1997 Pumper, a 2012 Pumper and a 20222006 Rescue SUV.– The 2012 pumper and the 2006 rescue SUV are recent replacements for much older vehicles. Thanks to federal and state grants, the department was able to upgrade personal protection gear including SCBA air pack devices in 2005. In order to continue to meet the needs of the Bakersfield community, the Fire Department purchased the former Sticks and Stuff Building near the Brigham Academy. The Fire Department has been in its current location since 2012, a former commercial building that was renovated mostly by volunteers. The current building is adequate to house modern equipment and meet the needs of the community. Using mostly volunteer help, the Department renovated it to provide a building large enough to accommodate bigger modern fire engines including the 2012 pumper. Finding, training and retaining new firefighters is an issue for many small communities across Vermont. The fire department's membership has declined over the past several years, and recruitment of new members is currently a concern. The Town should seek ways to increase fire department recruitment so it can continue to provide a high standard of service to residents in the future.

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The town of Bakersfield has an agreement with Enosburgh Ambulance Services for emergency response service.– Bakersfield is served by Northwestern Medical Center in St. Albans City. Many residents also use the walk-in emergency clinics operated by NOTCH in Enosburgh and St. Albans and Cold Hollow Family Practice in Enosburgh.

Bakersfield has a Local Rapid Response PlanEmergency Management Plan (LEMP) to help organize the town in case of an emergency.– The Rapid Response PlanLEMP contains basic emergency preparedness essential for responding to local emergencies.– It includes critical phone numbers, contact persons, and critical facilities.– The Ttown of Bakersfield is also a member of the Franklin County Mutual Aid Agreement.– This is a formal agreement among the municipalities and emergency first responders within Franklin County to lend resource assistance across jurisdictional boundaries for disasters and other emergencies that exceed local resources when required; either by an emergency that exceeds local resources or a disaster.– The Agreement helps the town achieve compliance with the National Incident Management System (NIMS) strategy.– The Town has a permanent generator at Bakersfield Elementary School, and the In 2010, the Town received federal money to install a permanent generator at the Elementary School. That building now serves as a designated emergency shelter in case of a crisis.– Bakersfield is served by Northwestern Medical Center in St. Albans City. Many residents also use the walk-in emergency clinics operated by NOTCH in Enosburgh and St. Albans.

Police Protection

The Vermont State Police (VSP) is the primary law enforcement agency responsible for public safety in Bakersfield.– As in many rural communities, the level of police protection is a concern in Bakersfield.– Because of the limited service, response times can be long.

Telecommunications

Policies

1. ~~Support the enhancement of the telecommunications network when such facilities do not have significant adverse health, environmental or scenic impacts~~Work with providers to expand cell service in Bakersfield in a way that meets the needs of residents and visitors, especially along VT-108 and VT-36. Supported solutions include monopoles rather than lattice towers, with collocated providers. A small number of higher towers is preferred compared to a large number of low towers.
1. ~~2.~~
2. Support access to broadband internet that meets the needs of current and future residents and businesses.
3. ~~3.~~

~~Access to telecommunication services, including high speed internet and cellular phone service are important not only to the quality of life for residents of Bakersfield, but for economic development as well. Under Governor Jim Douglas and current Governor Peter Shumlin, Vermont is pursuing a course to provide universal cellular and broadband coverage throughout the state. Such advances in telecommunication technology have the potential to significantly impact the local economy in rural communities such as Bakersfield, as they allow more residents to telecommute and may enable more people to live further and further from population centers. The Town must determine if there are planning and zoning ramifications for antenna towers and other telecommunications infrastructure. Guidance to site towers where community interests for historic and aesthetic preservation should be considered~~

Cell Service

Currently, a large majority of Bakersfield do not have access to cell service. In the 2025 Town Plan survey, cell was service the lowest rated public service in Bakersfield, with 74% of residents rating it as poor. Over half of survey respondents and workshop participants rated improving access to broadband and cellular service as a top priority to consider in the Town Plan.

Lack of cell service is a quality of life issue in Bakersfield that causes inconvenience, economic barriers, and threats to health and safety. Many residents who work outdoors rely on cell service for their businesses, and lack of cell service in the Village is an obstacle to economic growth.

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Commented [LS11]: Policy expanded and reworded to support topics from survey/outreach

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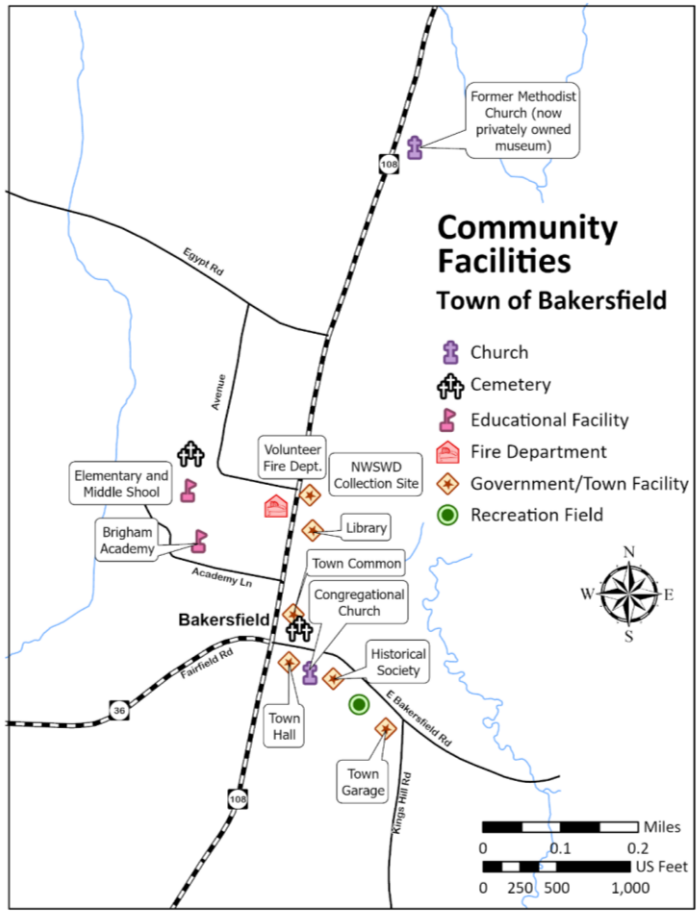
Cellular service is also extremely important to reach 911 in the event of an emergency, especially since landline service in Bakersfield is being phased out. Internet-based phone service relies on electricity to operate, which may not be available in the event of a disaster.

Increasing cell service is a very high Town priority, and outreach efforts show that the public strongly supports expanding cell infrastructure in Bakersfield. In current business models, cellular companies build towers directly, or tower companies build towers and then lease space to cellular providers. The Town should work to identify sites for cell towers that would provide the maximum coverage benefit for residents and visitors. The Town can play a role coordinating with interested landowners and tower/cell companies to accomplish this goal and bring more cell service to Bakersfield.

Broadband Internet

According to state data, roughly 85% of residents have access to internet service that meets the federal definition of broadband. Fiber internet has also become increasingly available to residents and offers greater internet speeds. As the availability of working from home provides more economic opportunities to residents, access to reliable internet service is increasingly

important. The Town supports maintaining high-quality internet access to meet the current and future needs of residents and businesses. Bakersfield is a member of Northwest Fiberworx, the communications union district serving the region, and has a member appointed by the Selectboard. The goal of Northwest Fiberworx is to leverage partnerships between municipalities to procure funding for regional internet upgrades. The Town also has a public Wi-Fi hotspot at the Town Hall.



Community Spaces and Facilities

Policies

1. Provide adequate recreational facilities to meet the needs of community residents
2. Encourage intergenerational programs that promote healthful living.
3. Support the conversion of the Brigham Academy building to serve as a multi-purpose municipal facility for senior/affordable housing, business, and/or other community use.

4. Ensure that designated emergency shelters are accessible and properly equipped.
5. Continue to provide library services that meet the needs of the community.
6. Maintain a website that provides information on Bakersfield town governance and a calendar of town activities, and support the website's growth as a means for meaningful communication and information sharing.
7. Support the retention of the US Post Office in the village.

The public facilities of Bakersfield include the Bakersfield Elementary and Middle School, the presently empty Brigham Academy and its front lawn, the Town Hall, the Volunteer Fire Department, the town garage, cemeteries, and a recreational field. Within the village are also a post office, a church, the H.F. Brigham Memorial Library, and the Bakersfield Historical Society building (see map on right).

~~Municipal Facilities~~

~~*Policies*~~



~~1. Provide adequate recreational facilities to meet the needs of community residents~~
~~2. Encourage intergenerational programs that promote healthful living.~~
~~3. Restore the Brigham Academy building to serve as a multi-purpose municipal facility for education, senior/affordable housing, recreation, and/or other community use.~~
~~4. Ensure that designated emergency shelters are accessible and properly equipped.~~
~~5. Continue to provide library services that meet the needs of the community.~~
- ~~Encourage the Selectboard to adopt municipal ordinances to enforce the clean-up of junkyards and other "quality of life" issues, such as farm animals in the village, noise pollution, etc.~~

~~6. Establish and maintain a website that provides information on Bakersfield town governance and a calendar of town activities.~~
~~7. Support the retention of the US Post Office in the village.~~

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~~The public facilities of Bakersfield include the Bakersfield Elementary and Middle School, the presently empty Brigham Academy and its front lawn, the Town Hall, the Volunteer Fire Department garage, the town garage, cemeteries, and two recreational fields. Within the village are also a post office, a church, the HF Brigham Memorial Library, and the Bakersfield Historical Society building (Figure 4.1).~~

Town Hall

The Bakersfield Town Hall was constructed in 1909 and is listed among the town's most important historic civic assets. The building provides office space for the Town Clerk, Treasurer, Listers, and Zoning Administrator, and includes a community meeting space on the first floor.

The first-floor work areas are cramped and functionally inadequate for modern municipal operations: office space is tight, workspace is hard to configure, and the condition of the space reflects deferred maintenance needs. The second floor contains a large auditorium with a stage and kitchen — a potentially significant community asset — but it is not accessible to people with disabilities and has therefore remained largely unused. The building is served by one single-person restroom, which is not sufficient for a public facility.

The Town has identified rehabilitation of the Town Hall as a priority capital project, with particular emphasis on ADA accessibility improvements to restore the second-floor auditorium to active public use, renovation of first-floor municipal office space to operational standards, and repair of long-deferred building maintenance. The Town Plan supports pursuing federal and state historic preservation funds (including Vermont Division for Historic Preservation grants and USDA Community Facilities programs), as well as applicable ADA compliance funding, to bring this building into full service for the community.~~The Bakersfield Town Hall was constructed in 1909. The building provides office space for the Town Clerk, Treasurer, Listers, and Zoning Administrator, and has a community meeting space. The second floor of the town hall has an auditorium, stage and kitchen and has served as the town teen center. The stage had a painted curtain which is now at the Vermont Historical Society.~~



The Town Hall is used each year for Town Meeting, when residents come together to vote and make important community decisions. Credit: Nancy Hunt

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Town Garage

The Bakersfield Town Garage houses the Town's road equipment, including three snow plows, three dump trucks, a 4x4 pickup truck, a front end loader, a grader, and a bulldozer/15-ton excavator. The current facility is undersized and not sufficient for the Town's needs. Interior parking capacity is limited to three plow trucks, which means vehicles and equipment are exposed to weather year-round, accelerating equipment wear and shortening service life. The majority of the garage floor is unfinished dirt. There is no dedicated workspace for equipment maintenance or repair — any mechanical work requires vehicles to be moved outside, which is impractical during Vermont winters and mud season. The Garage also lacks adequate office space, wash rooms, heating and lighting. The Town has prioritized replacement or major rehabilitation of the Town Garage as a capital improvement need. The Town Plan supports pursuing all available state and federal funding opportunities to address this deficiency, including but not limited to VTrans municipal highway and transportation programs, USDA Community Facilities grants, and Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding. ~~The Bakersfield town garage houses the town's road equipment, including three snow plows, three dump trucks, a 4x4 pick up truck, a Front End Loader, a Grader, and a bulldozer/15 ton excavator. The town garage provides adequate facilities and no major improvements are planned for this facility. The relocation of the town fire department to the renovated Sticks and Stuff building provided the Town additional storage space when it was transferred from the Fire Department to the Town.~~

The Town Hall is used each year for Town Meeting, when residents come together to vote and make important community



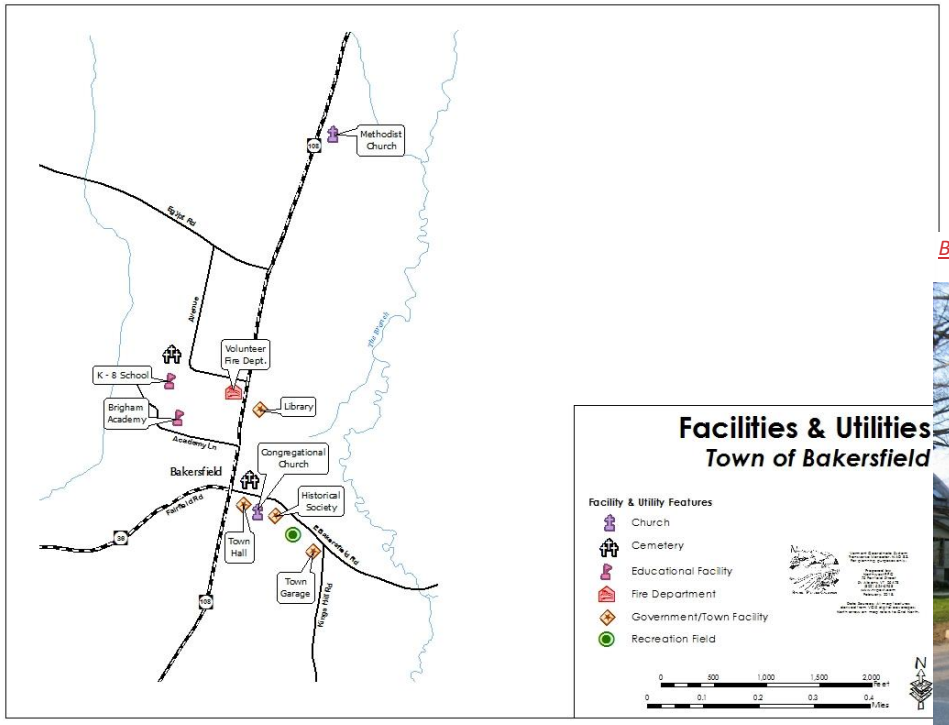

Figure 4.1 Municipal Facilities and Utilities

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Brigham Academy

The Brigham Academy, though vacant for the past 20 years, has the potential to be a significant public asset.– As of 2026, the Town of Bakersfield has a purchase and sales option with a firm to convert the building into senior housing.~~This building was under the ownership of the Bakersfield school district. A School Board vote in March 2013 requred the Board to sell the building to the Town. That sale was completed September 15, 2014. Studies in 1995 and 2012 found the building to be structurally sound and noted the potential for adaptive reuse of the building as an educational facility, senior housing or for other community use.~~ Adding a commercial component or community space would bring further economic benefits to the Village. The Town should continue to play an active role in its redevelopment to ensure that its restoration brings as much public benefit as possible.~~Under a current~~

Brigham Academy Building

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~~agreement with the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board, any rehabilitation of the building should provide for 75 percent school use and 25 percent community use, however it may be possible to renegotiate this agreement to allow for affordable or senior housing.~~

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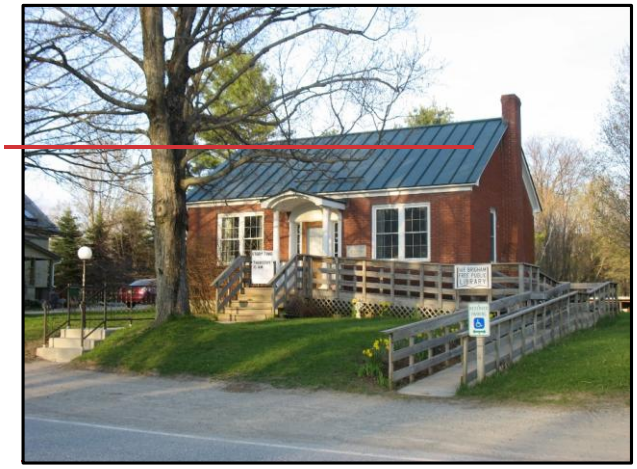
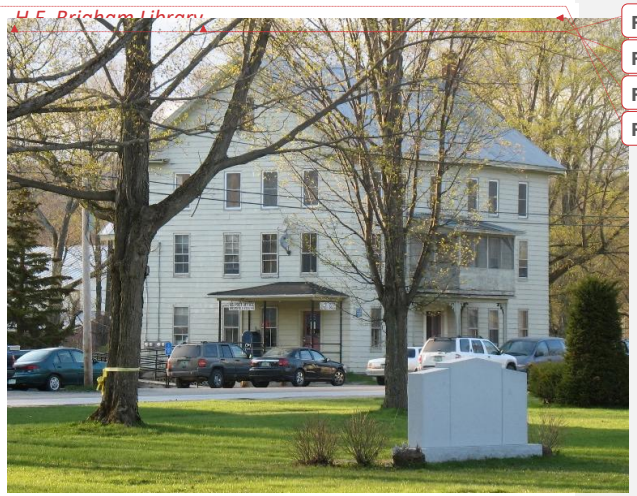
H.F. Brigham Library

The H.F. Brigham Library is located in the center of the village on the east side of Main Street across from the Brigham Academy.~~–~~ The library's goals include serving the community as a center of reliable information and cultural enrichment. The library has 263 registered borrowers. In 202~~1~~3, the library was visited 1,709 times and hosted more than 90~~70~~ events (including arts and craft groups, book clubs, and children's story time~~, book discussions, family movie nights and special speakers~~). The library also has public computers and WiFi available for patrons to use. The library's Trustees are currently working on upgrades to the building, including building an expansion in the back and bringing it fully up to ADA code. ~~The library had 2,715 visitors, (1,688 adults and 1,027 children) that year, too. Computer usage is a growing way to meet the library's goals "to provide access to reliable information, to educate and entertain".~~





US Post Office

While it is not a municipal facility, the Bakersfield Post Office is an important asset for the village of Bakersfield and provides an informal meeting spot for members of the community to interact. ~~***Recreation Facilities***~~

~~Currently, public outdoor recreational facilities available in Bakersfield are mostly limited to the recreation fields associated with the school. This includes a well-equipped little league field, soccer field, basketball court and a playground. These facilities represent the efforts of many volunteers in the community. The privately owned Bakersfield Country Club provides golfing facilities to the public.~~

~~Since their 2011 dedication, the Bakersfield Town Park and Community Trails have been steadily improved by the Bakersfield Conservation Commission. The Park is near the head of one of the trails and consists of several historic town buildings and a large picnic area adjacent to the town square across from the Town Hall. The space is now regularly used during the now annual Fourth of July celebration, especially for a robust horseshoe competition.~~

~~Currently there is no adequate indoor public space that is handicapped accessible and available throughout the week for townspeople for all ages. The school gymnasium with its kitchen facilities is used extensively on weekends for community events. The one handicapped bathroom is in the main part of the building and is not available.~~

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~~***The Bakersfield Post Office is situated in the heart of the village.***~~



The Bakersfield Historical Society provides a venue for a variety of community events

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~~US Post Office~~

~~While it is not a municipal facility, the Bakersfield Post Office is an important asset for the village of Bakersfield and provides an informal meeting spot for members of the community to interact.~~

Bakersfield Historical Society

The Bakersfield Historical Society occupies the St. George's Church, the oldest public building in Bakersfield.~~–~~ As of this date, there are approximately 150 members. Local active members work as volunteers to ensure that the mission of the historical society is met. The building is handicapped accessible with a bathroom and kitchen, and the Building Committee ensures that the building is properly maintained. The ~~building~~ Historical Society is open to the public on a regular basis from May to October and by appointment throughout the year.~~ Although the Bakersfield Historical Society's building is handicapped accessible with a bathroom and kitchen that is potentially available throughout the week , there is no public funding for its supervised use and maintenance.~~ In addition to Historical Society events and fundraisers, t~~T~~he ~~Board of Directors, however, has made the~~ building is~~facility~~ also available to the community ~~whenever possible~~ for ~~bereavement luncheons~~events, meetings, ~~charitable events,~~ school programs, and the town meeting luncheon~~, as well as their own programs and fund raisers~~.

The Bakersfield Post Office is situated in the heart of the Village.



The Bakersfield Historical Society provides a venue for a variety of community events throughout the year. Credit: Amber Foote.

Recreation Facilities

Currently, public outdoor recreational facilities available in Bakersfield are mostly limited to the recreation fields associated with the school. This includes a well-equipped little league field, soccer field, basketball court and a playground. These facilities represent the efforts of many volunteers in the community. The privately owned Bakersfield Country Club provides golfing facilities to the public.

Since their 2011 dedication, the Bakersfield Town Park and Community Trails have been steadily improved and maintained by the Bakersfield Conservation Commission. The Park

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is near the head of one of the trails and consists of several historic town buildings and a large picnic area adjacent to the town square across from the Town Hall. The space is now regularly used during the now annual Fourth of July celebration, especially for a robust horseshoe competition.

Currently there is no adequate indoor public space that is ~~handicapped~~ accessible and available throughout the week for townspeople ~~for~~of all ages. The school gymnasium with its kitchen facilities is used extensively on weekends for community events. The one accessible ~~handicapped~~ bathroom is in the main part of the building and is not available.



Fireworks at the Annual Fourth of July Celebration. Credit: Amber Foote.

Churches and Cemeteries

The churches and cemeteries of Bakersfield are important resources for the town.– The United Church of Bakersfield and East Fairfield serves the congregations of one current and two former church buildings: the Congregational (1850) and Methodist (1854) churches in Bakersfield and the church in East Fairfield.– The parishioners hold services in the Congregational Church Building on East Bakersfield Road. During 2013, the Methodist Church and the East Fairfield Church were sold. The former East Fairfield Church now is owned by that community and the former Methodist Church is owned by a private museum curator.– In addition, the Congregational Church in Bakersfield is governed by its own board of trustees and manages its own endowment.



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The Cemetery Commission manages the Maple Grove Cemetery ~~and Park~~, a five acre burial ground in the center of the village that was deeded to the town in 1804. Residents at the time of their death are entitled to a free plot. Its maintenance budget is based on income from endowments and gifts. The cemetery is non-denominational and also serves as a center for the community. ~~While the cemetery provides green space in the center of the village, it does not serve as a true village commons because its use is limited to activities approved by the Cemetery Commission.~~ The war memorial, benches, and flower gardens are an asset to the village center. The Town strongly supports the volunteer efforts of the Cemetery Commission and churches, and what they do for our community. ~~The cemetery commission currently uses the hearse house for storage, but the building is in need of repair.~~



The Maple Grove Cemetery is maintained by Cemetery Commission volunteers. Credit: Amber Foote

Local volunteers help to repair the cemetery stones with the help of the Vermont Old Cemetery

A second cemetery in the village is located at the west end of the Avenue. It is owned and operated by the Catholic diocese. A third cemetery (Cook Cemetery) is in East Bakersfield and is closed. It is maintained minimally by the town as required by state statute. ~~Chapter 7. Education and Childcare~~

Education and Childcare

Policies

~~1.~~ **Establish fair and effective measures to control the pace and impact of development on educational services.**

1.

2. **Support programs that provide activities for youth, children, families and seniors.~~programs such as "Caring Communities," the Teen Center, and "Success by Six".~~**
3. **Assess the need for and availability of childcare services in Bakersfield and support efforts to expand childcare services.**

Caring for and educating our children is a high priority for the Town of Bakersfield. The town has a strong history as a center for academic excellence. Today, approximately 20~~8~~% of Bakersfield's population is below the age of 19 and providing a high quality education and safe and accessible facilities continues to be a priority for the community.

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It is the T~~t~~own's~~'~~ responsibility and in its best interest to provide for the education of its school population without overcrowding, inefficient division of basic education facilities, or reduction in the quality of its educational programs.~~–~~ Through careful planning ~~and growth management~~, the town can ensure that it is able to continue to provide high quality education to our children.

Childcare

Bakersfield has become primarily a bedroom community to the surrounding towns and cities, and availability and cost of childcare is a growing concern for working families. Many child development experts believe that children often do not have the maturity and self-care skills to be left unsupervised until the age of 12. The 2020 U.S. Census indicates that there are 213 children under the age of 14 currently living in Bakersfield. There are currently no licensed childcare centers located in Bakersfield beyond the preschool and afterschool programs, which only run at specific hours during the school year. Data on other childcare options, such as grandparents, siblings, stay at home parents, un-registered childcare homes or other opportunities is not available. According to the "Stalled at the Start" Report by Let's Grow Kids, 74% of infants and 54% of toddlers in Franklin County do not have access to regulated childcare.

It is also important to note that the childcare industry can contribute to the local economy by creating jobs and supporting a stable workforce. The accessibility, affordability and quality of health care may affect a parent's ability to enter and remain in the workforce and to be a productive employee. Bakersfield supports efforts to expand childcare services and ensure that families have access to safe and affordable childcare.

~~*Childcare Services*~~

Bakersfield has become primarily a bedroom community to the surrounding towns and cities. Therefore, finding high quality and affordable childcare is a growing concern for existing and prospective families. A 2005 Legislative Report from the Vermont Child Care Advisory Board reports that the average cost for center-based care in Vermont is $140.92 for infants and $125.71 for preschoolers per week. Statewide, more than 27 percent of low-earning families spend more than one fifth of their income on childcare.

Many child development experts believe that children often do not have the maturity and self-care skills to be left unsupervised until the age of 12. The 2010 U.S. Census indicates that there were 280 children under the age of 14 currently living in Bakersfield at that time. According to state data, Bakersfield currently has two registered childcare homes and two childcare centers, with a total capacity of 56 children. Data on other childcare options, such as grandparents, siblings, stay at home parents, un-registered childcare homes or other opportunities is not available. Without additional data on the vacancy rates of childcare facilities, as well as the quality and affordability of these services, it is difficult to assess the availability of childcare in our community.



Students load the bus at the Bakersfield

It is also important to note that the childcare industry can contribute to the local economy by creating jobs and supporting a stable workforce. The accessibility, affordability and quality of health care may affect a parent's ability to enter and remain in the workforce and to be a productive employee.

PreK-8 Education

Table 7.1: Number of Children in Bakersfield Under the Age of 12

	2010
Under 5 years	80
5 to 9 years	95

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~~10 to 14 years~~	~~105~~
~~Total~~	~~280~~
~~Source: 2010 US Census~~	-

The Bakersfield Elementary and Middle School (BEMS) is on a site adjacent to the old Brigham Academy. Grades K-8 are given instruction in this building with the remaining grades enrolled at the high schools of neighboring municipalities.

The ~~Bakersfield Elementary Middle~~ School is a wood frame structure. This construction was used to save money and time after the tragic fire that razed the K-4 elementary school in 1985. ~~While the student population experienced in 1997 has diminished, the school has had to deal with space limitations.~~ The school can accommodate approximately 165 students. ~~and has been at or near this capacity in recent years.~~ In the 2025-26 school year, 126 students were enrolled. The school population has slowly declined over past decades, down from 173 students in 2005. The Town does not anticipate issues with school capacity given recent trends.

~~Table 7.2: Enrollment at the Bakersfield Elementary School~~	
~~Academic Year~~	~~# Students Enrolled~~
~~1997-1998~~	~~196~~
~~1998-1999~~	~~173~~
~~1999-2000~~	~~172~~
~~2000-2001~~	~~175~~
~~2001-2002~~	~~178~~
~~2002-2003~~	~~176~~
~~2003-2004~~	~~173~~

~~2004-2005~~	~~167~~
~~2005-2006~~	~~167~~
~~2006-2007~~	~~159~~
~~2007-2008~~	~~168~~
~~2008-2009~~	~~163~~
~~2009-2010~~	~~155~~
~~2010-2011~~	~~172~~
~~2011-2012~~	~~172~~
~~2012-2013~~	~~165~~
~~2013-2014~~	~~159~~
~~Source: VT Department of Education (http://education.vermont.gov/data)~~	

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There are no plans to expand the current school building.~~–~~ The wood construction doesn't allow for a second story on the building so any additions would have to be at ground level.~~–~~ Furthermore, if the building were to be expanded it would need to come into compliance with current codes which would likely be difficult. Overall, the current building provides a safe and inviting environment for academic success.

Current school district consolidation efforts at the state level may impact BEMS in the long term. The Town should be prepared to manage through any changes as necessary. In the event that the school is ever forced to close, the Town should consider options to reuse the building in a way that benefits the community as much as possible, including as a childcare center.

~~The school has been able to create some additional space to accommodate students. The principal's office has been moved to the rear of the school to create a larger library area and there is a new all-purpose classroom used for art, meetings, and other academic activities. Overall, the building provides a safe and inviting environment for academic endeavors.~~

High School Education

~~Table 7.3. Enrollment in area High Schools~~	
~~Academic Year~~	~~# High School Students Enrolled~~
~~1997-1998~~	~~83~~
~~1998-1999~~	~~92~~
~~1999-2000~~	~~95~~
~~2000-2001~~	~~78~~
~~2001-2002~~	~~75~~

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Beginning in the ninth grade, Bakersfield students must choose to attend one of the surrounding area high schools. The majority of Bakersfield high school students choose to attend Enosburg High School, but students also attend BFA St. Albans, Essex, MVU, and BFA Fairfax. ~~(Table 7.4).~~ Vocational education is offered at the Cold Hollow Center in Enosburg Falls, Northwest Technical Center at BFA St. Albans and the Voc Ed Center at Essex High School. These three facilities provide a wide range of programs for high school students and evening classes for adults as well. Tuition costs for area schools continue to rise, as does Bakersfield's school tax rate.

~~*Home Schooling*~~

~~Bakersfield has 10 children being home schooled at this time (2013. These students are from 4 families in town.~~

Other Educational Facilities

The majority of colleges are located either in or around Burlington or in St. Albans. The Community College of Vermont (CCV) offers courses and degree programs in several locations including Winooski and St. Albans. The 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 all located in the Burlington area. Vermont State University has a campus~~Johnson State College is~~ located in Johnson in our neighboring county to the southeast.

Vermont Adult Learning located in St. Albans offers classes to help adults improve their math, writing, and reading skill. It also provides a GED completion program. ~~Vermont Adult Learning also has some satellite classes available in Swanton in Richford.~~

~~2002-2003~~	~~65~~
~~2003-2004~~	~~65~~
~~2004-2005~~	~~73~~
~~2005-2006~~	~~86~~
~~2006-2007~~	~~92~~
~~2007-2008~~	~~84~~
~~2008-2009~~	~~87~~
~~2009-2010~~	~~81~~
~~2010-2011~~	~~77~~
~~2011-2012~~	~~75~~
~~2012-2013~~	~~71~~
~~2013-2014~~	~~70~~
~~Source: Northeast Franklin SU~~	

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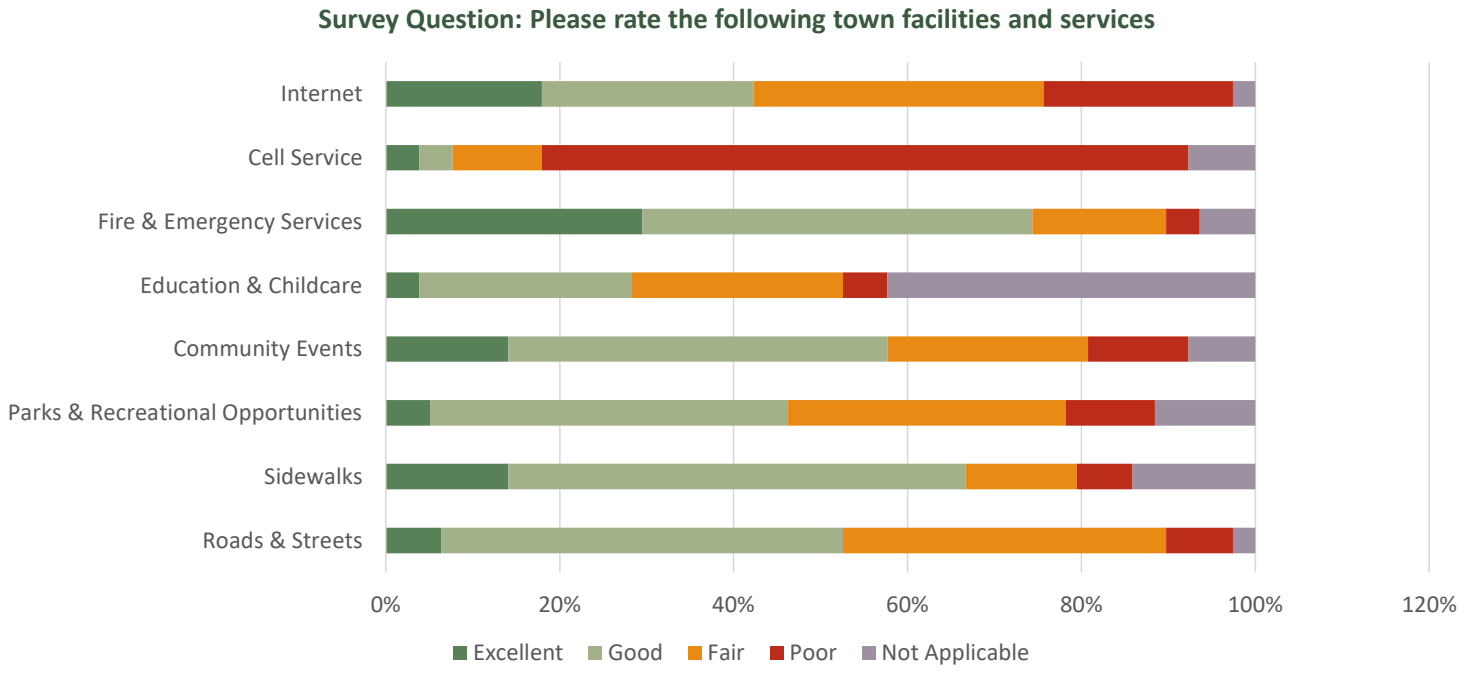

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Table 7.4. Attendance by High School with Tuition Rates		
High School	**# of Bakersfield Students Attending**	**Tuition Rate (2014/2015)**
Enosburg High School	40	$14,940
BFA (St. Albans)	25	$14,450
Essex	1	$12,950
BFA Fairfax	1	$11,825
Source: Northeast Franklin SU		

4. TRANSPORTATION

Goals

- To provide and maintain a safe, convenient, cost-effective, and functional transportation network for vehicular, pedestrian, and recreational use within the town
- To promote public transit and carpooling and to provide commuter parking

Policies

~~1.~~ 1. Regulate all classes of roads including access to private roads~~Assure the town's ability~~ to assure ~~provide~~ public safety for all ~~any~~ development. ~~by town regulation of all classes of roads, including access to private roads~~

~~1.~~2. Maintain a road maintenance and improvement program for the repair and/or rebuilding of the existing road network in an orderly cycle.~~Maintain town roads according to a systematic review of condition and levels of use~~

~~2.~~

~~1.~~3. Reclassify any remaining Class 4 roads ~~,~~that ~~which~~ are not expected to serve public uses for motorized traffic~~,~~ to legal trail status. ~~so that they may continue to be used for recreational uses and the right of way kept for future use.~~

~~2.~~4. Provide road signs, where necessary, for safety and traffic control purposes.

~~3.~~5. Assess the traffic impact of any new development on local roads before granting building or subdivision permits.

~~4.~~6. Limit road or driveway extension into important resource areas, including critical natural areas, wellhead protection areas, large blocks of intact forest, and important agricultural lands.

~~5.~~7. Design all future roads, including culverts and ditching, that are to be taken over and/or maintained by the town to standards approved by the Selectboard.

~~6.~~8. Maintain the scenic character of the town's rural byways.

~~7.~~9. ~~P~~Increase participation~~e~~ in the Northwest Regional Planning Commission's Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC).

10. Encourage the expansion of the sidewalks within the village~~, including the current Bakersfield Sidewalk Project,~~ to provide improved pedestrian access and safety.

11. Investigate solutions to reduce vehicle speeds through Bakersfield Village.

~~8. Reduce the speed limit to 25 miles/hour within the Village District~~

12. ~~The Town should explore the possibility of changing the recreational ATV ordinance.~~Reduce air pollution and energy use by encouraging public transit, carpooling and the use of park and ride lots.

~~3.~~13. Adopt and implement the most recent (currently 2026) VTrans Town Road and Bridge Standards, or stricter standards.

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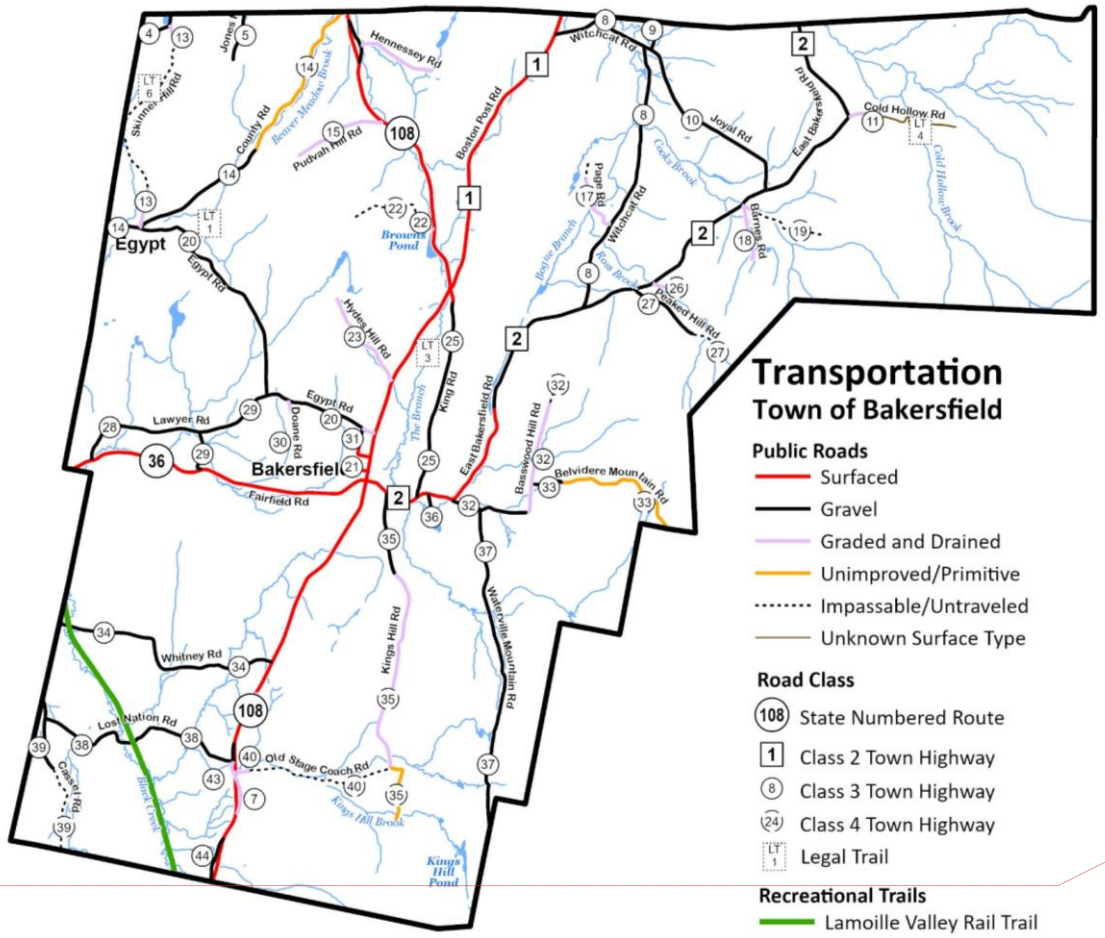
Bakersfield lies approximately 14 miles east of Interstate 89, which ~~(Exit 19) and~~ is easily accessible by VT Route 36. ~~–~~ The village is bisected by VT Route 108, which provides a connection to Enosburg to the north and through Fletcher to Jeffersonville to the south. ~~– The spring, summer and fall of 2013 brought much needed upgrades to Route 108 between Jeffersonville and Bakersfield, making the southerly commute much more comfortable. As is the case with many rural communities, Bakersfield residents depend greatly on privately owned motor vehicles and the local road network for access to jobs, goods and services.~~ The Village has a sidewalk network along North Main Street, and the southwestern corner of Town ~~–~~ contains a 2.5-mile segment of the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail (LVRT), an important

long-distance bicycle route that spans many communities and brings tourism to the region. As is the case with many rural communities, Bakersfield residents depend greatly on privately owned motor vehicles and the local road network for access to jobs, goods and services. ~~Providing~~ The goal of this chapter is to provide a safe and efficient transportation system that incorporates all modes of travel and meets the needs of Bakersfield residents and visitors now and into the future. ~~will meet the residents of Bakersfield now and into the future will require thoughtful planning. Such a system will provide a variety of transportation options beyond motor vehicles. In developing this plan, it is important to recognize that transportation is inter-related with many other sections of this plan, including land use, energy, recreation, and housing.~~



~~Travel to Work~~

~~On average, workers in Bakersfield traveled 32.6 minutes to get to work~~

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~~in 2000 (Table 5.1). This figure was not collected in the 2010 Census. In 1990, it took 12% of workers (58 people) less than 10 minutes to get to work. By 2012, this number decreased to 4.6% of workers (31 people). Meanwhile, the commute times longer than 20 minutes increased in Bakersfield. The most significant increase between 1990 and 2012 is seen in the 20-29 minutes interval. This category increased from 17% of workers (77 people) to 22.9% of workers (154 people). Commutes of over 45 minutes also increased by around 90 people between 1990 and 2012.~~

~~According to the 2000 Census, the majority of Bakersfield residents worked within Franklin County (Table 5.2). Per 2011 data, this has changed dramatically with only 35.8% of workers working in Franklin County. About 40% of workers in 2011 commuted to Chittenden County compared to almost 25% in 2000. The percentage of workers in Bakersfield has also dropped dramatically between 2000 and 2011 (19.3% to 1.6%).~~

~~In 2012, 76.2% of workers in Bakersfield drove to work alone using either a car, truck, or van (Table 5.3). This is near identical to the 2000 figure of 77%, yet higher than in 1990 (64%). The percentage of Bakersfield residents who worked at home dropped from 2000 to 2012 after remaining steady from 1990 to 2000. Only 5.2% of Bakersfield residents as of 2012 works from home. This is similar to the county-wide rate of 5.1% Carpooling is still not a habit for Bakersfield commuters. However, the percentage of carpooling commuters increased between 2000 and 2010. The reason for the low number of carpooling commuters is unknown. A possibility could be the lack of commercial establishments in town forces commuters to complete errand outside of town after work hours.~~

~~While the clustering of development helps decrease transportation costs, it is not the only answer. Most residents travel to Enosburg, Swanton, St Albans, or Chittenden County for employment, entertainment, medical needs, or supplies. Car-pooling 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 car-pooling program is the provision of a location where car-poolers can leave their vehicles. Currently, there is only one formal designated "park and ride lot" in Northern Franklin County. The lot is located in Enosburg on VT Route 105 near the National Guard Armory.~~

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Town Road System

Vermont's local roads are classified according to their importance and general use. This classification system applies to all town highways, and is used to determine the amount of state highway assistance provided to each community.~~–~~ The Bakersfield road system is depicted to the right.~~on Figure 5.1.~~

Table 4.1~~5.4~~ shows the classification of roads in Bakersfield.

Class 1 roads are ~~those~~ highways that are ~~the responsibility of the town to maintain, while being~~ extensions of the state highway system and carrying a state highway route number. Class 1 roads are generally maintained by the State unless the municipality has requested Class 1 Town Highway status. In Bakersfield, all Class 1 roads are state maintained and listed under state highways. ~~Bakersfield currently has no Class 1 roads.~~

Class 2 roads serve as important corridors between towns and carry a large volume of local and regional traffic. East Bakersfield Road and the Boston Post Road are both Class 2 roads.

Many of Bakersfield's roads are considered **Class 3** roads. In Bakersfield, these ~~These~~ roads are generally unpaved, but are passable year-round by standard passenger vehicles.

Class 4 roads receive little or no maintenance and may be impassable during winter and "mud season." Many former Class 4 roads have been reclassified to Legal Trails.

The Town should ensure that Class 2 and 3 roads are maintained and repaired on a regular schedule. In the Town Plan survey, 52% of residents rated the quality of roads as good or excellent, 37% rated them as fair, and 8% as poor.~~carrying a state highway route number. Bakersfield currently has no Class 1 roads. The roads that are designated as Class 2 serve as important corridors between towns, and consequently carry a large volume of local and regional traffic. East Bakersfield Road and the Boston Post Road are both Class 2 roads. Many of Bakersfield's roads are considered Class 3 roads. These roads are generally unpaved, but are passable year-round by standard passenger vehicles. Class 4 roads receive little or no maintenance and may be impassable during winter and "mud season."~~

Table 4.1: Road Mileage in Bakersfield

State Highways	
VT Route 108	8.03
VT Route 36	2.51
Total	10.54
Town Highways	
Class 1	0
Class 2	9.36
Class 3	31.81
Class 4	8.32
Legal Trails	2.74
Total	52.23

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The town of Bakersfield currently has an ATV Ordinance that allows ATVs~~-~~ on town roads east of VT 108 except Boston Post Road~~on Class 3 and 4 Roads~~.~~–~~ All ATVs must be registered and receive a sticker that allows them to legally operate on town roads and trails. However, enforcement of this ordinance is an issue, and there are still issues with unregistered ATVs in unauthorized locations. ATVs are used primarily as recreation vehicles and not strictly for transportation, with much of the traffic coming from out of town drivers.~~–~~ Many farmers and maple producers also use them for access to areas of their properties.~~ Operation of ATVs on the roads of Bakersfield, however, should be allowed for Bakersfield residents only. Operators with a registered vehicle would be required to obtain a permit from the town clerk's office for this privilege. Air and sound pollution would be greatly reduced on sunny weekends on our back roads.~~

The most direct route between Bakersfield and communities to the east, including Johnson, is the Waterville Mountain Road.~~–~~ However, during the winter months, this road becomes impassable and dangerous to travel. There are no plans to maintain this road during the winter. The Town should coordinate with the Town of Waterville with to ensure that this road is clearly marked on both sides as closed and unpassable in the winter.~~ The decision of whether or not this road should remain open year-round will likely be an important issue for the town in next several years. While this may be desirable for Bakersfield residents working in Lamoille County, there is also concern that opening up this road will create additional development pressure in the mountainous sections of Bakersfield. Keeping the road open and maintained would also require additional coordination between the town of Bakersfield and the town of Waterville in regard to plowing and maintenance.~~

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Complete Streets

Complete streets are streets that safely accommodate everyone using the road, including cars, bicyclists, pedestrians and public transportation. Complete streets consider the context of the road or street. For example, in a village a street may have a sidewalk for frequent pedestrian traffic, while in a rural area a wide striped shoulder may serve bicyclists and the occasional pedestrian. In the Village, complete streets enhance the value of our town as a traditional Vermont center.

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Traffic Calming

Route 108 is an important vehicular travel route that is also the heart of Bakersfield's village. In the Town Plan survey, some residents expressed concerns with vehicle speeds through the Village. The Town should work with VTrans to investigate opportunities to reduce noise and increase safety by slowing vehicle speeds within the Village. Speed measuring signs have been shown to have an impact on driver behavior, and should be considered as a solution.

Sidewalks

Bakersfield Village has a small sidewalk network along North Main Street that runs for 1,240 feet from Egypt Road to Route 36. These sidewalks connect the school, town hall, post office and library with residences and businesses along VT 108. These sidewalks were built in 2012 as a result of a feasibility study in 2004 and remain in good condition. The 2004 feasibility study also proposed sidewalks on South Main Street to Larry's Tree Farm, and further North on North Main Street, but these were never built. Extending the network as originally proposed would improve pedestrian access and safety within the Village. The south end of the Village has seen new development in recent years, and extending the sidewalks further south would further strengthen this neighborhood's connection to the village center. ~~A 2004 feasibility study looked at ways to improve safety and mobility for pedestrians in the village area and connect the school, town hall, post office and library with residences and businesses along VT 108. The proposed improvements to VT 108 sidewalks was a huge project with the southern end at Larry's Tree Farm and the northern end stopping just short of the Methodist Church. In 2005, the town received a grant from the Vermont Agency of~~



~~Transportation to design and construct 1,240 feet of sidewalk. In 2012, the sidewalks were completed and they consist of two segments: along VT 108 from the Brigham Library to East Bakersfield Road, and along the west side of VT 108 in front of Brigham Academy across from the library. The project includes sidewalk construction, curbing, crosswalks, landscaping as needed, and signs. Construction of these segments of the sidewalk was completed in 2011(.~~

Most Village sidewalks are built directly on the curb with no buffer between the road. When Main Street is plowed by the state in the winter, this causes snow and ice to pile up on sidewalks, sometimes after sidewalks have already been cleared. The Town should coordinate with VTrans to find better methods of plowing that have less of an impact on locally maintained sidewalks.

Recreational Paths

The Lamoille Valley Rail Trail (LVRT) runs through the southwestern corner of Bakersfield for about 2.5 miles. At 94 miles long, the LVRT is the longest rail trail in New England and connects 18 towns from St. Johnsbury to Swanton. The LVRT is a major regional destination for summer recreation. Currently, there is no dedicated bicycle infrastructure connecting the Village to the LVRT, but the Village can be accessed by riding on the shoulder of VT 36 or VT 108. The closest public trailhead is located in East Fairfield. Exploring ways to better connect the Village to the LVRT could provide tourism benefits to the Town and increase recreational opportunities for residents. A wayfinding sign on the LVRT that points users toward Bakersfield Village could bring more visitors and help with economic development efforts.

~~There are currently no specific bike trails or facilities available in Bakersfield.~~ The Bakersfield Conservation Commission also maintains ~~has created the Bakersfield Town Park adjacent to the Maple Grove Cemetery. The park has~~ walking trails for recreational use at the Town Park adjacent to Maple Grove Cemetery. ~~The Lamoille Valley Rail Trail is currently in the planning phase, however this is considered to be also a recreational resource, rather than a meaningful transportation option.~~

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Public Transportation and Carpooling

The town of Bakersfield is not serviced by fixed public transit.~~–~~ Rural Community Transit (RCT) ~~The Northwest Vermont Public Transit Network (Network)~~ offers public transit for Franklin County and Grand Isle County.~~–~~ The closest route is the Richford-St. Albans Commuter, which runs twice a day and stops in Enosburgh. Green Mountain Transit (GMT) also provides a route from St. Albans to Burlington. ~~The Network has established~~

~~subscription service between Richford and St. Albans and a fixed route service known as the St. Albans City Loop. Elderly residents and those eligible for Medicaid may connect with subscription service by calling the Network.~~

Bakersfield is a difficult place to provide consistent public transportation due to its low overall density. One available option to reduce single-occupancy vehicle trips is carpooling.~~While the clustering of development helps decrease transportation costs, it is not the only answer.~~ Most residents travel to Enosburg, Swanton, St Albans, or Chittenden County for employment, entertainment, medical needs, or supplies. Car-pooling 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 car-pooling program is the ~~provision of a location where car-poolers can leave their vehicles~~availability of Park and Ride lots. Currently, ~~there is only one formal designated "park and ride lot" in Northern Franklin County. The lot is located in Enosburg on VT Route 105 near the National Guard Armory.~~the closest official Park and Ride lots are in East Fairfield, Enosburgh and Jeffersonville.

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~~Presently, the~~The nearest rail service for freight is in Richford (Canadian Pacific). The nearest passenger rail service is Amtrak's Vermonter which stops in St. Albans and travels south to New York City and Washington D.C with connections to Boston and other locations on the east coast. Travelling via rail to Montreal is possible on Amtrak's Adirondack line.~~–~~ The closest station on this line is in the Plattsburg, NY area.~~– ~~The Chittenden County Transportation Authority (CCTA) offers regular bus service between Jeffersonville in Lamoille County and St. Albans to Burlington four times daily during the week. There is no weekend bus service on these routes.~~

Burlington International Airport, approximately 45 miles to the southwest, is the closest airport with national and international connections. Trudeau Airport is located about two hours to the north in Montreal, Quebec.

~~*Pedestrian and Bike Facilities*~~

~~A 2004 feasibility study looked at ways to improve safety and mobility for pedestrians in the village area and connect the school, town hall, post office and library with residences and businesses along VT 108. The proposed improvements to VT 108 sidewalks was a huge project with the southern end at Larry's Tree Farm and the northern end stopping just short of the Methodist Church. In 2005, the town received a grant from the Vermont Agency of Transportation to design and construct 1,240 feet of sidewalk. In 2012, the sidewalks were completed and they consist of two segments: along VT 108 from the Brigham Library to East Bakersfield Road, and along the west side of VT 108 in front of Brigham Academy across~~

~~from the library. The project includes sidewalk construction, curbing, crosswalks, landscaping as needed, and signs. Construction of these segments of the sidewalk was completed in 2011(.~~

~~There are currently no specific bike trails or facilities available in Bakersfield. The Bakersfield Conservation Commission has created the Bakersfield Town Park adjacent to the Maple Grove Cemetery. The park has walking trails for recreational use. The Lamoille Valley Rail Trail is currently in the planning phase, however this is considered to be also a recreational resource, rather than a meaningful transportation option.~~

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5. ENERGY

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Goals

- **To encourage the conservation of energy by individuals and organizations**
- **To promote efficient and climate resilient buildings**
- **To demonstrate the Town's leadership by example with respect to the efficiency of municipal buildings, municipal transportation, and renewable energy generation**

Policies

1. **Support the development and siting of renewable energy resources in the Town that are in conformance with the goals, strategies, and mapping outlined in this plan. Development of generation in identified preferred locations shall be favored over the development of other sites.**
1.2. **Support and encourage school participation in Vermont Energy Education Program (VEEP) activities to foster an educational foundation geared toward energy savings.**
2.3. **Support the efforts of Efficiency Vermont to promote the selection and installation of devices, appliances, and equipment that will perform work using less energy (e.g., ENERGY STAR).**
3.4. **Consider and prioritize efficiency along with cost when replacing current systems in municipal buildings.**
4.5. **Consider and prioritize efficiency along with cost when replacing or adding municipal vehicles.**
6. **Consider municipal renewable energy generation options including community solar, wastewater methane collection, or other potential municipally owned projects.**
5.7. **Extremely energy-intensive industries, including data centers, shall not be permitted in Bakersfield.**

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The intent of this energy section is to meet the municipal determination standards for enhanced energy planning enabled in 24 V.S.A. 4352. The purpose of enhanced energy planning is to further regional and state energy goals, including the goal of having 90% of energy used in Vermont come from renewable sources by 2050 (90 x 50 goal), and the following:

A. *Vermont's greenhouse gas reduction goals under 10 V.S.A. § 578(a);*
B. *Vermont's 25 by 25 goal for renewable energy under 10 V.S.A. § 580;*
C. *Vermont's building efficiency goals under 10 V.S.A. § 581;*
D. *State energy policy under 30 V.S.A. § 202a and the recommendations for regional and municipal energy planning pertaining to the efficient use of energy and the siting and development of renewable energy resources contained in the State energy plans adopted pursuant to 30 V.S.A. §§ 202 and 202b (State energy plans); and*
E. *The distributed renewable generation and energy transformation categories of resources to meet the requirements of the Renewable Energy Standard under 30 V.S.A. §§ 8004 and 8005.*

A positive determination of compliance with the requirements of enhanced energy planning, as provided by the Regional Planning Commission, will enable Bakersfield to achieve "substantial deference" instead of "due consideration" in Section 248 applications for energy generation facilities (ex. wind facilities, solar facilities, hydro facilities, etc.) under Criteria (b)(1)-Orderly Development. In short, this means that Bakersfield will have a greater "say" in Certificate of Public Good proceedings before the Vermont Public Service Board about where these facilities should or should not be located in the community. To receive a positive determination of energy compliance, an enhanced energy plan must be duly adopted, regionally approved, and must contain the following information:

A. An analysis of current energy resources, needs, scarcities, costs, and problems.
B. Targets for future energy use and generation.
C. "Pathways," or implementation actions, to help the municipality achieve the established targets.
D. Mapping to help guide the conversation about the siting of renewables.

Municipal Energy Consumption & Targets

The following section reviews current data and future targets for thermal/space heating, transportation, electrical energy use and energy generation. These targets are based on the overall goals of the Vermont Comprehensive Energy Plan. As required under Vermont state statute targets are set for 2025, 2035 and 2050.

Data and Modeling

While the data used in this plan offers insights into current needs and progress, it is also imperfect in multiple respects. Because of the relatively small population of Bakersfield and the region, there is a high margin of error on data from the American Community Survey. Many other available data sources are not regularly updated or are incomplete in their scope. Regardless, the data provided in this plan is the best available and still provides valuable insight.

Energy targets were created by the Department of Public Service using the LEAP (Long-range Energy Alternatives Planning) software to create a model of the demand for and supply of total energy usage in Vermont and the region. LEAP software is a system that allows users to create complex models of future energy use. The LEAP model does not identify specific costs that would be incurred in the future. Instead, it compares 2050 costs among various scenarios, in order to achieve the least-cost alternative to meet legislative goals. The LEAP model also includes impacts that do not result in out-of-pocket costs, such as impacts of pollution. Because of the model's complexity, it is difficult to explain comprehensively. The following scenarios provide some background on the methodology and the inputs used to create both statewide and regional models in LEAP. Appendix 1B presents the full model results for the region and the state as well as a more thorough explanation of the model assumptions and

methodology. Targets for generation were developed by the Northwest Regional Planning Commission in partnership with the Department of Public Service.

Thermal Energy/Space Heating

Thermal energy use means energy used to heat homes, commercial and industrial buildings.

Residential Space Heating

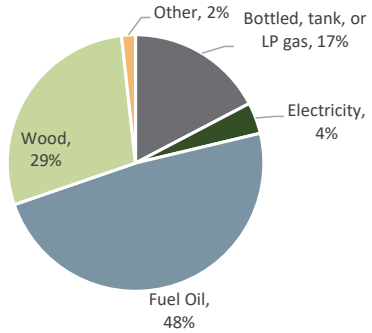
Current Use

The most common fuels used for heating in Bakersfield are fuel oil, wood, and bottled, tank or LP gas. Overall, residential heating in the Town is 54 BBTUs (billion British Thermal Units), accounting for 36.3% of total residential energy use.

Residential Thermal Goals

- Significantly decrease the use of fossil fuels including fuel oil, natural gas and propane.
- Significantly increase the number of residential cold climate heat pumps and heat pump hot water heaters
- Increase the number of weatherized homes.

Current Residential Thermal Energy Use by Type of Energy



~~Residential Heat Pumps~~

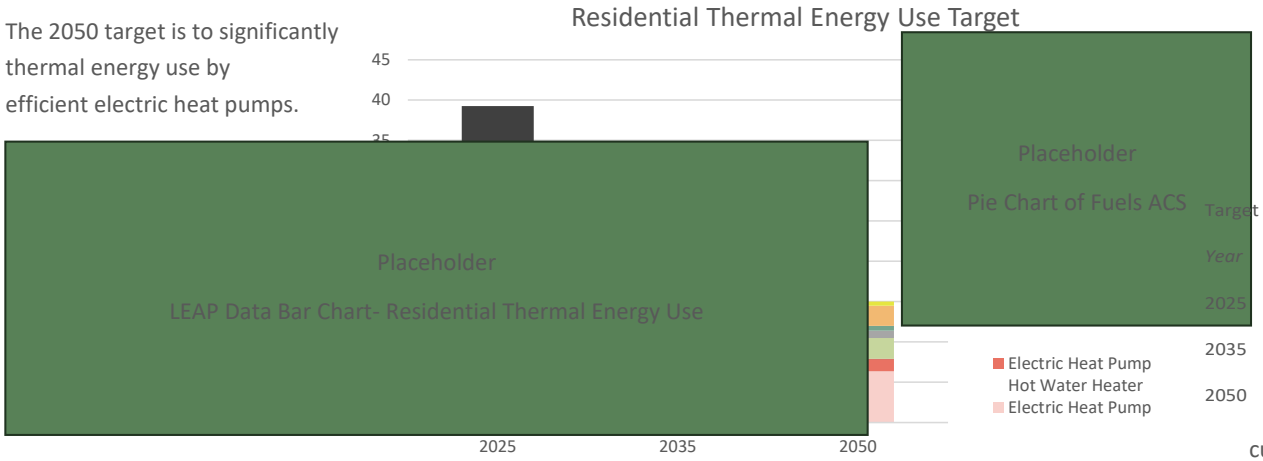
~~Year~~	~~#~~
~~2025~~	
~~2035~~	

Several~~Three~~ households have installed cold climate heat pumps through Efficiency Vermont's programs. Cold climate electric heat pumps use less energy to provide the same amount of heat as fossil fuel heating systems.

~~2050~~	

Target

The 2050 target is to significantly reduce residential thermal energy use by transitioning to more efficient electric heat pumps. Additionally, the target assumes that



Target Number of Residential Heat Pumps

Year	#
2025	71
2035	171
2050	199

weatherized to better retain current homes will be heat, and new homes will be energy efficient.

Commercial Space Heating

Current Use

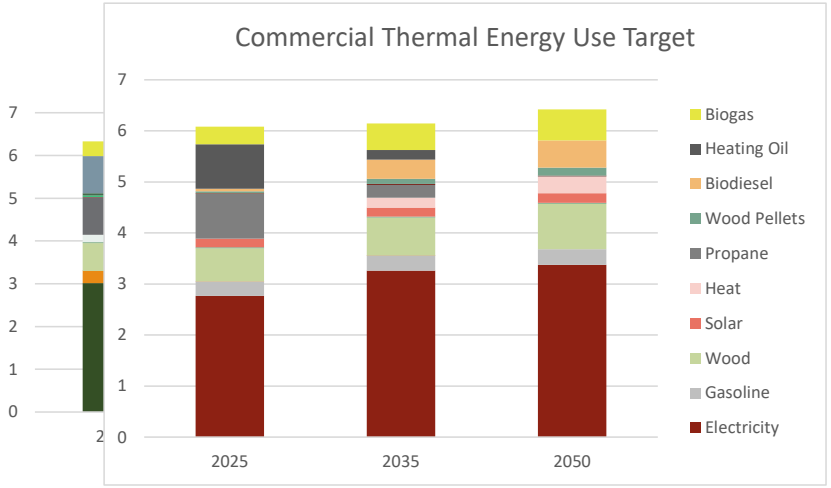
There is no survey data on commercial and industrial heating energy use, or the types of fuel used. Based on statewide trends and the businesses located in Bakersfield, commercial and industrial heating use is estimated to be around 7.1 BBTUs per year. 0 businesses in Bakersfield have installed cold climate heat pumps through Efficiency Vermont's programs.

Commercial Thermal Goals

- Significantly decrease the use of fossil fuels
- Significantly increase the number of commercial cold climate heat pumps and heat pump hot water heaters

Target

Similar to residential heat use, the 2050 target for commercial and industrial heat use is to reduce thermal energy use by significantly decreasing the use of fossil fuels and increasing the use of efficient heat pumps.



Target Number of Commercial Heat Pumps	
Year	#
2025	3
2035	8
2050	9

Transportation

Transportation energy use includes gas, diesel and electric vehicles. It accounts for the largest percentage of energy use in Vermont.

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Land Use, Transit & Complete Streets

A key strategy to reducing the energy spent on transportation is to reduce the number of total miles driven. Bakersfield encourages public transportation and carpooling as noted in the Transportation chapter. Bakersfield also encourages the growth of reliable broadband service to help make home-based businesses and remote work possible. ~~Carpooling reduces the number of vehicles on the road and the total energy used.~~

Transportation Goals

- ↓ Decrease the total amount of miles travelled in personal vehicles.
- ↓ Significantly decrease use of fossil fuels including gasoline and diesel.
- ↑ Significantly increase the adoption of electric vehicles.

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~~Carpooling reduces the number of vehicles on the road and the total energy used.~~ ~~Bakersfield encourages carpooling as noted in the Transportation chapter.~~

The Town ~~can~~ also supports a reduction in personal vehicle trips by encouraging compact land use patterns and complete streets that promote walking and cycling. It is one of the fundamental building blocks of a more efficient, resilient, and greener community. More information on these goals and policies can be found in the Land Use and Transportation chapters.

Passenger Vehicles and Light-Duty Trucks

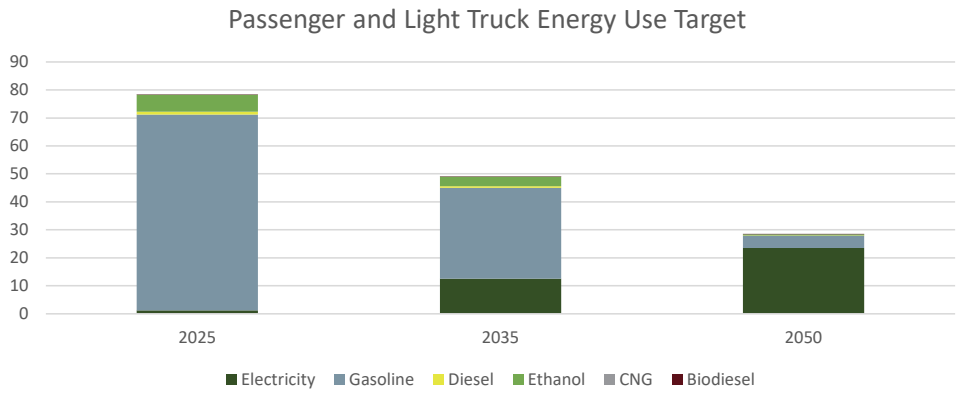
Current Use

The vast majority of personal vehicles and trucks in Bakersfield use fossil fuels such as gasoline. Personal vehicle use represents roughly 55% of all residential energy use in Bakersfield.

Target

Target Number of Electric Vehicles

The 2050 target for passenger vehicles and light duty trucks requires almost all vehicles to be fully electric by 2050. Electric vehicles are more efficient than gasoline and diesel vehicles, with typical fuel economy equivalent to more than 100 MPG. Therefore, the switch to electric vehicles will reduce total transportation energy consumption. The 2050 target also assumes that the number of vehicle miles travelled will decrease 10% due to increases in carpooling, public transit, walking and cycling.



Year	Plug-In Hybrid	Electric
2025	2	6
2035	5	29
2050	21	123

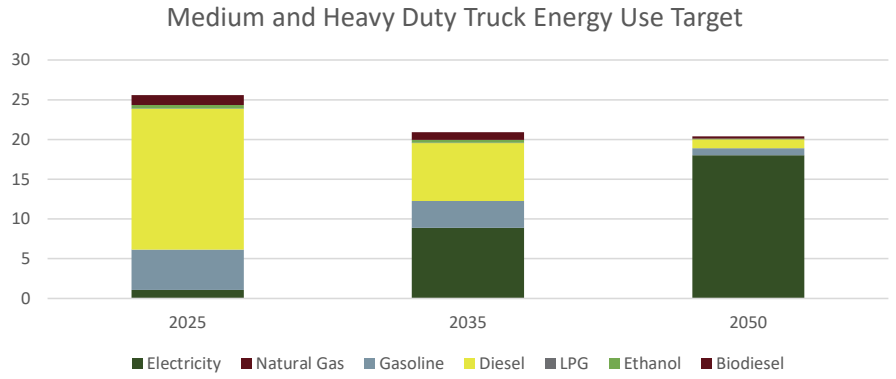
Medium and Heavy-Duty Trucks

Current Use

There is no available data on current energy use of medium or heavy-duty trucks. Diesel is the most common form of fuel for heavy-duty vehicles in Vermont (VTrans 2021, Vermont Transportation Energy Profile).

Target

Similar to passenger vehicles and light trucks, the target for medium and heavy-duty trucks is that the majority will be electric vehicles by 2050. Advancements in electric vehicle technology will be required to meet this goal.



Electricity

Residential Electricity

Current Use

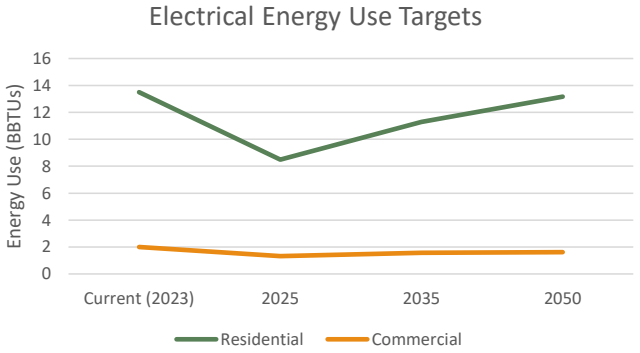
Electrical energy use in Town is equivalent to 15.5 BBTUs. 87% is residential and 13% is commercial.

Target

Data on electrical energy use is difficult to interpret. Increased energy efficiency of household appliances, lightbulbs and devices should bring electrical energy use down over time. However increased use of electricity for heating via heat pumps and for transportation via electric vehicles will increase electrical demand significantly. Therefore, the total amount of electrical energy use is expected to increase by 2050, even as total energy use decline s.

Electrical Goals

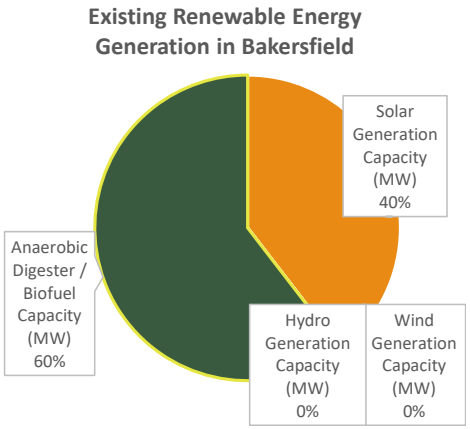
Electrical use will increase due to increasing use of electricity for heating and vehicles.



Energy Generation

As the amount of electricity needed for heating and transportation increases, some of that energy will need to be generated locally. This plan assumes about half of all electricity generation will occur locally. The overall renewable target is for 3.8 MW of new energy to be produced in Bakersfield, equivalent to the power needed for 646 homes.

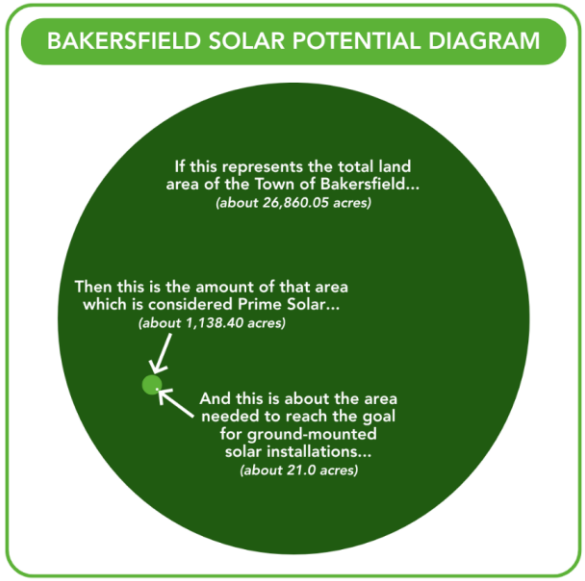
Since availability of some renewable energy sources such as wind and hydro can vary widely based on the environment, the municipal target assumes all renewable energy will come from solar power.



Energy Generation Targets

Solar

Bakersfield currently has 0.26 MW of solar power generation. An additional 3.5 MW will be required to meet the 2050 goal. The goal assumes that 0.8 MW of this will be generated by rooftop solar systems. This is equivalent to roughly ¼ of homes and businesses having rooftop solar The remaining 2.7 MW will be generated by ground-mounted solar, which is roughly 21 acres of solar fields.



Wind

Bakersfield currently has no wind generation facilities, and no wind generation is proposed to meet the 2050 goal.

Bakersfield does not support the construction of “industrial” or “commercial” wind generation facilities within the Town. For the purposes of this plan, Bakersfield considers any wind facility with a tower height (excluding blades) in excess of 100 feet tall to be considered an “industrial” or “commercial” wind facility. Small, net-metering scale wind generation may be possible. More information is needed regarding the viability and affordability of these systems, but generally Bakersfield views these types of facilities favorably provided that impacts to known constraints are avoided, impacts to possible

constraints are mitigated, and site-specific concerns are addressed. More information on known and possible constraints can be found in Appendix 1C.

Hydro

The Town does not currently have any dams that produce hydroelectric power. There are no major rivers in Bakersfield which makes the development of hydro power unlikely, although some small-scale "run-of-the-river" generation may be possible.

Biodigesters

Biodigesters are facilities which convert food scraps or manure into renewable natural gas (RNG). RNG may be used directly in place of fossil fuel natural gas or burned in a generator to convert the energy to electricity. On-farm biodigesters generally require a minimum of 500 cattle. There is currently one biodigester in Bakersfield at the Gervais Family Farm that produces 0.78 MW. There may be additional potential for more biodigesters in Bakersfield. Thermal generation from a "district heating facility"—a central facility that would provide heat to several structures -- is another potential use for biodigesters.

Energy Storage

One potential issue with increasing renewable energy production is that some renewables can only produce energy under the right environmental conditions. For instance, solar panels can only generate power when the sun is out. To address this, there will be a need for additional energy storage systems such as batteries. There is no specific target for energy storage.

New Technologies

New technologies continue to develop, including the emergence of geothermal heat as an electricity source. Investigating which technologies are suitable for our region and its residents will be an ongoing process. It is hard to know exactly what the future makeup of Vermont's electricity generation will be, but it is important to support a diverse, distributed, and robust set of generation facilities in the region. This will ensure resiliency, equity, and adaptability for the future.

~~Energy Generation Maps~~

~~Additional Data~~Energy Generation Maps

The following maps are available in Appendix 1A of the Town Plan:

- Utility Service Areas
- Transmission & 3 Phase Power Infrastructure
- Energy Generation Potential:
  - Solar
  - Wind
  - Woody Biomass
  - Hydro

~~More data is available in the following~~

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~~Energy generation maps showing the potential areas available for solar, wind, and hydro power are available in Appendix 1A of the Town Plan.~~

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~~Equity, Feasibility, and~~ Challenges

~~*Feasibility and Challenges*~~

Bakersfield faces several challenges in achieving the targets laid out in this plan which will require the cooperation and coordination of the federal government, state government, NRPC, and private sector.

High Upfront Costs- While efficient technologies such as heat pumps and electric cars are more affordable to operate, they also tend to have higher up-front costs. Incentives have been created to help Vermonters, especially low-income Vermonters, access these technologies. Unfortunately, many residents still find a gap between the subsidized cost and the amount they can afford. Increased incentives, especially for middle income households, as well as the quickly improving technology, could help to alleviate this barrier for Bakersfield's residents. There is also a need to substantially increase the capacity of existing programs for low-income residents, such as the low-income weatherization programs to reduce wait times.

Grid Limitations- The Vermont electrical grid was developed to have a one-way flow of electricity and distributed renewable generation can impact the function of the electrical grid. As with the rest of the United States, Vermont has historically depended on a small number of centralized power plants—the vast majority of which are located outside of the state.

Impact on Local Energy Companies- The changing energy landscape may have negative impacts on local energy companies, such as heating fuel and gas stations, that cannot evolve their business model. In the short term, this may hinder residents from accessing new, innovative heating and transportation technologies locally. In the long term, it may lead some local energy companies to disband, with lost jobs as a consequence. There are several programs in the state and region to help retrain workers who currently work in the fossil fuel industry. Certain sectors, including weatherization and green technology installation, will require additional labor and can provide careers for those transitioning out of fossil fuel industries.

Despite the challenges involved in implementation, it is important to remember the key issues this plan hopes to address: energy security, environmental protection, economic need/opportunities, and equity. Without making significant changes to how Bakersfield generates and uses energy, our energy future will be less secure, our environment less healthy, and our economic situation potentially dire. Bakersfield finds that any and all progress toward the goals of this plan is important. A lack of action at the state, regional, and local levels may have serious consequences.

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Equity

It is the policy of Bakersfield that no segment of the population should, because of its racial, cultural, or economic makeup, bear a disproportionate share of environmental burdens or be denied an equitable share of environmental benefits. Environmental justice focus populations are defined as households with low income, households with limited English proficiency, and persons of color and indigenous peoples. It is further the policy of the Bakersfield to provide the opportunity for the meaningful participation of all individuals, with particular attention to environmental justice focus populations, in the development, implementation, or enforcement of any law, regulation, or policy.

Bakersfield has and will continue to broaden its consideration of equity in its planning and implementation work. This includes working to:

- Improve the ability to respond effectively and respectfully to complex social, economic, and political issues that impact the community.
- Improve the decision-making processes to ensure that decisions are fair and balanced.
- Create and support the development of a more inclusive ~~workspace and~~ external community culture.

Defining equity is important for this plan and Bakersfield's continued work.

1. Distributive equity recognizes disparities in the allocation of resources, health outcomes, the inequities in living conditions and lack of political power~~ place frontline / impacted communities~~.
2. Procedural equity includes equitable planning and implementation that requires community membersies have a meaningful opportunity to participate.
3. Contextual equity ensures that mitigation and adaption strategies consider that low-income communities, black communities, indigenous communities and ~~and~~ people of color, ~~and~~ people with disabilities, and historically marginalized people~~,~~ are often more vulnerable to climate change.
4. Corrective equity ensures that mitigation and adaptation strategies provide communities with clear processes to hold the state accountable to its commitments to pursue equity.

Bakersfield has officially adopted a Declaration of Inclusion. These themes and ideas have been incorporated into this plan and will be considered further in the implementation of this plan. The Bakersfield will continue to identify ways to implement the statement of inclusion and identify how to consider equity and inclusion within their work. Bakersfield will continue to partner with local and regional organizations to ensure projects and programs support improved access to opportunity for all people in Bakersfield.

Generation Siting

Bakersfield finds it to be essential that all decisions regarding new renewable energy generation facilities take into consideration concerns about health and safety. The noise, vibration, glare, or other impacts from generation facilities shall be mitigated by developers to ensure that such impacts do not have an undue adverse impact upon neighboring properties.

It is hard to know exactly what the future makeup of Vermont's electricity generation will be, but it is important to support a diverse, distributed, and robust set of generation facilities in the region. This will ensure resiliency, equity, and adaptability for the future.

Split-Incentives

95% of households are owner-occupied and 5% are renter households. In many rental housing options, the landlord is responsible for building maintenance while the tenant is responsible for utility bills. As a result, the landlord may not have a strong financial incentive to invest into home improvements such as weatherization or heat pumps and renters may face high utility costs with few options to address them. This is a particular problem given that in the Northwest Region the median renter household has half the income of the median owner-occupied household. Finding new ways to incentivize both landlords and tenants as well as provide targeted outreach and education on this topic could help to alleviate this issue.

~~***Feasibility and Challenges***~~

~~Bakersfield faces several challenges in achieving the targets laid out in this plan which will require the cooperation and coordination of the federal government, state government, NRPC, and private sector.~~

~~**High Upfront Costs-** While efficient technologies such as heat pumps and electric cars are more affordable to operate, they also tend to have higher up-front costs. Incentives have been created to help Vermonters, especially low-income Vermonters, access these technologies. Unfortunately, many residents still find a gap between the subsidized cost and the amount they can afford. Increased incentives, especially for middle income households, as well as the quickly improving technology, could help to alleviate this barrier for Bakersfield's residents. There is also~~

~~a need to substantially increase the capacity of existing programs for low-income residents, such as the low-income weatherization programs to reduce wait times.~~

~~**Grid Limitations.** The Vermont electrical grid was developed to have a one-way flow of electricity and distributed renewable generation can impact the function of the electrical grid. As with the rest of the United States, Vermont has historically depended on a small number of centralized power plants—the vast majority of which are located outside of the state.~~

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~~Despite the challenges involved in implementation, it is important to remember the key issues this plan hopes to address: energy security, environmental protection, economic need/opportunities, and equity. Without making significant changes to how Bakersfield generates and uses energy, our energy future will be less secure, our environment less healthy, and our economic situation potentially dire. Bakersfield finds that any and all progress toward the goals of this plan is important. A lack of action at the state, regional, and local levels may have serious consequences.~~

6. ENVIRONMENT AND RESILIENCE

Goals

- To protect and enhance the quality of wetlands and watercourses, wildlife habitats, ground water and aquifers, populations of rare and endangered species, forests, scenic viewsheds and all other irreplaceable natural resources.
- To encourage and foster an all hazards disaster resilient community

Policies

1. Restrict the density of development near high quality wetlands and watercourses, wildlife habitats, ground water and aquifers, populations of rare and endangered species, forests and all other irreplaceable natural resources to levels that will have minimal impact.
2. Support the purchase, ~~and~~ protection and participation in land preservation measures of natural or fragile areas by local or state conservation agencies.
2.3. Encourage development primarily on slopes less than 15 percent to avoid erosion and other environmental hazards.
~~3. Prohibit all land development on slopes greater than 25 percent and maintain vegetative cover.~~
~~4. Regulate development on slopes greater than 15 percent to avoid environmental degradation and conditions that create health hazards.~~
~~5. Carefully control runoff and erosion should during all phases of construction.~~
~~6.~~4. Prohibit development in areas where the water table is less than 1.5 feet below the surface.
7. Prohibit new construction within the Wellhead Protection Area, as designated by the Vermont DEC.
8. Encourage the use of Low Impact Development (LID) strategies to treat stormwater on-site.
9. Promote the natural balance of the hydrologic regime by controlling excess runoff and maintaining natural water infiltration and storage capacities.
~~10.~~ EPncourage educational, scientific, aesthetic and recreational activities in proximity to wetlands and ensure that development is not detrimental to these activities~~romote development in proximity to wetlands, streams and ponds that preserves their value for education, science, aesthetics and recreation.~~
10. ~~Develop a plan to establish a Town Forest~~.
11. Protect and promote forestry as a valuable land use in Bakersfield through the creation of a town forest/natural area.
~~11.~~12. Monitor and remove diseased and dying trees in town and implement a shade tree preservation program.

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~~12.~~13. Evaluate the flood hazard regulations for opportunities to incorporate additional measures to increase public safety and reduce future damages.

~~13. Consider adopting River Corridor bylaws to discourage future development in areas of high risk for fluvial erosion.~~

~~Encourage the protection and restoration of floodplains and upland forested areas that attenuate and moderate flooding and fluvial erosion.~~

~~Explore participation in the FEMA Community Rating System (CRS) to secure a discount on flood insurance.~~

~~14.~~

~~Policies (continued)~~

~~15.1. Explore participation in the FEMA Community Rating System (CRS) to secure a discount on flood insurance.~~

~~16.~~ Reduce damages to public infrastructure resulting from all hazards events through hazard mitigation planning and project implementation.

14.

15. Continue to participate in the Franklin County Mutual Aid Agreement.

Policies (continued)

16. Encourage the protection and restoration of floodplains and upland forested areas that attenuate and moderate flooding and fluvial erosion.

17. Continue to participate in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and explore participation in the FEMA Community Rating System (CRS) to secure a discount on flood insurance

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~~17.~~

Bakersfield is rich in natural resources, including high quality forestland, abundant water resources, and valuable agricultural soils. These resources contribute significantly to the town's rural and scenic character, provide opportunities for recreation, and support the local economy. In the 2025 Town Plan Survey, over 70% of residents supported protecting and preserving farms, forests, natural areas and scenic resources as the most important planning goals. Through proper planning and management, Bakersfield can work to protect and conserve the valuable natural resources that make our community a unique and enjoyable place to live. Proper planning will also ensure that our community is resilient to flooding and all other environmental risks.

Land Resources

The Town of Bakersfield spans two biophysical regions: the Champlain Valley and the Northern Green Mountains region. The Town generally rises in elevation as you move from west to east, varying from under 600 feet to over 2500 feet.



Regulating Natural Resources

Bakersfield has a strong record of protecting natural resources at the Town level. The 2026 Town Plan does not expand the Town's regulation of natural resources on private land. Additionally, all agricultural and forestry uses will continue to be exempt from regulation at the local level. Some existing town policies designed to protect natural resources may be counterproductive. For example, large minimum lot sizes in the Rural and Conservation zoning districts may be contributing to fragmentation of farms, forests and working lands.

Adoption of this Town Plan enables Bakersfield to update its zoning regulations and reevaluate standards that may negatively affect the Town's rural land. More information is available in the Land Use chapter.

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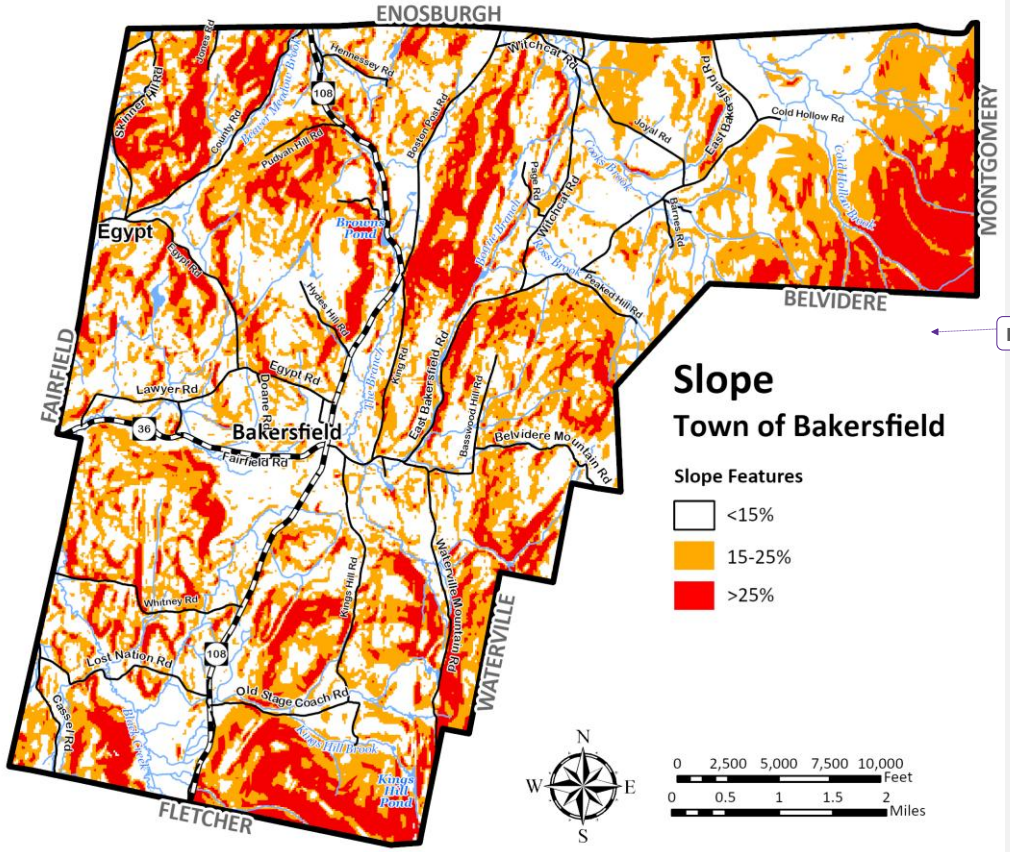
Elevations and Slopes

The high elevation areas of eastern Bakersfield include steep slopes, shallow soils, and exposed, fractured bedrock. These areas are largely forested and are not well-suited to development. Steep slopes are ideal for maple sugaring, which is an important agricultural activity in Bakersfield. Development on steep slopes can create a number of environmental problems, including increased stormwater runoff, erosion and the possibility of landslides. Septic tank disposal fields on slopes greater than 15 percent can also result in partially treated effluent seeping downhill or rising to the surface. The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) provides general guidelines for assessing slope limitations as shown in Table 8.~~1~~1.

Table ~~8~~X.~~1~~X: 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



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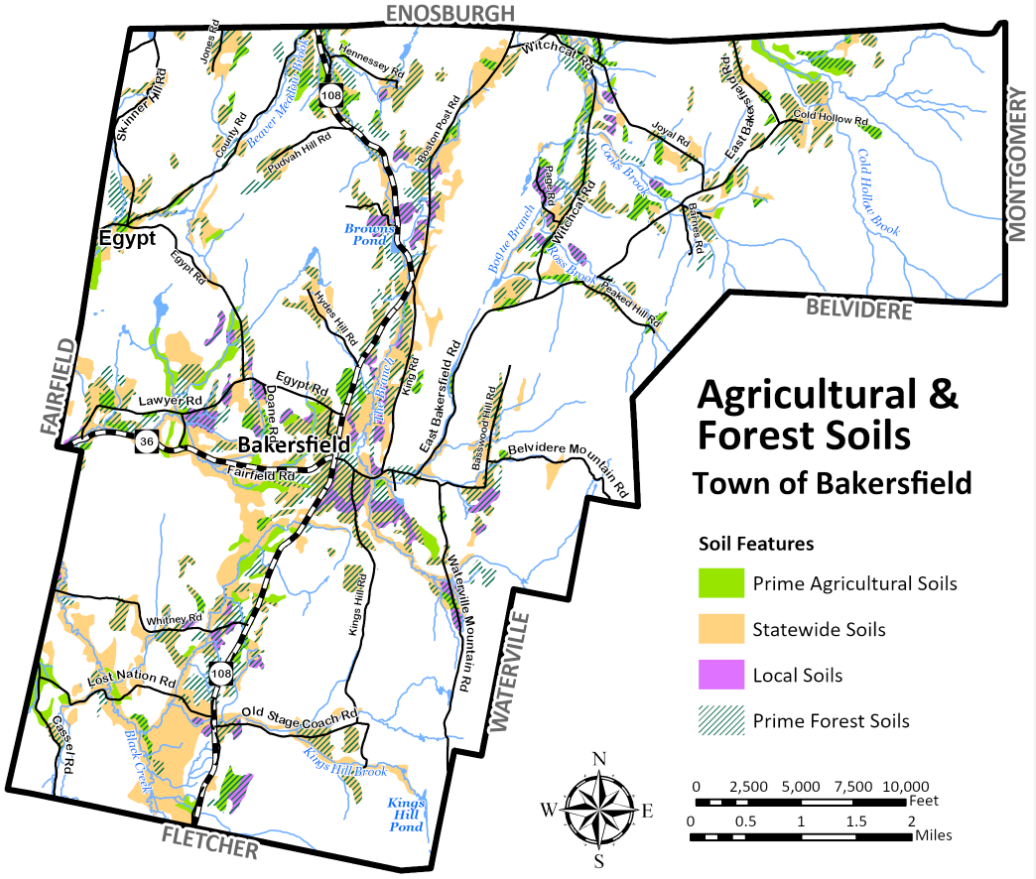
Soils

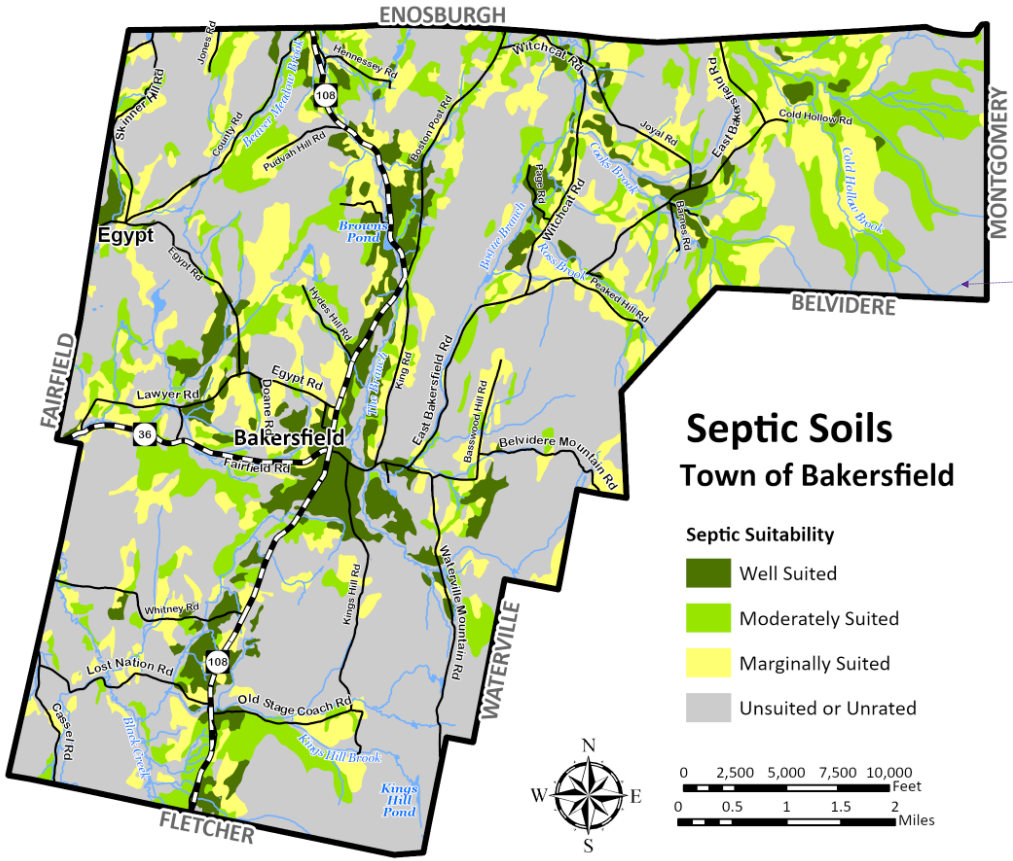
Soils are one of the most important environmental factors influencing the use of land in rural areas. Good, fertile soils represent a 10,000 year investment - a valuable and limited resource. ~~In planning for growth and development, it is important to target development in areas with appropriate septic capacity. The septic suitability of Bakersfield soils are shown to the right.~~

~~The ability of soils to support farming and forestry is also an important consideration in Bakersfield land use planning.~~ Local agriculture depends upon the availability of high quality soils in large, contiguous parcels to allow for economical hay and field crop production. Farmland conversion and fragmentation are of particular concern in Bakersfield. Keeping prime agricultural soils in agricultural use is one of the goals supported in this plan. Prime forestry soils are also important to conserve. Areas of forest soil can help determine which tracts of forest land should be maintained long-term for commercial use. Sustainable management of



soils through best management practices (BMPs) can ensure that farms and forest lands remain productive in the future.

In planning for growth and development, it is also important to target development in areas with appropriate septic capacity. The septic suitability of Bakersfield soils are shown to the right. The area surrounding Bakersfield Village is well-suited to septic, which benefits the goals of the Land Use chapter.



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Resource Extraction

Earth resources, including sand and gravel deposits, are important natural resources particularly for their use in road maintenance and construction. However, it is important to recognize that these resources are finite and that the geologic processes that create them can take tens of thousands of years to occur. In Bakersfield, their use must be carefully balanced with the consequences of their extraction, and even then should be used only when high public benefit is in evidence. In 2014, the Town purchased land for a gravel pit and this should provide for the public needs for the foreseeable future. Other extractions in town, especially for commercial purposes, should be restricted.

Improper or excessive resource extraction is extremely damaging to the natural and scenic resources of Bakersfield, with far-reaching implications for water quality and the archaeological and aesthetic resources of the region. Sand and gravel deposits often serve as important areas for aquifer

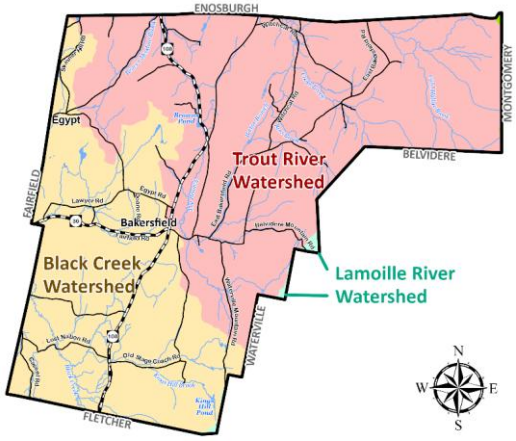
recharge and filtration. Disturbance of these areas results in a reduction of their natural ability to retain and filter groundwater, resulting in degraded water quality. -On-site storage and disposal of materials at extraction sites can cause contamination of groundwater through the leaching of hazardous materials into the water table. Removal of top soils may also have far-reaching impacts and should be discouraged.

Cultural resources are also at risk of degradation through improper earth resource extraction, including the accidental destruction of buried archaeological sites, and diminished scenic qualities which may negatively affect land values and opportunities for future use. Noise, dust, and increased traffic on roads near extraction sites can increase road maintenance costs and negatively impact the quality of life in Bakersfield.

To minimize negative impacts on the natural and cultural environment, a focus on appropriate site development that minimizes visual impact and reduces the risk of resource degradation shall be coupled with post-operative attempts at proper mitigation and site reclamation. Prior to permitting extraction, the Bakersfield Planning Commission may require a plan for the rehabilitation of the site during and at the conclusion of extraction or processing activities and appropriate guarantees to allow for enforcement and to ensure rehabilitation at the operator's expense.

Water Resources

Bakersfield has rich water resources, including rivers and streams, wetlands, and groundwater resources ~~(Figure 8.4)~~. The town's waters offer sustenance, scenic beauty, ecological values, and recreational opportunities and are important to the social, economic and cultural character of the community.



Surface Water

Bakersfield is situated within the watershed of the Missisquoi River. The Missisquoi Watershed encompasses much of northwestern Vermont and southern Quebec. All of this area drains into the Missisquoi River Basin and then into Lake Champlain. This watershed has been identified as a high priority area for the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation due to its contribution to phosphorus runoff and water quality issues in northern Lake Champlain.

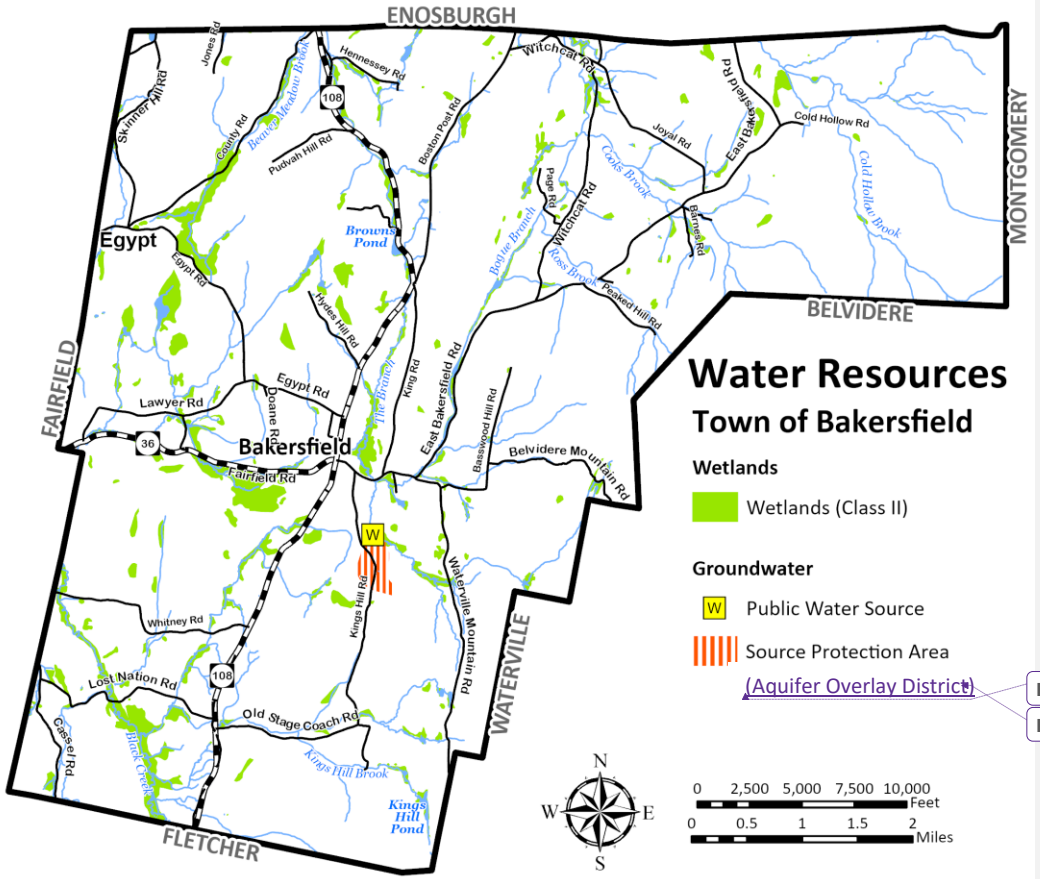
The two major subwatersheds in Bakersfield are the Black Creek and Trout River subwatersheds (see map above~~Figure 8.5~~). Flooding and erosion are major issues within these subwatersheds. – Stormwater runoff from roads, roofs, driveways and other surfaces also degrades local water quality and exacerbates flooding. During rain events and snow melt, stormwater carries dirt, oil, debris and other pollutants from these surfaces into our

waterways. All water from Bakersfield drains into Lake Champlain, which means that any problems with water quality caused in Bakersfield impact the health of the Lake as well. Ensuring high-quality surface water in Bakersfield helps improve the environment of the State as a whole.

Wetlands

Wetlands are important for a variety of reasons. The extensive biological activity of wetlands allows them to absorb nutrients and purify the water. Wetlands also regulate water levels of streams by storing large quantities of water during periods of high runoff and gradually releasing water during low flow periods. Wetlands also provide habitat for a wide variety of plants and animals, including a high number of threatened and endangered species.

Class II wetlands are wetlands with important environmental characteristics that are protected by wetlands rules. Bakersfield has many potential Class II wetlands identified on the Vermont Significant Wetlands Inventory Maps. These mapped wetlands receive protection from the State of Vermont, the Army Corps of Engineers, and the Federal Environmental Protection Agency.



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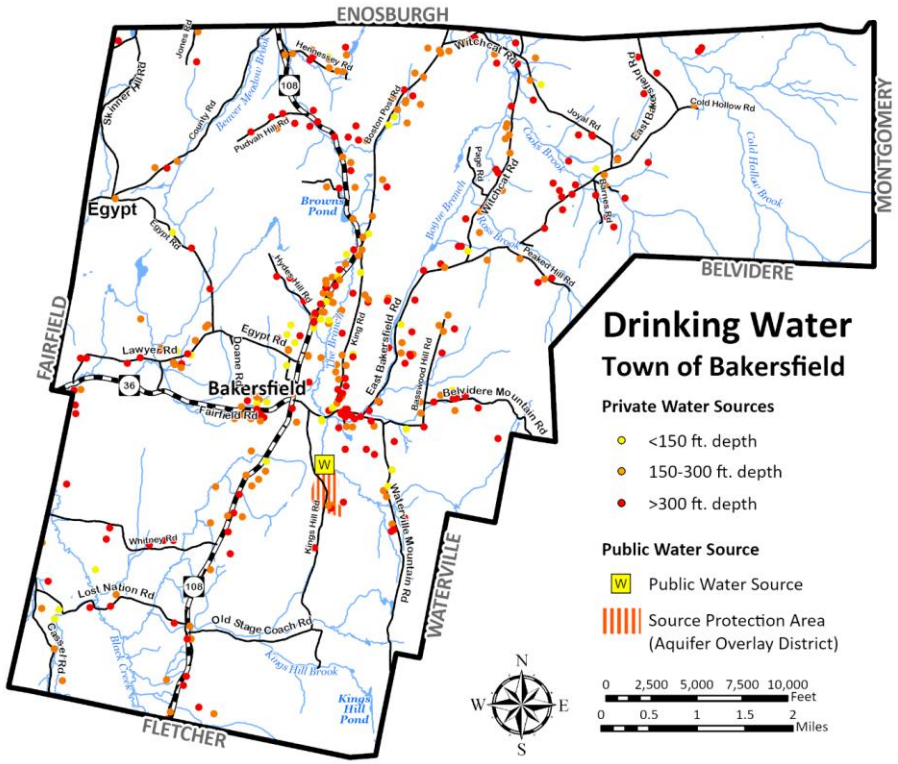
Groundwater

Clean groundwater is a valuable resource in Bakersfield. 120 residents are on the public village water system, and all other residents depend ~~, since many residents depend~~ upon private ~~springs and shallow~~ wells and springs for their water.

-Water from the surface slowly seeps into the ground to form groundwater aquifers. Activity in these groundwater recharge areas can affect the quality and quantity of the potential water supply, especially in areas with a seasonal high water table of 0-1.5 feet where there is unconfined groundwater at or near the surface for part of the year.

-Failed septic systems, leaking gas tanks, road salt, industrial wastes and chemical application in agriculture are all common sources of groundwater pollution. Once a groundwater system is contaminated it is expensive and difficult, if not impossible, to fix.



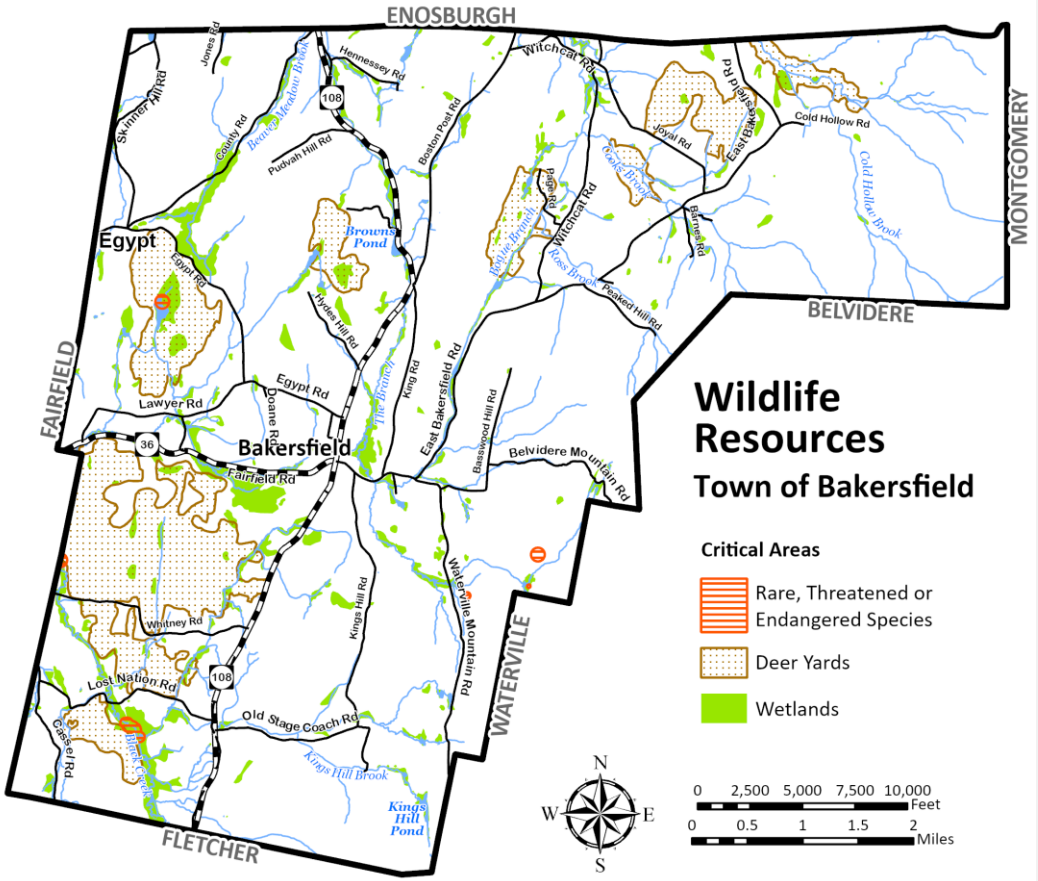
In an effort to protect the municipal water supply, Bakersfield has adopted an aquifer overlay district, which is intended to discourage new development and maintain the high quality of drinking water for village residents. Commercial extraction of water is discouraged town-wide in Bakersfield to protect the quantity of water available in aquifers.

For residents not on the village water system, Bakersfield can be a difficult area to find a reliable water supply. State data shows that there are 355 private water sources in Bakersfield, many of which are wells over 300 feet deep (see map). In recent years, residents in the East Bakersfield Road

area outside the village have had problems with running out of water in private wells. The Town should consider opportunities to expand the public water system to ensure reliable access to high-quality drinking water for all residents.

Wildlife Resources

The Town of Bakersfield is host to abundant flora and fauna typical of the region. Bear, deer, moose, and small mammals occupy our fields and forests. Over 90 species of breeding birds have been documented in Bakersfield. A heronry (breeding colony of herons) in the western part of town has been monitored by state wildlife personnel for several years and is a protected area. More than fifteen of Vermont's forty breeding reptiles and amphibians have also been recorded within the town's boundaries. Vernal pools, ponds, and other wetlands within the town provide critical breeding habitat for amphibians.



Invasive plant and animal species pose problems for our forests, wetlands, and waterways. So far, very little research has been done to inventory Bakersfield for the presence of invasive species.

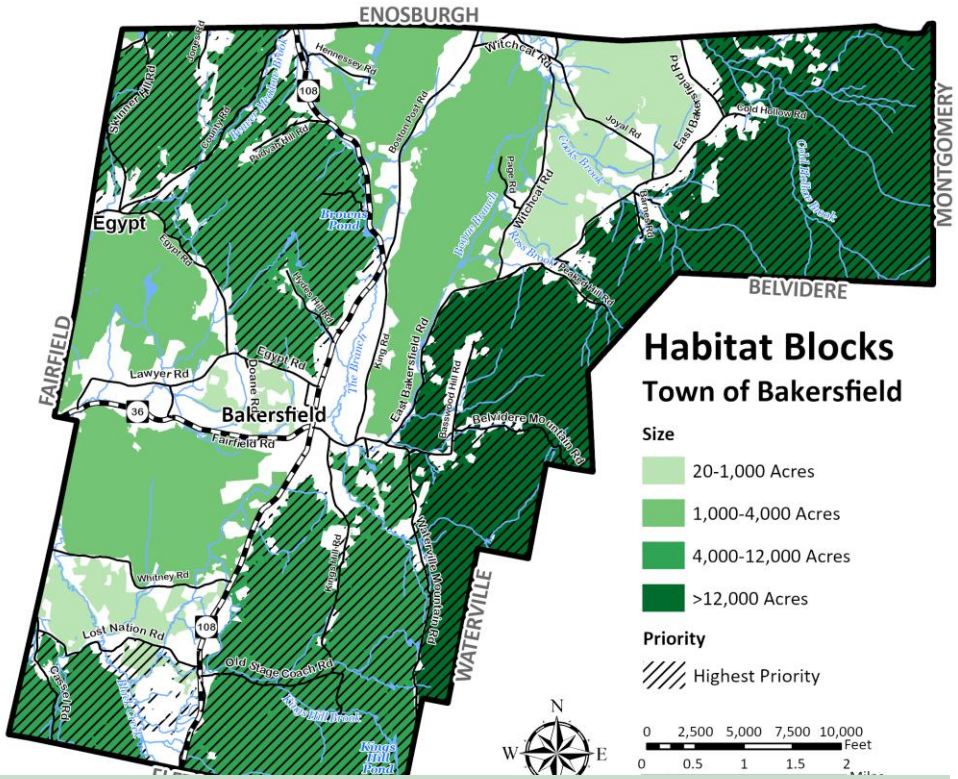
Deer wintering areas provide critical habitat for whitetail deer. These areas of hemlock, spruce, fir, cedar, and pine forest provide shelter from deep snows and permit easier winter travel for animals. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has targeted deer yards for protection. These and other critical habitat areas are depicted in- the Wildlife Resources map~~Figure 8.6~~.

Black bears prefer mountainous and forested landscapes just like those found on the slopes of the Green Mountains. Black bears 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, the black bear habitat areas are decreased.

Habitat Blocks

Approximately 72 percent of Bakersfield is covered by forest. Bakersfield's forests provide habitat for many kinds of wildlife, stabilize soils, absorb runoff, add to the scenic value of the landscape, and provide a living for Bakersfield residents who rely on logging or profits from their woodlots. Large, unfragmented stretches of forest in the eastern part of Bakersfield are critical habitat for mammal and bird species that require forest interior.

Many areas east of VT Route 108 have been identified as "highest priority" core habitat blocks by the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources. This means that they are areas of contiguous, unfragmented forest that are critically important to protecting native species. The



The Habitat Blocks map is required for inclusion in the Town Plan under 24 V.S.A. § 4382(2)(D) and 24 V.S.A. 4302(6)(C), which were updated in Act 171 of 2016. **The Town Plan does not propose any new regulations based on the Habitat Blocks map.**

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same habitat blocks have also been "highest priority connectivity blocks" that provide connection along the "spine" of the Green Mountains between Vermont and Quebec.

It is important to minimize forest fragmentation in Bakersfield. Even low densities of development and rural roads can fragment habitat blocks. Roads and homes disrupt animal travel, resulting in invasive species taking root, and creating more conflict points between humans and animals. Bakersfield has mostly avoided significant fragmentation of its forests and important habitats. Many habitat blocks are located in the Town's Conservation district, which will help prevent future development and fragmentation of these areas.

Scenic Resources

The scenic beauty of Bakersfield is among our community's greatest assets. Yet, despite the importance of scenic beauty to our community and sense of place, scenic and aesthetic concerns are often difficult to quantify, and can be challenging to incorporate into comprehensive planning endeavors. In order to protect these resources, the Town has identified specific scenic viewsheds that are important to the community's beauty and sense of place.

- Rt. 36 and Cross Road, looking east
- Rt. 108 between Burnor Rd. and Lost Nation Rd., looking south View of Mt. Mansfield looking south from Rt. 108
-
- Rt. 108 at the to Enosburg town line, looking north

For In these areas, the town will need to identify these resources and encourages innovation in design and layout of development that respects and complements the scenic resources so that the visual impact can be minimized. The use of vegetative buffers and other screening methods are also will be encouraged. to help reduce the visual impact of development in the Town. This includes the regulation of cellular and wind energy systems to the extent possible.

Light Pollution

Bakersfield's night sky is also an important scenic resource that can be preserved through thoughtful development. Site design should encourage using properly shielded, energy-efficient, and warm-colored lighting, and minimizing unnecessary illumination when possible.

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Environmental Resilience

Hazard Mitigation Planning

Due to the effects of a globally changing climate, severe weather events have become more common in Vermont in recent years. The lack of cell service in Bakersfield also makes the Town particularly vulnerable to weather hazards. Hazard Mitigation is any sustained action that reduces or eliminates long-term risk to people and property from natural and human-caused hazards and their effects. The Town of Bakersfield is actively engaged in hazard mitigation planning and adopted a Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) in 2020. The LHMP evaluates potential risks to the community and the strategies that address those risks.

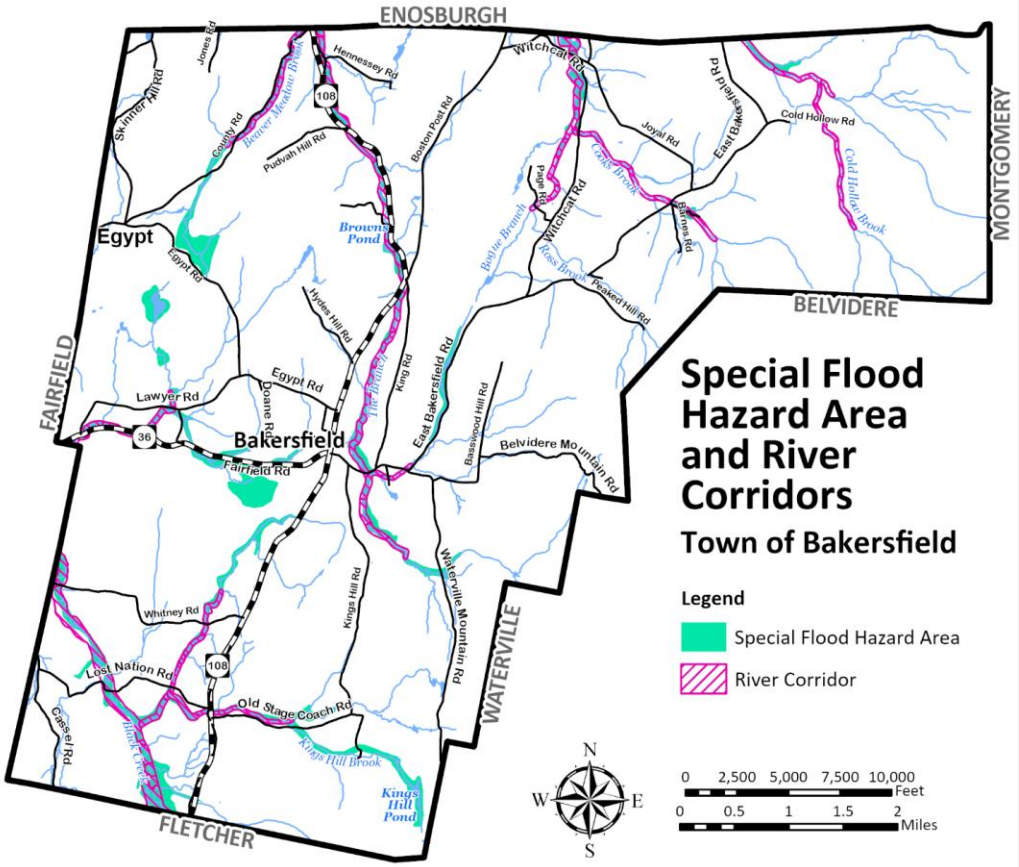
The Northwest Region ~~Bakersfield~~ is also represented on the Statewide Local Emergency Planning Committee, ~~District 4 serving Franklin County~~ and Bakersfield is a member of the Franklin County International Firefighters Mutual Aid Association. This plan summarizes many of the risks addressed in the LHMP. For additional information on these risks and Bakersfield's hazard mitigation planning efforts, the full LHMP is available on the Town website and at the Town Office.

Flooding

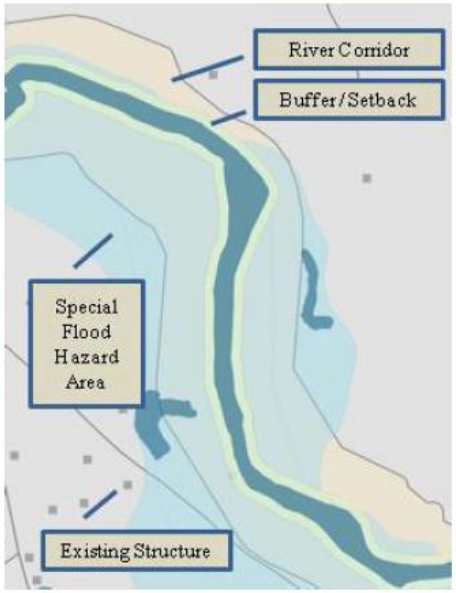
Flooding is a natural and common occurrence in Vermont, but floods have been increasing in recent years due to climate change. The best protection against loss of life and property is to not build in areas prone to flooding. Flooding can occur in two ways: inundation and fluvial erosion.

Inundation flooding occurs when the water level of a river, stream or pond rises beyond its banks and flows into nearby land. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) maps areas that have a 1% chance of flooding each year. This area is known as the special flood hazard area (SFHA). The SFHAs in Bakersfield are along the Tyler Branch, Black Creek and their tributaries. Development within these floodplains can have many potentially damaging consequences, as construction may obstruct the natural flow of water or displace soil and create higher water levels during floods.

Appropriate uses of floodplains are those that allow the river to access the floodplain during high flows, including agriculture, open space, and



recreation. Bakersfield's zoning bylaw restricts development within the SFHA. These regulations comply with the standards set by FEMA for participation in the National Flood Insurance Program, a federal program which allows residents and businesses to purchase government-backed flood insurance. Official Special Flood Hazard Area maps from FEMA can be found in the vault at the Town Office or online at the FEMA Map Service Center.



Fluvial Erosion

A second type of flooding is known as fluvial erosion. Fluvial erosion is the destruction of riverbanks caused by the fast movement of rivers and streams. Fluvial erosion occurs when heavy rains or alterations to the river channel cause the water to move faster. Fluvial erosion is a common cause of road and bridge washouts during flooding events. The Vermont Agency of Natural Resources has mapped River Corridors across the state that are at risk for fluvial erosion. To help prevent damage related to fluvial erosion, Bakersfield's development bylaw restricts development in River Corridors (see diagram on right). Regulating River Corridors also means that Bakersfield can receive a higher amount of recovery funding from the state in the event of a federally declared disaster.

High Winds

High winds are a hazardous threat to the Town and most commonly accompany other storm events. Violent windstorms are possible in Bakersfield, and high winds are common along the Cold Hollow Range on the eastern part of Town as well as along the Branch, Beaver Meadows Brook and Bogue Branch.

Power lines and trees are most vulnerable to high winds. Power outages may occur resulting in significant loss of business as well as threatening public safety. The Town has a limited ability in quickly restoring lost power caused by damaging high winds. Cleaning up debris following high wind events can be costly depending on the severity of the event. Public utilities should ensure that trees close to power lines are regularly trimmed and maintained to minimize this risk.

Structure Fires

Structure fires can occur anywhere. The Town Fire Department receives an average of 6 structure fire calls per year. The Fire Department also provides assistance to other Towns through Franklin County Mutual Aid. The Fire Department actively upgrades its equipment through federal grant programs.

In the village area of Bakersfield, structures that are relatively close together raise the risk for multiple structure fire. Older historic buildings that lack fire alarms and sprinkler systems are greater at risk for damages. New building construction codes and standards which address fire safety are expected to lessen this risk.

Winter Storms

Winter storms affect the entire Town and generally cause disruptions to public and private services. The primary impacts of a storm typically include the disruption to transportation networks, school closings and occasionally telecommunications and power outages. Vulnerable populations such as the elderly, those dependent on medical equipment and specialized health or physical care are at risk to winter storms. Also at risk are farms and associated structures and livestock. Barns can collapse due to heavy snow loads. Dairy cattle are susceptible to mastitis if they are unable to be milked.

The Town is equipped to handle typical winter emergencies, including keeping roads open and repairing downed infrastructure. The town has access to machinery, including bulldozers, plows, ATVs and snowmobiles, should they be needed in the event of a storm.

Air Quality

Air quality is generally high throughout Vermont, especially in rural communities such as Bakersfield. Motor vehicles are the largest source of air pollution in Vermont, which can create localized areas of poor air quality where traffic is congested. Air quality can also impacted by weather patterns which carry pollutants from other areas. In recent years, wildfire smoke from Canada has impacted Bakersfield in summer months. All efforts should be taken to maintain good air quality in Bakersfield.

7~~10~~. LAND USE

Goals

- To maintain Bakersfield's rural character and scenic resources through informed land use decisions
- To accommodate future growth in patterns, densities, and locations that respect traditional patterns of development, and that do not compromise the integrity of natural, historic and cultural resources
- To establish public policies that balance development with the town's ability to provide services
- To protect and promote the continuation of agriculture and forestry as integral components of Bakersfield's local economy and culture through land use planning

Policies

1. Promote new development in areas of existing infrastructure and services (roads, power, and water) and discourage development in areas without existing infrastructure and services.

~~Encourage low development densities where low levels of services are provided, and higher densities only where residences and businesses can be properly served~~

~~Design clustered housing, including housing specifically designed to be affordable, to fit into the cultural, aesthetic, and natural resource landscape of Bakersfield~~

~~2.~~ 2. Promote anti-sprawl initiatives as a measure to maintain the appropriate use of the town's land resources

~~3.~~ 3. Protect the vitality and importance of ~~the village center~~ Bakersfield Village by designating it as the primary focus for commerce~~,~~ while ~~simultaneously~~ preserving its essential historic character and beauty

~~4.~~ 4. Discourage development that causes hazards~~in areas which are hazardous~~ to human health and safety

5. In subdivision review, encourage lot layouts, landscaping and site design that respect the natural features of the landscape and do not create long, narrow lots which contribute to sprawl and waste irreplaceable agricultural and forest ~~silvicultural~~ resources

~~Strongly encourage landscaping and site design that reduces adverse impacts of new development~~

~~Protect prime recreational resources from incompatible land uses and protect scenic qualities of agricultural, forest and riparian lands from unnecessary despoliation~~

~~2. Permit development only in a manner that is safe for existing drinking water supplies, both public and private~~

~~3. Protect water quality by limiting development in Wellhead Protection Areas, wetlands, and along stream banks~~

~~4. Protect river corridors by establishing a minimum setback or "buffer" between development and the streambank~~

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~~5. Promote environmentally sound construction practices, including control of runoff and erosion during all phases of construction and treatment of wastes off of steep slopes~~

6. ~~Protect scenic ridgelines by regulating their development, including the siting of cellular and wind towers~~ Work to identify appropriate locations for cell towers that would provide the best coverage for Bakersfield visitors and residents.

7. Prohibit siting wind towers on specific scenic ridgelines identified in this plan (Environment and Resilience chapter).

~~6. Steer development away from areas where soils will not support it due to shallow depth to bedrock, instability, or high water table~~

~~7. Prohibit land development on slopes greater than 25 percent, and maintain vegetative cover~~

~~8. Conduct development on slopes greater than 15 percent carefully in order to avoid environmental degradation and conditions that create health hazards~~

~~9. Protect public health, welfare, and safety by prohibiting development in the flood plain and continuing to participate in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP)~~

~~10. Support and encourage participation in land preservation measures, such as those promoted by the Vermont Land Trust~~

8. ~~Maintain the character of~~Development in existing neighborhoods in the village should respect historic resources, maintain compact settlement patterns and avoid potential conflicts between incompatible land uses.

9. Support working lands as part of Bakersfield's natural landscape. Agriculture, forestry, sugaring, and related infrastructure shall continue to be exempt from development regulations at the local level

10. Conserve agriculturally productive lands by accommodating development in areas apart from most farming activity and from areas of prime agricultural soils

11. Encourage sustainable agricultural and silvicultural practices to both protect the use of land and water resources, and to keep a working rural landscape based on a practice of stewardship

~~11. 1. Strongly encourage landscaping and site design that reduces adverse impacts of new development~~

~~12. Protect and promote forestry as a valuable land use in Bakersfield through the creation of a town forest~~

~~13.~~ Promote alternative small farms which produce products such as cheese, yogurt, market garden, etc.

12. ~~Provide incentives for appropriate commercial growth in the village district~~

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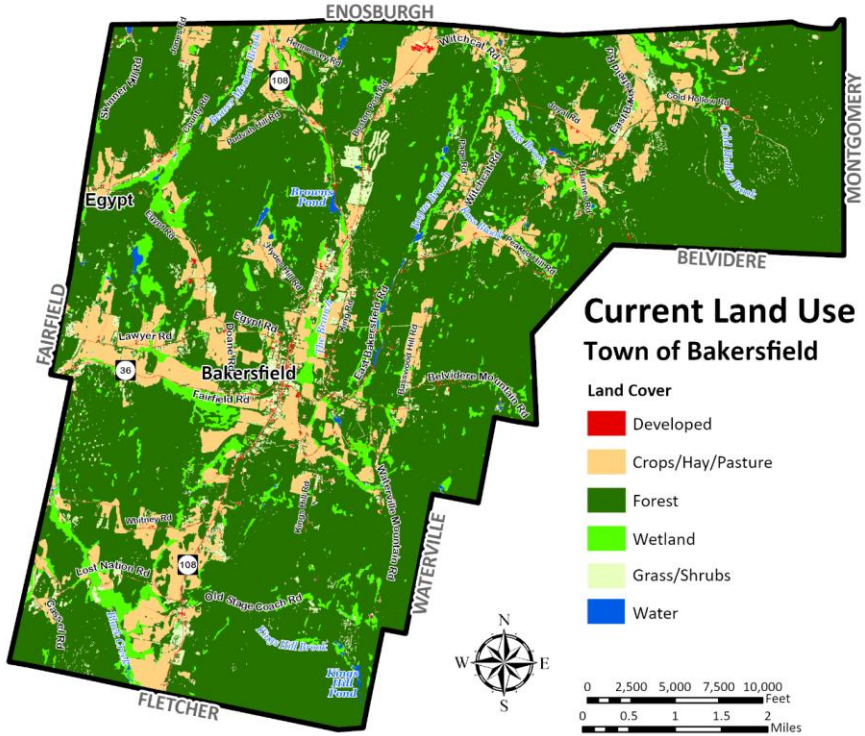
In developing the land use plan for Bakersfield, it is important to recognize the many physical constraints to development. Steep slopes limit development in many areas of town, and nearly a third of the land (8,610 acres) has a slope greater than 20 percent. The town also has two small bodies of water, Brown's and Kings Hill Ponds, with a total area of only 16 acres and 1057 acres of class 2 wetlands which account for almost 4 percent of its land area. The overall goal of Bakersfield's land use plan is to encourage development in and around Bakersfield Village and reduce development pressure on rural lands and sensitive areas.

Current Land Use and Development Trends

Currently, the highest concentration of residential development in Bakersfield lies within the village area. This is also the district where commercial development is considered to be most appropriate.– The higher density development that exists within the village creates a strong sense of community and is an efficient use of land.– The village also provides important public services including the Town Hall, pPost oOffice, school, library, fire department andd rescue service and historical society.



The village is an important asset and should be promoted and preserved by encouraging historic preservation, economic development, and the adaptive reuse of existing structures.– Village sidewalks, the reuse of Brigham AcademyThe village sidewalk project, efforts to renovate the Brigham Academy, and other projects intended to maintain and improve the quality of life in Bakersfield village should be encouraged and supported through thoughtful land use decisions.– Sprawling development patterns that fragment the landscape and detract from Bakersfield's rural character should be are discouraged.

Agriculture and forestry continue to be important components of the local culture and economy. It is important to remember that owners of farms and forests provide a public benefit by not developing their property, and cost the town little in terms of municipal services. These areas provideFrom popular scenic vistas, to important wildlife habitat, and otherthese contributions to the well-being of the town cannot be overlooked.

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The development of farms and forests for residential use ~~is~~ can be~~becoming more~~ profitable for ~~the individual~~individual ~~land owners~~landowners. This creates pressures for development.~~–~~ It is important that this development be guided by good land use planning in order to maintain the unique character of our community and ensure that local services are not overwhelmed.

The use of planned unit development ~~(PUD) may~~ provides a tool for ~~to enable~~ Bakersfield to accommodate some residential development, while protecting the working landscape and open land.~~–~~ Planned Unit Developments (PUDs) allow for a more flexible design approach and provide an opportunity for the planning commission to work with landowners and developers to create subdivisions that reflect the goals and values of Bakersfield, including clustered development, the provision of common land, and the protection of prime agricultural soils.

As currently implemented, the Town has concerns about the Fixed Area Allocation system that is currently used for subdivisions, as well as large minimum lot sizes in Rural and Conservation districts. The Town should ensure that these policies are not contributing to fragmentation and loss of farm and forest land. Other options for zoning in rural areas may be more appropriate to meet the Land Use goals of the Town Plan, and should be explored in future zoning updates.

Future Land Use~~/Current Zoning Districts~~

The town of Bakersfield ~~currently~~ divides its future land use map into the following ~~zoning~~ districts: Village Center, High Density Residential, ~~Low Density Residential,~~ Rural, Conservation, ~~Watershed,~~ Aquifer Overlay, and Flood Hazard Overlay ~~(Figure 10.2)~~.~~–~~ The purposes of these districts are summarized below ~~and a complete description can be found in the town of Bakersfield Zoning Bylaws adopted in 2017~~.~~–~~ These districts represent both the existing and future land uses in the Town of Bakersfield.~~–~~ These districts are implemented through Bakersfield's zoning regulations, and it is important that Bakersfield's zoning conforms to ~~is informed by~~ the Land Use plan.

Village Center District:~~–~~ The Village Center represents the historic center of Bakersfield.~~–~~ This district has a distinct historic character which features mixed residential, commercial and public uses in a historic village setting.~~—~~ Development in this district should protect and preserve existing historic resources, promote pedestrian access and maintain the village character, including its historic settlement pattern, scenic character and sense of community.

High Density Residential District: This district is comprised of the area around the village center where additional high-density development could be accommodated.~~–~~ This district provides a transition between the compact development of the village center and the rural areas of Bakersfield. It is designed to allow a radial pattern of development around the village in an effort to discourage linear sprawl.~~–~~ Development in this district

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should complement and extend the character and traditional development pattern of the village core. Interconnected street networks and pedestrian access are encouraged in this district.

Rural District: It is intended that this district remain rural, agricultural and silvicultural. The preservation of farmland and prime agricultural soils is a major objective. Rural residential development and compatible rural uses, at a density the land can support are permitted. Clustered development that protects large, contiguous tracts of farmland or open space is appropriate in this district. Within the rural district, additional restrictions are included to protect an important Heron Rookery in northwestern Bakersfield, consistent with the requests of the Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Conservation District: This district is designated to protect the natural resources and scenic value of mainly forested lands that lack direct access to public roads, are important for wildlife and wildlife habitat, and which are poorly suited for development. Included are areas of high elevation, steep slopes and swamplands. Concern must be given to building on any slope greater the 15% because the soils in these areas tend to be thin and unstable, making them unsuitable for development. The Conservation District includes the watershed that provides Bakersfield's municipal water supply and land uses that might reduce the water quality in this area are restricted. Only limited, low-density development is to be permitted in this district. The Conservation District is also mapped as a known constraint for solar, wind and biomass generation in Energy Plan maps (see Appendix A).

Aquifer Overlay District: The purpose of the Aquifer Overlay District is to protect the public health and safety by preserving and maintaining the community water source from incompatible development. No new construction is permitted within the Aquifer Overlay District.

Flood Hazard Overlay District: The purpose of the Flood Hazard Overlay District is to minimize and prevent the loss of life and property, the disruption of commerce, and the extraordinary costs that result from flooding and other flood-related hazards. Within this district, the design and

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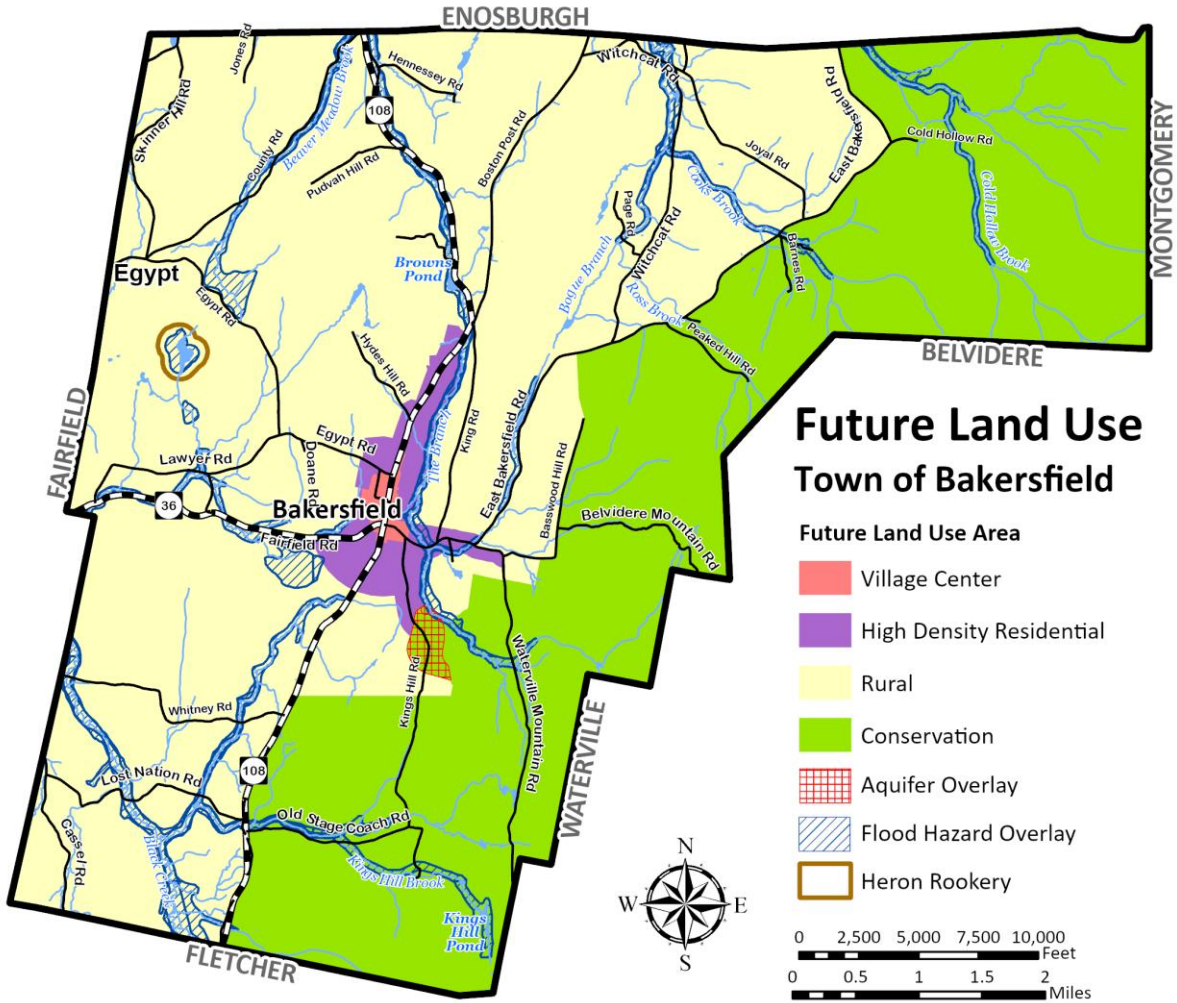

construction of development should be accomplished in a manner that minimizes or eliminates the potential for flooding and loss or damage to life

and property. Uses in the flood hazards areas shall be restricted to agriculture, conservation and outdoor recreation.

The map of Future Land Use Districts is on the next page.

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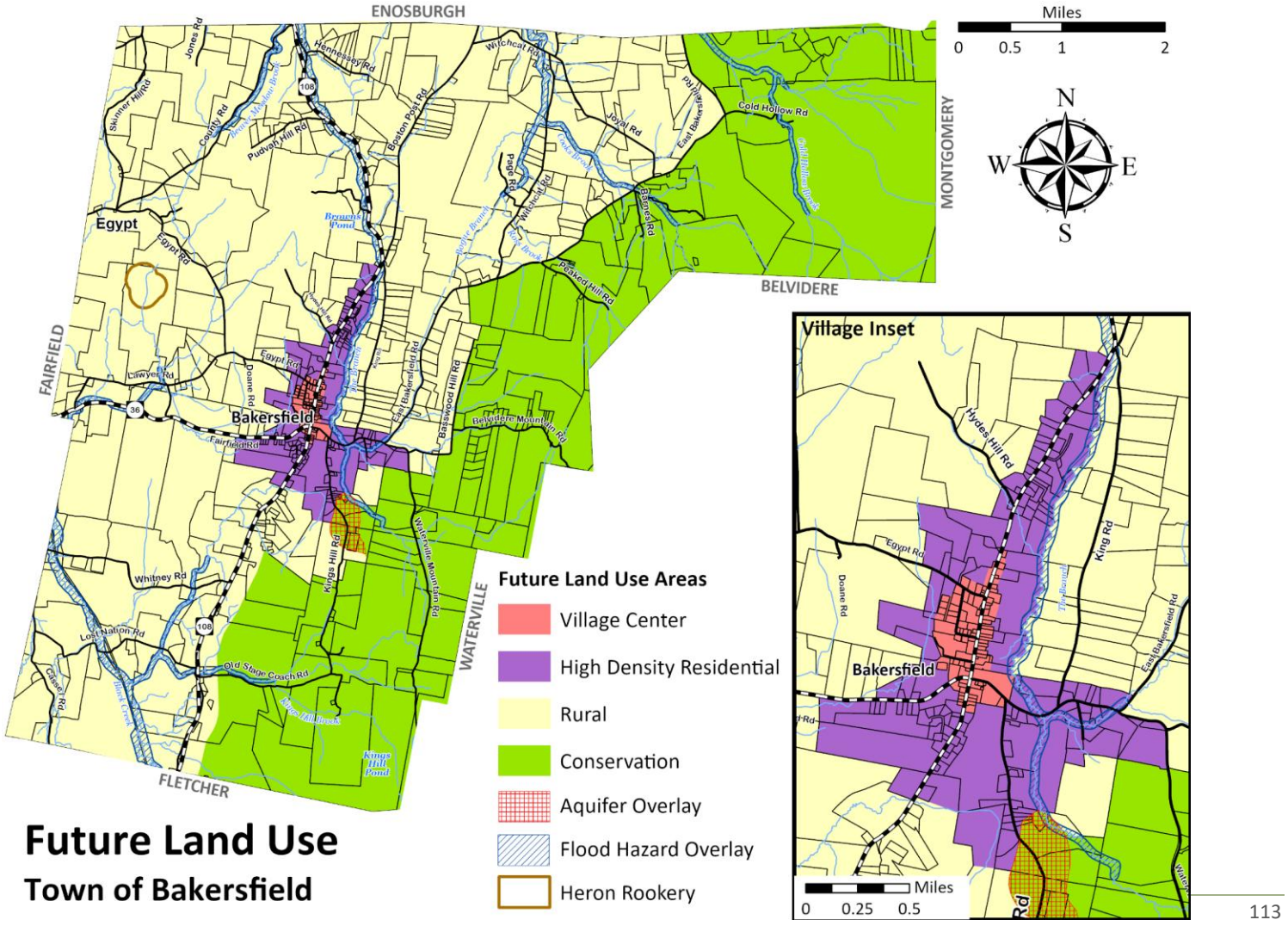
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Future Land Use Areas
Village Center
High Density Residential
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Aquifer Overlay
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Future Land Use
Town of Bakersfield

Compatibility with Neighboring Towns and the Region

Land use patterns are shaped by many factors beyond the borders of a community. ~~, including the economy, the housing market, employment trends, transportation opportunities, energy costs, etc. In working to attain the desired land use patterns, it is important that planning efforts be coordinated across municipal boundaries.~~ The Town of Bakersfield shares borders with the Towns of Fletcher, Fairfield, Enosburgh and Montgomery in Franklin County and the Towns of Belvidere and Waterville in Lamoille County. Bakersfield is also a member municipality of the Northwest Region. According to state regulations, the Bakersfield Town Plan must be compatible with other adopted plans. This ~~chapter~~ section will provide a summary of other plans and Bakersfield's compatibility. ~~the land use plans and regulations implemented by each of the communities and consider the compatibility of these efforts. While this will provide a snapshot in time, it is also important to seek opportunities for on-going coordination between communities and at the regional level to avoid potential conflicts and effectively work towards common goals.~~

~~**Compatibility with** **Fletcher**~~

~~The Town of Fletcher borders Bakersfield to the south. Fletcher adopted its most recent town plan on September 19, 2005. The plan seeks to maintain the rural character of the community, to provide for orderly development that enhances the quality of life for Fletcher residents, and to require that all development be pursued with strict regard to the capacity of the land. From 2000-2010, Fletcher experienced similar population growth rates as compared with Bakersfield.~~

Fletcher's Proposed Land Use Map is compatible with Bakersfield's. Adjoining lands are classified as Conservation, Rural Residential/Agricultural, and Forest in the Fletcher Town Plan. These districts have similar goals to Bakersfield's Conservation and Rural districts on our side of the Town boundary. Fletcher also a 1000-foot buffer on the east side of Route 108 as the boundary between its Rural and Forest districts, which is the same boundary that Bakersfield uses for our Rural and Conservation district boundary in that area.

~~To regulate land use, Fletcher has adopted zoning and subdivision regulations. These regulations were most recently adopted October 24, 2002. Along its border with Bakersfield, to the west of route 108 is Fletcher's forest district, which shares similar goals to Bakersfield's conservation district and requires a similar density of development. To the east is Fletcher's conservation district, which requires a density of one unit per 10 acres, similar to the density requirement in Bakersfield's adjoining rural district. Along route 108, Fletcher has designated the rural residential/ag district, the purpose of which is "to provide for and protect residential, agricultural, forestry and compatible commercial and recreational uses." While this district allows for a greater density of development (2 acres/unit) than the adjoining land in Bakersfield, this is not considered an incompatible use of land in this area.~~

~~**Compatibility with** **Fairfield**~~

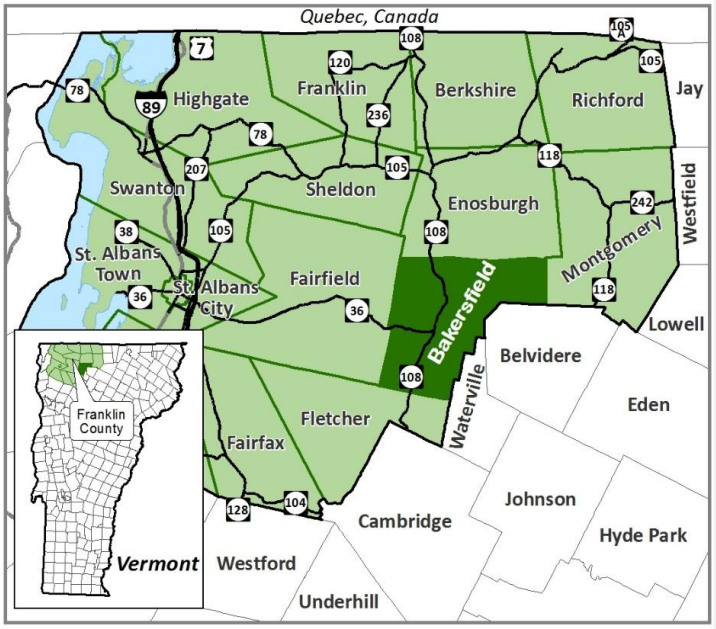

Figure 14.1 – Bakersfield Location Map

Fairfield and Bakersfield's Proposed Land Use maps are compatible. To the west of Bakersfield, lies Fairfield. According to the town plan, adopted on December 14, 2009, "It is the primary and fundamental intention of Fairfield to remain a rural, agricultural town." Fairfield is currently in the process of updating its town plan, including its Growth Management Plan. The current Growth Management Plan has established a cap of ten building permits issued per year, which serves to slow growth to a rate the community can accommodate.

Fairfield most recently revised its zoning and subdivision regulations on May 14, 2012. The town is divided into seven zoning districts: Agricultural/Rural Residential, Chester A. Arthur Scenic District, East Fairfield District, Fairfield Center District, Fairfield Swamp District, Lake District, and the Uplands District.

Bakersfield has designated the entire length of this boundary to be in the rural as Ruraldistrict. In Fairfield, the south side of Rroute 36 is in the Uuplands district, which is intended for conservation and recreationin which agricultural and forestry uses and essential public services are the only permitted uses, and t. he northern portion is Much of northern Fairfield is designated as Aagricultural/Rrural Rresidential, which is intended to preserve rural character and protect agricultural resources while providing for residential, agricultural, forestry, and compatible commercial and recreational uses. Bakersfield's Rural district is Along the Chester A. Arthur Road, Fairfield has designated a scenic district which intersects the northwestern corner of Bakersfield. These land uses are compatible with both of thesethe land usesadjoining rural district in Bakersfield.

Along Route 36 is the area designated as theTo the west of Bakersfield Village along Route 36 is the East Fairfield Village district, which provides for residential, commercial and other compatible development that serves the needs of the town and maintains the traditional , social and economic physical rolecharacter of the village. Maintaining the vitality of East Fairfield village is consistent with the goals of the Bakersfield plan. By designating the area between East Fairfield Vvillage and Bakersfield Vvillage as rural, the Ttown of Bakersfield seeks to limit the potential for strip development along Rroute 36 and to maintain the two centers as distinct.

Compatibility with Enosburgh

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~~Enosburgh lies to the north of Bakersfield. Enosburgh is currently in the process of updating their town plan. According to their most recent plan, adopted on August 19, 2013, the town of Enosburgh seeks to preserve its unique character, protect natural resources, promote agriculture and forestry, and provide employment opportunities and a high quality of life for residents.~~

~~Enosburgh most recently updated its zoning regulations on May 27, 2013. The town is divided into five zoning districts: Village of Enosburg Falls, Agricultural, Rural Residential, Conservation and Wellhead Protection. There are also three overlay districts: Natural Resources Overlay, Wetland Overlay, and Flood Hazard Overlay.~~

Most of ~~Along m~~Enosburgh's~~ost of its~~ border with Bakersfield is designated as Agricultural and Rural Residential in the Enosburgh Town Plan~~,~~ ~~Enosburgh is designated as Rural Residential.~~ The mountainous area to the east is~~-~~ designated as Conservation~~within the Conservation Zone~~. These areas are compatible with the adjacent Rural and Conservation Districts in Bakersfield.

~~Compatibility with~~ Montgomery

Bakersfield shares a short border to the east with Montgomery. This border is mountainous and sparsely populated. There are no roads connecting Bakersfield directly to Montgomery. This boundary is designated Conservation II in Montgomery's Plan and Conservation in Bakersfield's Plan. These districts have similar goals to protect sensitive resources and limit development.

~~The Montgomery Town Plan, adopted on August 19, 2010, calls for preserving the town's rural character, protecting its natural resources, and maintaining unique cultural resources including its two historic villages and six covered bridges.~~

~~Montgomery implements its land use policies through zoning regulations (most recently adopted on March 1, 2005) but does not have subdivision regulations. The area bordering Bakersfield is designated as the Conservation II district. This district requires a 20 acre minimum lot size and the only permitted uses are agriculture, forestry, water storage and reservoirs, and wildlife refuge. Camps are considered a conditional use in this district. These regulations are consistent with the adjoining conservation district in Bakersfield.~~

~~Compatibility with~~ Belvidere

Belvedere's Town Plan maps their border with Bakersfield as a Forest district. The main goal of this district is the conservation of forest resources, which is compatible with Bakersfield's Conservation district on our side of the boundary. Belvedere and Bakersfield are connected by Belvedere Mountain Road, an unimproved and unmaintained Class 4 road with no plans to be upgraded. Both land use plans support this goal by limiting development in this area.~~The Town of Belvidere is located in Lamoille County to the east of Bakersfield. The Town Plan was adopted on May 5, 2005. The goals of the Town Plan are to control growth to avoid undue tax burden on residents, to protect natural resources, to promote agriculture and forestry practices, and to ensure that land use decisions are made locally. The town of Belvidere does not have zoning or subdivision regulations, but does regulate development within the floodplain in accordance with the National Flood Insurance Program.~~

~~Compatibility with~~ Waterville

Bakersfield's boundary with Waterville is classified as Conservation in our Town Plan. Adjacent lands in Waterville are mostly classified as Conservation & Forest Resource Lands in Waterville's Town Plan. One difference in the Waterville Plan is that the area around Lapland/Waterville Mountain Road is as Rural Residential, which provides for residential uses appropriate with the physical capability of the land. Adjacent limited Rural Residential uses in Waterville should not impact the goals of Bakersfield Town Plan as long as they do not increase travel on Waterville Mountain Road, which is intended for very low traffic with no winter maintenance. The Waterville Plan states that our shared boundary is an opportunity for collaboration to protect natural resources, and Bakersfield also supports this goal. ~~Waterville is also located in Lamoille County to the east of Bakersfield. Like Belvidere, Waterville does not have zoning or subdivision regulations. They do have a town plan adopted originally on September 22, 2003 and revised on May 4, 2009. Goals of this plan include: "Keep Waterville small and rural in order to preserve the quality of life here" and "Encourage preservation of Waterville's natural resources and scenic beauty, including water resources, open land, mountaintops and ridges, forest and agricultural land, trails and views."~~

~~Compatibility with~~ Northwest Regional Plan

The Town of Bakersfield is an active member of the Northwest Regional Planning Commission. ~~-~~Each of the municipalities in Franklin and Grand Isle Counties has representation on the Board of Commissioners. Bakersfield currently has two members regularly representing at Board meetings.

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The most recent Northwest Regional Plan was adopted~~.~~ in 2026~~on July 29, 2015 and was amended on June 28, 2017~~. Bakersfield's proposed land uses are similar to the land uses proposed on the regional level, and the goals of the Regional Plan are supported by the Bakersfield Plan. The Bakersfield Town Plan will be reviewed by the Regional Planning Commission ~~in order~~ to ensure compatibility and receive regional confirmation and approval.

~~Based on this analysis, none of the goals, objectives or recommendations in the Bakersfield Town Plan will adversely affect the plans or development trends of the neighboring communities or the region. Bakersfield will continue to work with neighboring municipalities when implementing this plan.~~

8~~9~~. HOUSING

Goals

- **To ensure the provision of adequate, safe and affordable housing for all income and age groups in an environment that is safe and visually attractive**
- **To promote new and renovated residential development that reinforces and reflects the traditional forms and historic patterns of residential community settlements and efficiently utilizes existing and planned infrastructure**

Policies

1. **Conserve and protect the quality and vitality of existing residential neighborhoods ~~or areas,~~ and encourage the renovation of old and deteriorating dwellings.**
2. **~~To the extent possible,~~ Locate new housing, especially housing for elderly and disabled residents, in proximity to Bakersfield village and existing infrastructure and services. Consider using the Brigham Academy building for this purpose.**
3. **In rural areas, work with developers to site e~~Encourage siting of~~ new housing ~~in rural areas~~ in a way that blends harmoniously with the surrounding landscape and preserves ~~the greatest amount of open space~~ continuous blocks of agricultural and forest land.**
4. **Determine residential densities on the basis of topography, soil conditions, proximity to- Class 3 or better public roads~~highways~~, availability of public water, cost of providing mandated public services, and conservation of natural resources.**

~~a.~~**5. Promote innovative approaches to developing affordable housing, including planned unit developments.**

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~~5.~~6. Allow the building of accessory dwelling units ~~apartments~~ within or attached to single family residences in accordance with state law.
7. Ensure that land use regulations do not restrict multifamily and manufactured housing in accordance with state law.
~~b)~~8. Support efforts that assist elderly and disabled residents who want to remain in their homes, and community-based health care systems that enable elderly and disabled people to remain in their communities.
~~6.~~9. Encourage high quality design, efficient construction, and energy efficiency to provide affordable housing that minimizes environmental costs.

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All Bakersfield residents, present and future, should have safe and affordable housing. However, if poorly planned, housing development can increase demands on available facilities and services and may adversely affect environmentally sensitive areas. Planning is necessary to meet anticipated needs, to avoid overburdening services, and to protect natural resources. Planning should include not only the character of the housing stock, but also the patterns of development within the community and housing affordability.~~The function of this plan is to guide the writing and passage of regulations that will encourage reasonable and well-planned growth in Bakersfield. Planned residential development is a priority among the residents of Bakersfield. In a 2006 town survey by the Bakersfield Bylaw Advisory Committee, 37 out of 69 respondents expressed that the rate of residential development in town was "just right". And that the existing controls on development should continue according to 31 out of 71 respondents. This plan aims to keep living and housing costs affordable in Bakersfield and to accommodate a rate of residential growth that will not exceed the town's ability to provide adequate facilities and services.~~

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Housing Data

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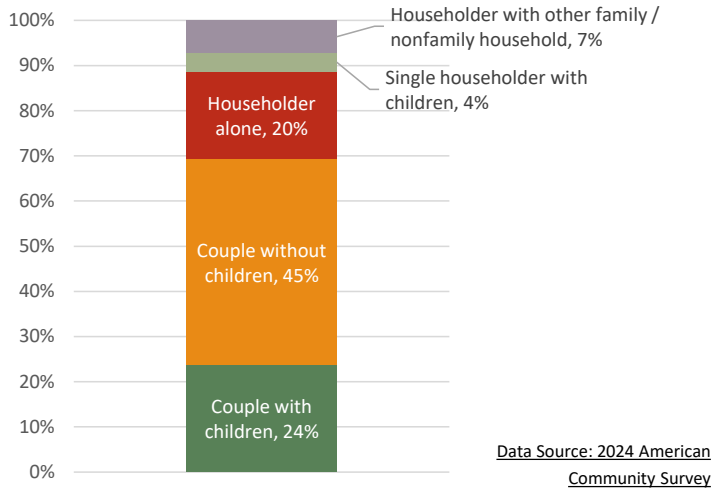
Households

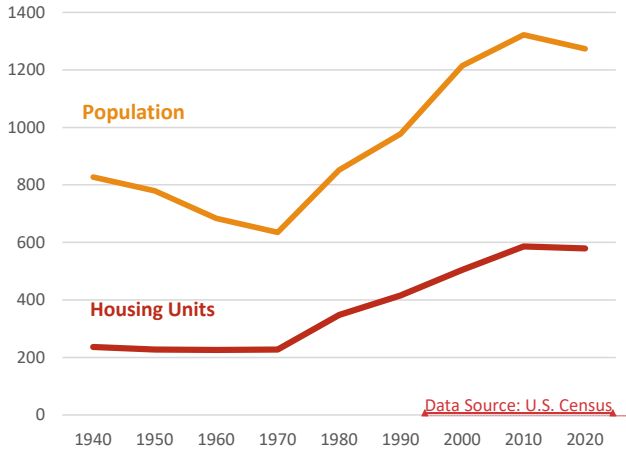
The 2020 Census reported 497 households in Bakersfield. Overall, households are getting smaller. The average household size was 2.56, compared to 2.77 in 2000. The most common household type are couples without children, which account for almost half of all households in Bakersfield. Roughly 17% of Bakersfield residents live alone.

Figure 8.1: Households by type (2024)



Data Source: 2024 American Community Survey

Figure 8.2: Housing Units vs. Population, 1940-2020



Data Source: U.S. Census

Housing Stock~~Trends~~

Bakersfield had a period of rapid growth in housing stock between 1970 and 2010. During that period 358 housing units were added, which more than doubled the housing supply. However, this period of growth has not continued since 2010, and the number of housing units declined slightly from 2010 to 2020. This is consistent with a similar slight loss of population during the same period.

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Recently, 3-6 building permits for new homes have been issued each year in Bakersfield. -20 years ago, this number was much higher. Today, most housing units in Bakersfield were built either before 1940 or between 1980-2000.

The 202010 Census showed a total of 579 ~~586~~ housing units in Bakersfield~~, an increase of over 150 percent since the 1970s~~. -Of these units, ~~426~~ only 27 are renter-occupied according to the 2024 American Community Survey. 97% of housing units are single-family homes, and 3% are mobile homes. ACS data also estimates that Bakersfield has about 57 units that are seasonally occupied. ~~were owner-occupied, 69 were renter-occupied year-round housing, 67 were seasonal or recreational housing units, and 9 were vacant housing units. The rate of housing development has exceeded the rate of population increase (Figure 9.1). Total housing units increased by over 16 percent from 2000 to 2010, while population increased at a rate of only 8 percent.~~

~~The number of building permits for new houses issued per year has gradually increased between 2000 and 2005 (Figure 9.2). The number of permits for new housing in the last 3 years 2011 to 2013 was 14. The vast proportion of new housing~~

Figure 8.3: Number of Building Permits Issued per Year in Bakersfield, 2000-2025

Data Source: Bakersfield Zoning, NRPC.
Note: 2013-2019 data is missing.

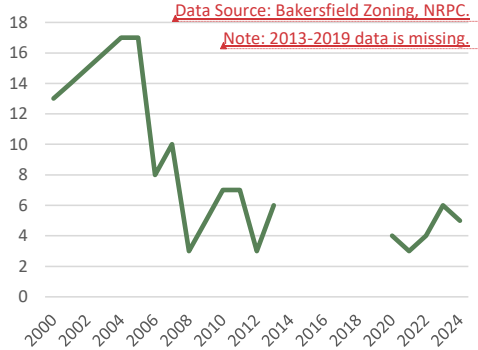


Figure 8.4: Bakersfield Housing Units by Age (2024)

Data Source: 2024 American Community Survey

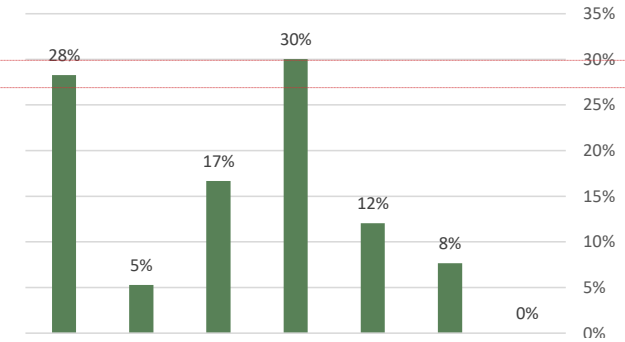
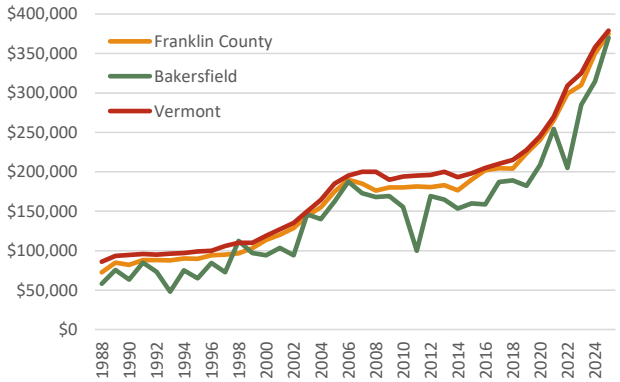


Figure 8.5: Median Primary Home Sale Price



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~~in Bakersfield is year- round housing with vacation homes accounting for only a small percentage of new construction.~~

~~*Affordable Housing*~~*Housing Affordability*

H~~The demand for affordable housing is an important issue in many Vermont communities.~~ ousing costs have increased rapidly statewide in recent years (Figure 9.5), which makes access to affordable housing an important issue across Vermont. Bakersfield's median home sale price has more than doubled since 2019. The median cost of a home in Bakersfield was $370,000 in 2025, which is similar to the county ($375,000) and state ($379,000) median. ~~In the 2006 survey of Bakersfield residents, 28 respondent out of 70 respondents, or 40% noted that support for affordable housing is an important or very important planning goal for the town.~~

According to the Vermont Housing Finance Agency, a household would need a median income of $123,748 to afford the median home in Bakersfield. This means that currently only the top 20% of Bakersfield households by income can affordably buy a home in their community.

According to the 2024 American Community Survey, 1 out of 5 homeowner households in Bakersfield are cost burdened, meaning they spend more than 30% of their income on housing costs.

Because the portion of renter households in Bakersfield is very small, it is difficult to obtain accurate data about the affordability of rental units. The estimated median rent in Bakersfield is $1,200 (2024 ACS), which is affordable for a household with an income of $48,000. This indicates that rental units are generally affordable, but the supply of rental units is still very small (only 27 total).

Housing Needs

Bakersfield's future depends on increasing the supply and affordability of housing in the Town. Otherwise, future generations may have to leave the community to find housing elsewhere. As required by state law, the housing goal for Bakersfield is to have at least 28 new housing units

Housing Goals

2030: 28-43 units

2050: 82-168 units

Defining Affordable Housing

At an individual level, housing is considered affordable when a household spends 30% or less of their total income on housing. At the community level, affordability is defined based on the metropolitan statistical area or county median household income. Bakersfield is within the Burlington-South Burlington Metropolitan Statistical Area (Chittenden, Franklin, and Grand Isle Counties), and has a similar median income to the MSA as a whole. Therefore, this plan uses the MSA median income to determine affordability.

Rental housing: Rent affordable to a household earning 80% of the MSA median income ($71,692)

Home purchase: Mortgage affordable to a household earning 120% of the MSA median income ($107,538)

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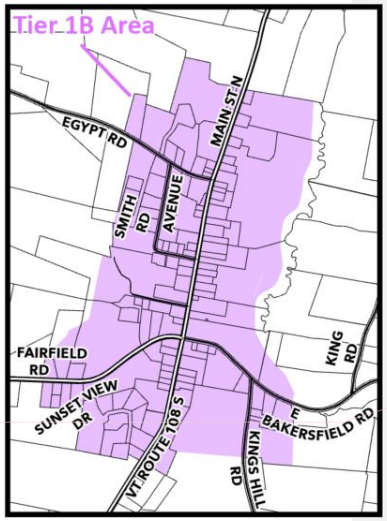
by 2030 and at least 82 new housing units by 2050. If development trends of the last 5 years continue, Bakersfield will have 18 new units by 2030. Meeting housing goals will require a major change in the amount of housing built in Bakersfield.

Housing cost and supply are largely determined by large-scale economic forces outside of the Town's control. For example, a shortage of contractors and a high cost of labor and materials are known issues at the state and regional levels. Bakersfield also has a number of town-specific constraints that are documented elsewhere in this plan, including wastewater disposal, issues with private wells, and lack of telecommunications infrastructure. Working to implement solutions identified in the Town Plan to address these constraints will help to support housing in Bakersfield.

There are also more specific steps that the Town can take at a local level to support housing. Bakersfield has opted in to Tier 1B, which makes housing developments of up to 50 units in areas of Bakersfield Village exempt from Act 250 (see map). Tier 1B areas are based on the NRPC Regional Plan and are separate from zoning boundaries. Additionally, the Town can review its zoning regulations to ensure that they are not overly restrictive.



Most new housing should be built in Bakersfield Village and the surrounding High-Density Residential zoning district. The Town supports gentle infill in the Village, such as adding accessory dwelling units, duplexes, and small multi-unit apartments that fit the existing historic settlement pattern. The Town also supports rehabilitation of historic structures for housing where appropriate.

Outside of the village, development should be at a rate consistent with the rural nature of the area. The Town supports Planned Unit Developments (PUDs), which allow for the clustering of development to conserve rural countryside and the working agricultural and forest landscape. The Town also supports affordable housing options such as manufactured homes.

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~~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 price of housing in Bakersfield has generally followed the regional and statewide trends (Figure 9.3). According to the Vermont Housing Data website in 2014, the median sale price of a primary residence in Bakersfield ($153,250) was slightly below that of Franklin County ($176,500) and the state as a whole ($193,000). However, when compared with other local housing markets, including St. Albans Town ($199,900), Fairfield ($226,000), and Fletcher ($164,750), Bakersfield appears to be a more affordable community in which to buy a home.

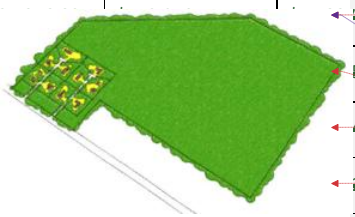
According to Vermont Statute, housing is considered affordable when a household earning not more than 80 percent of the county median income or the metropolitan statistical area's median income, if it applies, pays no more than thirty percent of their income on housing.

All municipalities in Franklin County are deemed part of the Burlington-South Burlington Metropolitan Statistical Area by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The figures for median income, however, do not paint an accurate picture for many of the municipalities within Franklin County, including Bakersfield. The median household income according to the 2009-2013 American Community Survey for the Burlington-South Burlington MSA was $61,763, while it as $56,240 in Franklin County. For this reason, the Northwest Regional Planning Commission uses the county median household income to compute affordability statistics.

Table 9.1 shows the affordability gap for Bakersfield, which is the difference between the maximum affordable mortgage and the median sale price for primary residences. 100 percent of the median income represents moderate income households, 80 percent represents low-income households, 50 percent represents very low-income, and 30 percent represents very, very low-income households.

Table 9.1: Homeownership Affordability in Bakersfield

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 in Bakersfield (2014)	Affordability Gap
		Per Year	Per Month						
100%	$56,240	$16,872	$1,406	$414	$992	$8,425	$2		
80%	$44,992	$13,498	$1,125	$414	$711	$8,425	$1		5
50%	$28,120	$8,436	$703	$414	$289	$8,425	$5		47
30%	$16,872	$5,062	$422	$414	$8	$8,425	-$6		28



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

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~~Moderate-income households can afford a mortgage with monthly payments that do not exceed 30 percent of their monthly income. In Franklin County, this equates to a mortgage of not more than $191,000. This figure is higher than the 2001 median sale price for single-family dwellings of $153,250 and therefore there is no affordability gap at the County median household income level. However, at 80% of the median household income level there is an affordability gap of negative $11,575, which indicates that house at the median sale price in Bakersfield would be unaffordable. For those with an income below this level, owning a home at the median sale prices is even further beyond their reach.~~

~~Senior Housing~~

~~Currently~~T~~,~~ ~~t~~he Ttown of Bakersfield currently does not have specific ~~group~~ housing for senior citizens. ~~The 2010 US Census reported that 9.9 percent of Bakersfield residents were age 65 and over. The median age for Bakersfield residents has risen the last twenty years from (32.2 years in 1999, 35.2 years in 2000 and 39.2 years in 2010). The 2010 median age in Bakersfield is similar to the median age of Franklin County (38.9 years) and slightly lower than the state of Vermont (41.5 years).~~ The town, county, and the state have all seen a steady~~n~~ increase in their median ages since 1970. Because the population is aging as a whole, steps need to be taken to ensure that there is adequate and affordable housing available for senior citizens. The Town currently has a purchase and sales option with a private developer to convert the Brigham Academy building in Bakersfield Village into 16 units of ~~building has been identified as a potential location for~~ senior housing. This project will be an important step in accomplishing the Town's housing goals, and t

he Town should continue to stay involved with this project and ensure that it moves forward.~~Planned Unit Developments~~

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~~**Table 9.1: Homeownership Affordability in Bakersfield**~~

~~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 in Bakersfield (2014)~~	~~Affordability Gap~~
		~~Per Year~~	~~Per Month~~						
~~100%~~	~~$56,240~~	~~$16,872~~	~~$1,406~~	~~$414~~	~~$992~~	~~$8,425~~	~~$201,056.83~~	~~$153,250~~	~~$47,807~~
~~80%~~	~~$44,992~~	~~$13,498~~	~~$1,125~~	~~$414~~	~~$711~~	~~$8,425~~	~~$141,675.49~~	~~$153,250~~	~~-$11,575~~

	50%	$28,120	$8,436	$703	$414	$289	$8,425	$52,603.48	$153,250	-$100,647
								-$6,777.86	$153,250	-$160,028

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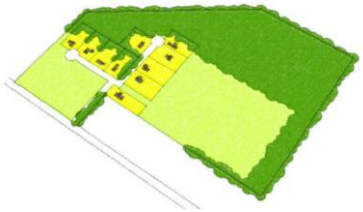



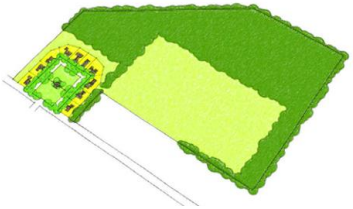

Pictured above: examples of different conceptual layouts of Planned Unit Developments (PUDs). PUDs allow clustered housing that preserves rural countryside, agricultural and forest lands. Credit: Westford, VT Development Regulations

~~One of the intents of this plan is~~ ~~ment.~~ ~~ering of~~ ~~development, conserving rural countryside, protecting contiguous woodlands and the working landscape, and providing a more efficient and affordable means of housing development, especially as the population of Bakersfield ages.~~

~~The effect of major subdivisions on school facilities, town roads and other town facilities must be carefully considered. It is preferable to have these developments phased and conditions should be set to ensure that the impacts on town services, neighbors, and community character are minimal.~~

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911. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Goals

- ~~Encourage the development of appropriate and compatible industry and business in the town;~~
- ~~P~~To promote a balanced, diverse economic base where residents have ~~, with a focus on locally owned enterprises that utilizes the local labor force~~access to satisfying and rewarding job opportunities at a livable wage.~~;~~
- To promote and sustain the local agricultural and forestry economies.~~;~~
- To support the Village as the economic center of Bakersfield and encourage the growth of small businesses that serve the needs of local residents. ~~Promote a mix of new development in the designated village area, and focus a majority of any new commercial development within the village;~~
- To ~~S~~support and encourage low-impact, home-based businesses throughout the town.

Policies

1. Investigate opportunities to attract small businesses to the Village that serve the needs of the community, including a cooperative-based general store that sells products from local businesses.
2. Maintain zoning bylaws to support the development of home businesses and home industries that fit with the rural character of the community, including home-based food businesses and roadside stands.
3. Maintain and upgrade ~~Support the maintenance~~ broadband internet and cell phone service to ~~of and/or upgrade to reliable telecommunications services that~~ support existing and future businesses.~~, and attract commercial development, such as broadband internet and cell phone service.~~
4. Provide infrastructure in appropriate areas to attract and retain ~~for the retention and attraction of~~ businesses that are consistent with land use goals.~~the town's character~~
5. Support agriculture and forestry related businesses~~,~~ and protect productive agricultural and forestry lands from conversion to incompatible land uses.~~.~~
6. Commercial and industrial development should not place an undue burden on the Town in terms of services and facilities required from their development and its associated impacts.

~~***Overview***~~

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The Bakerfield ~~term "~~economy~~"~~ includes the natural ~~for purposes of municipal planning refers to~~ resources, businesses~~production~~, jobs, income and activities in the town and region that contribute to the economic well-being of local residents, businesses and industries. A healthy well-planned economy is one with ~~Economic planning can assist in providing~~ well-paying jobs that match the skills of residents~~ commensurate with the skills and aims of local residents~~, which has a ~~a more~~ balanced tax base to meet community needs, where ~~the protection of~~ important ~~economic~~ resources are protected, and which supports local businesses~~–~~ that provide ~~the provision of~~ services and products needed in ~~to support~~ the ~~local~~ community. The future economy of Bakersfield must be one where goods and services are accessible, resources are used sustainably, local strengths are built upon, and all residents can achieve success. ~~Poorly planned economic development can adversely affect the local environment, strain municipal services, cause dislocations of businesses and labor, and adversely impact community character.~~

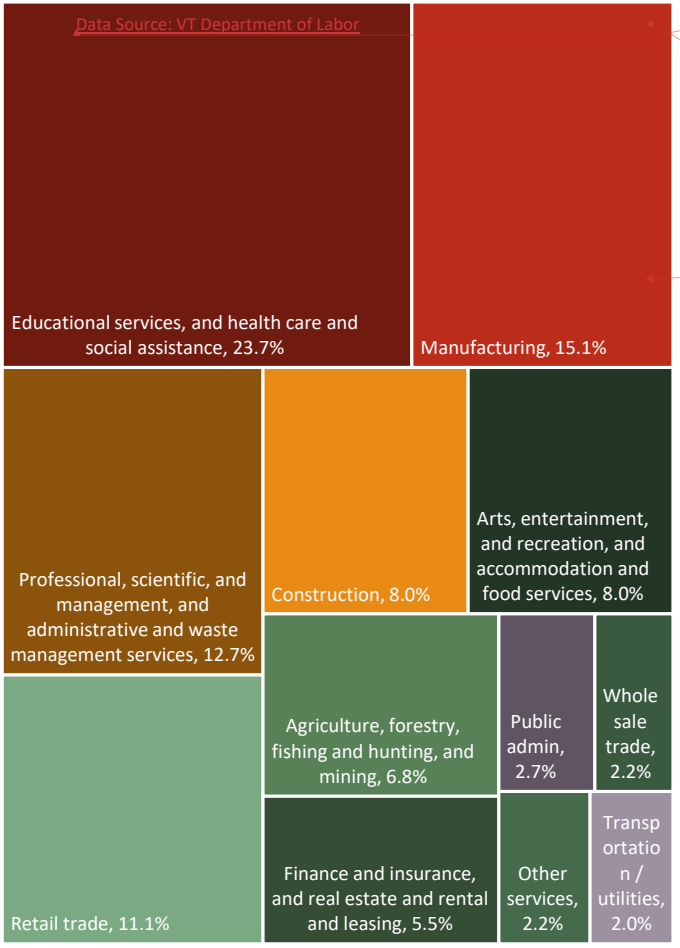
~~Bakersfield's local economy remains predominantly rural, agrarian, and resource based. Planning for other forms of economic development in small, relatively isolated communities such as Bakersfield, which have limited infrastructure to support business, retail and industrial growth, is a challenge; but such planning can help highlight local needs, strengths and opportunities.~~

Local Economy

Employment Characteristics

Historically, the Bakersfield economy has relied heavily on agriculture, forestry and education.~~–~~ Today, the largest employment sector for Bakersfield residents is~~are~~ educational services, health care and social assistance~~,~~ ~~with retail trade, construction, and manufacturing. Table 13.1~~Figure 9.1 shows the industry sectors within which Bakersfield residents are employed.

Fig. 9.1: Occupation of Bakersfield Residents



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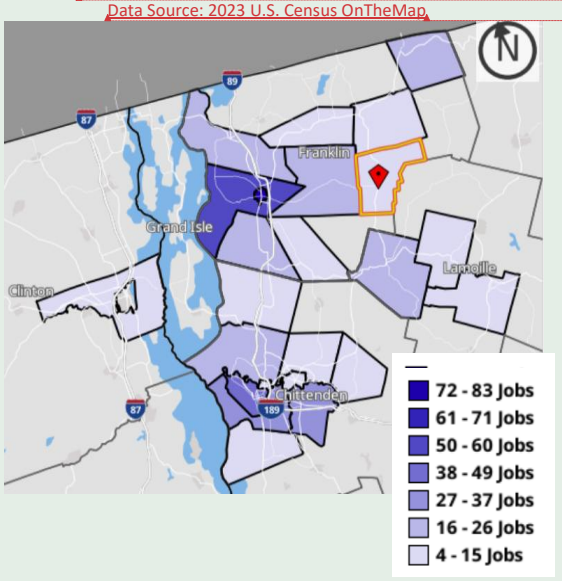
Among workers who commute, 50% commute to other towns in Franklin County and 30% commute to Chittenden County (2023 U.S. Census OnTheMap Tool). Less than 2% of Bakersfield residents work for Bakersfield based-employers. Note that this does not count self-employed or remote workers who live in Bakersfield. Data on remote work is difficult to obtain, but anecdotal evidence shows that remote work has grown since the COVID-19 pandemic and residents may have more opportunities to work from home.

Fig. 9.2: Commuting Destinations
Data Source: 2023 U.S. Census OnTheMap



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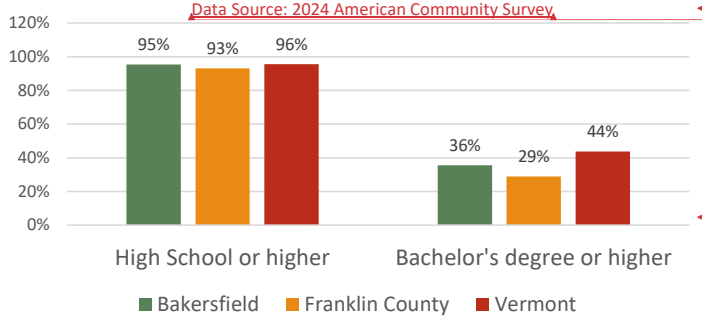
95% of Bakersfield residents over age 24 have a high school diploma or higher. This rate is roughly the same as in Franklin County and statewide. 36% of Bakersfield residents over age 24 have a Bachelor's degree or higher. This rate is higher than Franklin County as a whole but lower than the state average.

Fig. 9.3: Educational Attainment Age 25+, 2024

Data Source: 2024 American Community Survey



Local Businesses ~~in Bakersfield~~

Agriculture continues to have a substantial presence in Bakersfield. This includes at least five dairy farms in Bakersfield, and there ~~and, as discussed in Chapter 3, there~~ are a growing number of small farms engaged in livestock and local/organic food production. There are also several maple sugar producers that process and market their own syrup, and two tree~~X tree~~ farms that raise and sell Christmas trees.

According to a ~~2012~~ 2024 report from the Vermont Department of Labor, there were ~~9~~10 commercial establishments in Bakersfield ~~and approximately 113 workers employed in the Town~~that had 56 employees total. Main Street in the Village has historically been Bakersfield's commercial center, however there are currently no longer any businesses there beyond a gas~~There is one convenience/country store and a gas~~ station/convenience store, mechanic shop, ~~in addition to various other types of businesses~~and a small café. The Bakersfield Village Market general store closed in 2021.

~~**Table 11.2 Unemployment rates from 2009-2013 (not seasonally adjusted)**~~

~~**Source:** Vermont Department of Labor, Economic & Labor Market Information.~~

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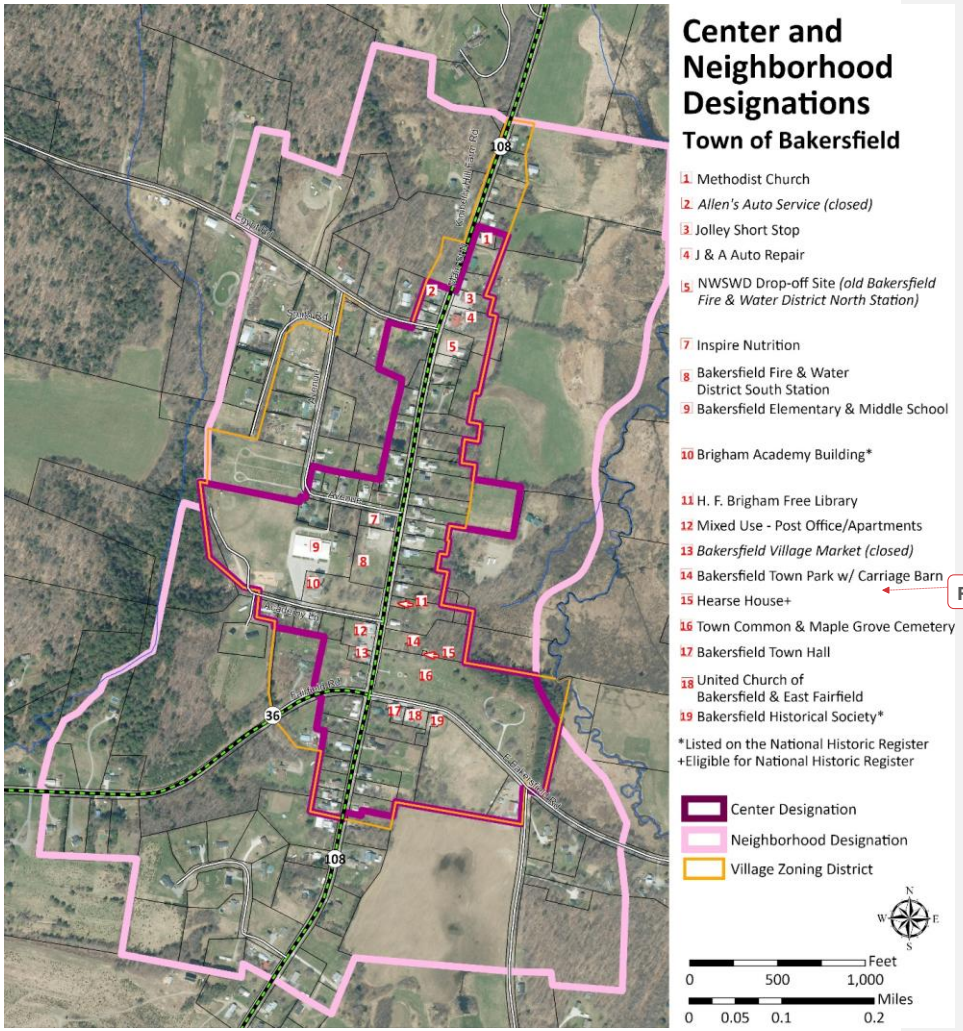
Designated ~~Designated Village~~ Center and Neighborhood

Bakersfield has a Designated Center which extends along Main Street, and a Designated Neighborhood which extends into the surrounding area. These areas are designated by the Vermont Department of Housing and Community Development. The Center and Neighborhood Designations qualify Bakersfield for grants, tax credits, and other incentives from the State of Vermont to encourage economic development in these areas.

Bakersfield gained a Center designation in 2011, when the program was known as the Designated Village Center program. In 2026, the Center area was expanded, and the new Neighborhood designation was established.

~~In June 2011, Bakersfield received "Village Center" designation from the State of Vermont for the area surrounding the village green (See Figure 11.1). This designation entitles those within the Village Center with certain benefits such as tax credits for façade improvements, tax credits for code compliance, and priority consideration for Municipal Planning Grants (MPG) and Community Development Block Grants (CDBG). The Town did receive a Municipal Planning Grant to plan for the redevelopment of Brigham Academy (discussed later), but there has been no other redevelopment associated with the designation program at present.~~



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These designated areas~~It is envisioned that designation as a Village Center will~~ are intended to foster investment in ~~the village area~~and around the Village.~~–~~ This will in turn further the goals included in this plan, such as promoting a mix of development in the village and focusing any economic development within Bakersfield within the village.~~–~~ It will also help further state planning goals such as maintaining "historic settlement pattern of compact village and urban centers separated by rural countryside" and "provide a strong and diverse economy that provides satisfying and rewarding job opportunities and that maintains high environmental standards."

~~In 2012, Bakersfield received a Municipal Planning Grant, to assess the structural integrity the currently vacant Brigham Academy building, to generate enthusiasm for finding a reuse of the Academy and to identify ways that the building could be reused. The Village Center designation definitively helped strengthen the Town's grant application.~~

~~The Brigham Academy is the envisioned foundation of the Village Center The structure, currently undergoing sale from the school district to the Town, has high redevelopment potential. Future uses could include a space for small business incubation and classes for local entrepreneurs. The Academy gymnasium could be used for exercise and fitness classes for the young and old. Other uses of the space within the Academy could include satellite offices for visits by health care providers including physicians, dentists, nurses, therapists, social workers and mental health counselors.~~

Survey Question: If you could change one thing about Bakersfield, what would it be?

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Future Economic Development

General Store

Bakersfield's general store closed in 2021. There are currently few options available for purchasing groceries, food, and other day to day needs. Some items are available at the gas station convenience store, but it is not locally run and selection is limited. Residents largely have to travel to businesses outside of Bakersfield to eat and shop.

Public outreach has shown strong support for establishing a cooperative general store in the Village. A general store would allow residents to support a local business for their daily needs. Like many other small towns in Vermont, the general store would be a gathering place and a center of community that brings life to the Village. The store would also be an opportunity to sell products from local based businesses, further supporting Bakersfield's economy.

The Town should collaborate with community groups and investigate funding opportunities to bring a cooperative general store to the Village. Opportunities include the Village Trust Initiative, which has funded similar projects statewide. Strong local support is necessary for such a project to work, and outreach results show that this is a high priority for residents.

"In a dream world, there would be a way to revitalize a town store. Communal, casual gathering places are historically essential to the fabric of a society, of any size. ~~My~~

"A small store, like a co-op, that carried fruits and vegetables, bread, local products, etc. ~~The history and people in the community who~~

"We need to have the general store back. it was a great loss. ~~The quaintness, sidewalks, school, the village greens, music in the park~~

Brigham Academy

The Brigham Academy is envisioned as the foundation of Bakersfield Village. The Town currently has a purchase and sales option with a private developer to convert the building into senior housing, Adding a commercial component or community space would bring further economic benefits to the Village. The Town should continue to play an active role in its redevelopment to ensure that its restoration brings as much benefit to the Village as possible.

Other Economic Development

Continued economic health for the Town of Bakersfield lies in the maintenance of viable agricultural soils to support all forms of agricultural activity and the provision of goods and services that support an agrarian economy. The Town ~~should~~ encourages efforts that support its

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agricultural base, including the protection of primary agricultural soils and enrollment in the ~~farmers' rights to farm; support of tax abatement programs, such as the~~ Use Value Appraisal ~~Program~~ (Current Use) program.~~, better known as Current Use.~~

However, Economic and Labor Market information trends show that agricultural employment has been in steady decline, and more people commute outside of the Town to work.~~–~~ To complement agriculture in Bakersfield's rural economy~~the rural character of the Town and agrarian economy~~, small ~~commercial enterprises,~~ home and farm based businesses ~~occupations and light industry, in appropriate locations, should be~~are also encouraged. Locally produced products and services, including value-added agricultural products, can enhance the Town's economy and provide more economic opportunities for residents. One way to encourage the growth of small businesses

~~The Town recognizes that a particularly effective means to accomplish these goals~~ would be to bring more reliable ~~high-speed (broadband) internet connectivity and~~ cellular and internet service to residents and businesses throughout the Town. ~~Broadband internet connections would encourage and enable small and home-based businesses, and enhance existing businesses in ways that current connections cannot.~~

Tourists, attracted by the beauty of the town's agricultural landscape, may also play a greater role in the Town's economic future.~~–~~ Related development such as bed and breakfasts, farmers markets, craft shops, or eateries could add to the local economic base.

Challenges to Economic Development

The Town is faced with several~~ome~~ challenges to local economic development.~~–~~ ~~By working on these challenges, including sewer capacity, calming traffic, improving the safety of pedestrian activity, and encouraging improvements to telecommunication, the Town will encourage the continued development of a healthy economy in the village area.~~ Many of these challenges are discussed in other chapters of the plan, but are referred to here as they relate to economic development:~~.~~

- *Sidewalks and paths.* A safe pedestrian and bicycle environment in the Village will contribute to its economic vitality. The Village currently has a small sidewalk network along North Main Street. ~~Sidewalks completed in 2010 connect Brigham Academy and the school with the library and village park.~~ Continued efforts to improve safe walking and biking could attract future development and encourage tourism.~~–~~ As new development occurs in these areas, attention should be given to improving and adding new bike and pedestrian connections. New

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sidewalks should include adequate pedestrian buffers from the travel lane, and road plowing should be done in a way that keeps sidewalks clear of ice and snow in the winter.

- *Sewer Infrastructure*.– A major barrier to attracting new business in Bakersfield Village is the lack of septic capacity~~of public sewage disposal facilities~~. Bakersfield does not currently have a public wastewater system.– -At present, there is no plan to add a public wastewater system in ~~public sewage disposal infrastructure in~~ Bakersfield. Shared wastewater solutions may be necessary to meet economic development goals in the Village.~~.~~
- ~~*Current Technology*~~*Cell Service and Internet*.– To be able to ~~both~~ serve ~~the~~ small businesses and provide ~~for~~ opportunities for working at home, ~~businesses need~~the Town needs reliable access to ~~broadband and~~internet and cell~~ular~~ service. Much of Bakersfield lacks cell service, which is a major barrier to economic development. Expanding cell and internet service would bring major economic development benefits.~~Such advances in telecommunication technology have the potential to significantly impact the local economy as they make rural Bakersfield more attractive to home-based businesses, telecommuters, and other businesses that increasingly rely on broadband for their services. As technology evolves, Bakersfield should continue to work the public and private sectors to improve the local telecommunication infrastructure to ensure that residents have fast, reliable network connections.~~
-

Working to implement the goals of the Bakersfield Town Plan as a whole will help to address these challenges and make economic growth possible.

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10. IMPLEMENTATION

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As required by statute, a municipal plan must have a plan for implementation. This chapter identifies available tools, strategies, and opportunities that will assist the Town in building our vision for the future. Short-term actions are intended to be completed by the next planning cycle in 2034. Long-term actions have longer timeframes but may still have steps that can be taken to advance progress in the short-term. It is important to regularly review the plan to prioritize implementation steps and to ensure that all recommendations are being considered. ~~Aa~~

#	Action	Timeframe	Responsible Party
Historic and Archaeological Resources			
1	Seek opportunities for structural remediation and renovation of the town-owned Carriage Barn.	Short	Conservation Commission, Historical Society, Selectboard
Community Services and Spaces			
2	Coordinate with interested landowners, tower companies and cell providers to build infrastructure that brings reliable cell service to Bakersfield.	Short	Planning Commission, Selectboard
3	Coordinate with NWSWD, local scrap businesses and residents to organize the collection of junk vehicles and bulk waste from private residences.	Short	Planning Commission, Selectboard
4	Seek funding for upgrades to the Town Garage, including VTrans Municipal Highway and Transportation programs, USDA Community Facilities grants, and Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding.	Short	Selectboard

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Community Services and Spaces (continued)			
5	Consider adopting a Noise Ordinance.	Short	Selectboard
6	Seek federal and state historic preservation funds and ADA compliance funding to upgrade the Town Hall.	Short	Selectboard
7	Consider opportunities to expand access to the public water system in order to address issues with private wells.	Long	Planning Commission, Selectboard, Fire District #1
8	Consider purchasing or conserving property in the Village for a future community wastewater leach field.	Long	Planning Commission, Selectboard
Transportation			
9	Seek opportunities to reduce vehicle speeds through the Village, including installing speed indicator signs.	Short	Selectboard
10	Coordinate with VTrans to reduce the impact of state snow plowing on Village sidewalks.	Short	Selectboard
11	Coordinate with the Town of Waterville with to ensure that Waterville Mountain Road is clearly marked on both sides as closed and unpassable in the winter.	Short	Selectboard
12	Seek opportunities to extend the Village sidewalk network further north and south along Main Street as originally proposed in the 2004 Feasibility Study. South Main Street is the highest priority area for sidewalk expansion.	Long	Planning Commission, Selectboard
Energy			
13	Consider energy efficiency when upgrading municipal vehicles and buildings.	Ongoing	Selectboard

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Energy (continued)			
14	Support the efforts of Efficiency Vermont to promote the installation of energy-efficient devices, appliances, and equipment in residences and businesses.	Ongoing	All municipal parties
15	Consider municipal renewable energy generation options including community solar, wastewater methane collection, or other potential municipally owned projects.	Long	Planning Commission, Selectboard
Land Use, Environment and Resilience, Housing			
16	Update the town's zoning bylaws. Update should include the following: • Reflect the new district boundaries in the Land Use chapter • Explore alternatives to large minimum lot sizes and fixed area allocation system for regulating density in rural areas • Comply with the HOME Act and ensure a variety of housing options are supported	Short	Planning Commission
17	Maintain a current Local Hazard Mitigation Plan and adopt a Local Emergency Operations Plan each year.	Ongoing	Selectboard, Emergency Management Coordinator
18	Monitor and remove diseased and dying trees in town and implement a shade tree preservation program.	Short	Conservation Commission
Economic Development			
18	Continue to play an active role in the Brigham Academy redevelopment to ensure that it supports the goals of the Town Plan and brings as much benefit as possible to the community.	Ongoing	Selectboard, Planning Commission
19	Investigate opportunities to open a cooperative general store in the Village that sells items from local businesses and meets the day-to-day shopping needs of residents.	Long	Selectboard, Planning Commission

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APPENDIX 1: ENERGY PLAN APPENDIXES

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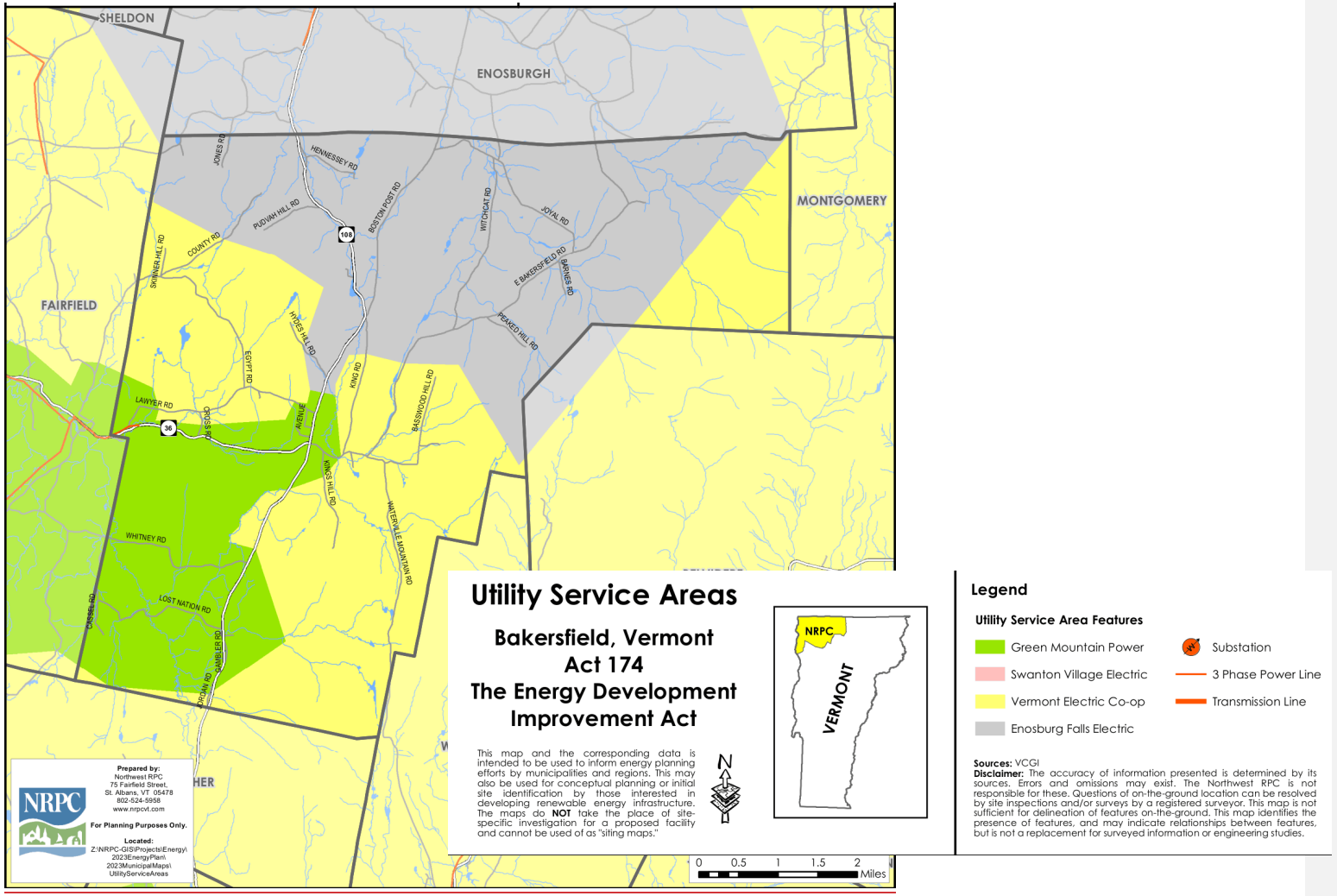
A. Energy Generation Maps

Energy generation maps show the potential areas available for solar, wind, and hydro power, as well as existing biomass which could be used for wood heating. These maps exclude high priority resources which are known constraints. Energy generation facilities shall not be located in areas where known constraints exist.

The maps also consider lower priority resources as Possible Constraints. These resources often impact the siting process for generation facilities. New generation facilities shall not have an undue adverse impact upon possible constraints. Often, site-specific mitigation solutions may exist~~are possible~~ when possible constraints exist on a parcel. Therefore, possible constraints have been included in the area designated as "base" on the regional energy generation maps (solar, wind, biomass, hydro).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KINGS HILL RD
WATERVILLE MOUNTAIN RD
WHITNEY RD
LOST NATION RD
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GAMBLER RD
JORDAN RD
108
36
Utility Service Areas
Bakersfield, Vermont
Act 174
The Energy Development
Improvement Act
This map and the corresponding data is intended to be used to inform energy planning efforts by municipalities and regions. This may also be used for conceptual planning or initial site identification by those interested in developing renewable energy infrastructure. The maps do NOT take the place of site-specific investigation for a proposed facility and cannot be used of as "siting maps."
N
NRPC
VERMONT
Legend
Utility Service Area Features
Green Mountain Power
Swanton Village Electric
Vermont Electric Co-op
Enosburg Falls Electric
Substation
3 Phase Power Line
Transmission Line
Sources: VCGI
Disclaimer: The accuracy of information presented is determined by its sources. Errors and omissions may exist. The Northwest RPC is not responsible for these. Questions of on-the-ground location can be resolved by site inspections and/or surveys by a registered surveyor. This map is not sufficient for delineation of features on-the-ground. This map identifies the presence of features, and may indicate relationships between features, but is not a replacement for surveyed information or engineering studies.
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Located:
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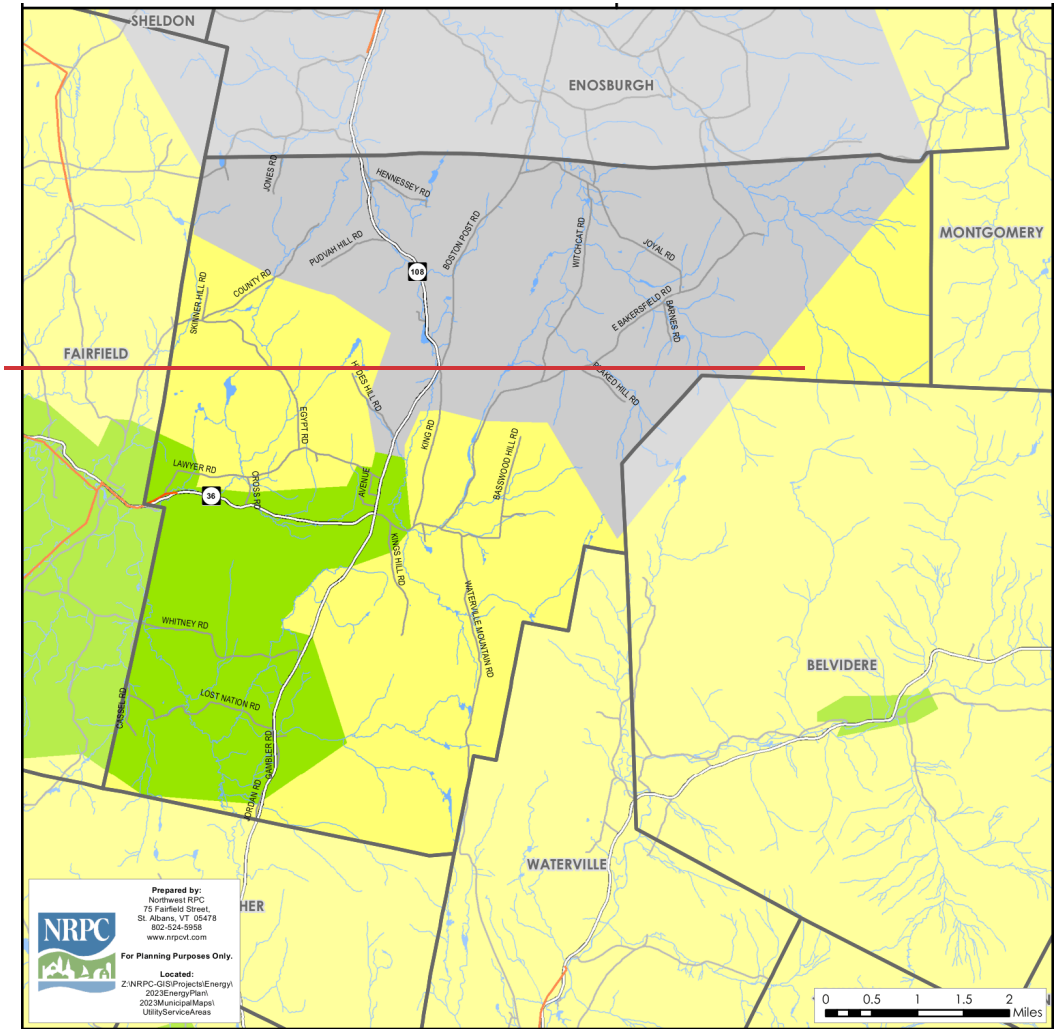
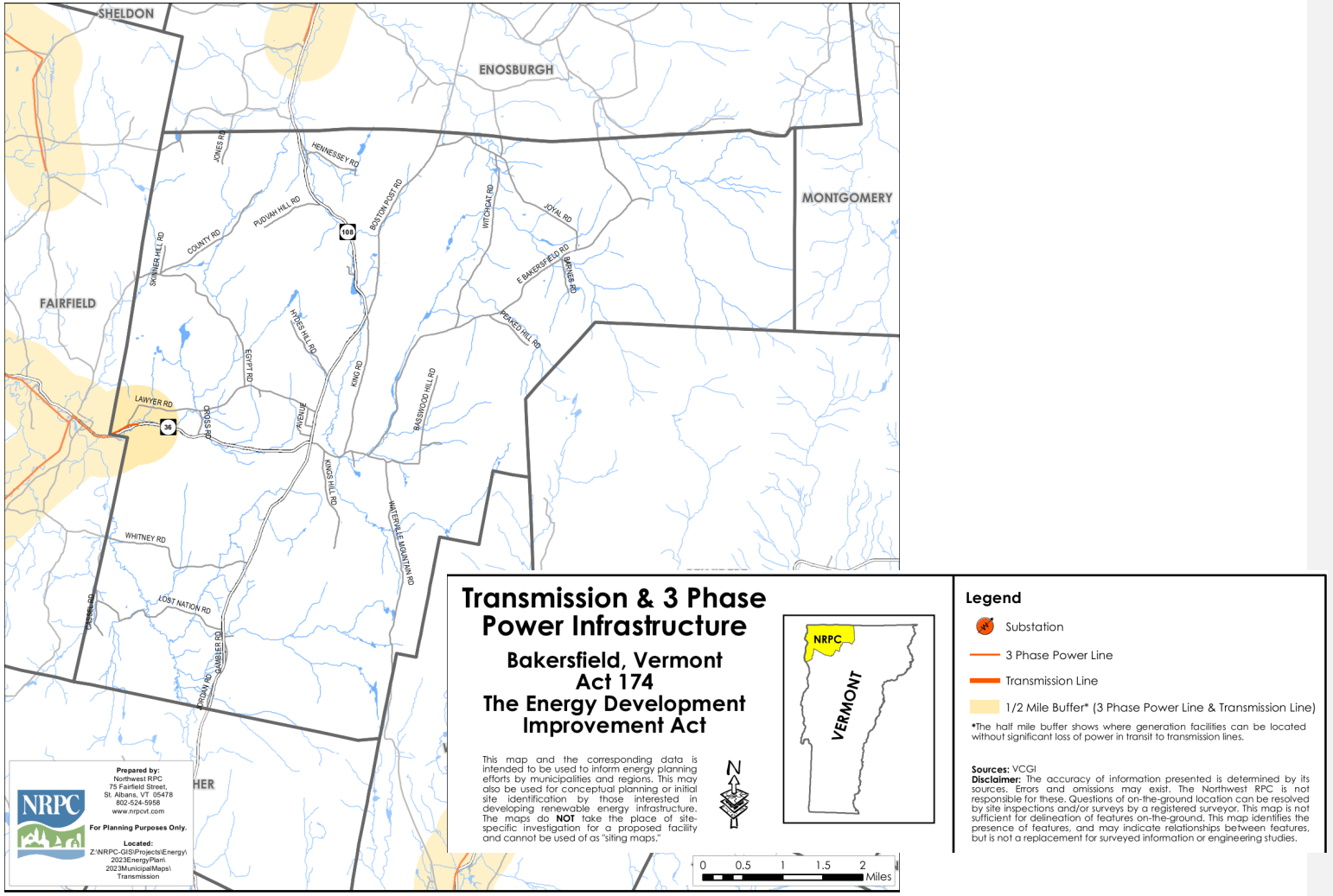
BAKERSFIELD

Town Plan

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Transmission & 3 Phase Power Infrastructure
Bakersfield, Vermont
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N
NRPC
VERMONT
Legend
Substation
3 Phase Power Line
Transmission Line
1/2 Mile Buffer* (3 Phase Power Line & Transmission Line)
*The half mile buffer shows where generation facilities can be located without significant loss of power in transit to transmission lines.
Sources: VCGI
Disclaimer: The accuracy of information presented is determined by its sources. Errors and omissions may exist. The Northwest RPC is not responsible for these. Questions of on-the-ground location can be resolved by site inspections and/or surveys by a registered surveyor. This map is not sufficient for delineation of features on-the-ground. This map identifies the presence of features, and may indicate relationships between features, but is not a replacement for surveyed information or engineering studies.
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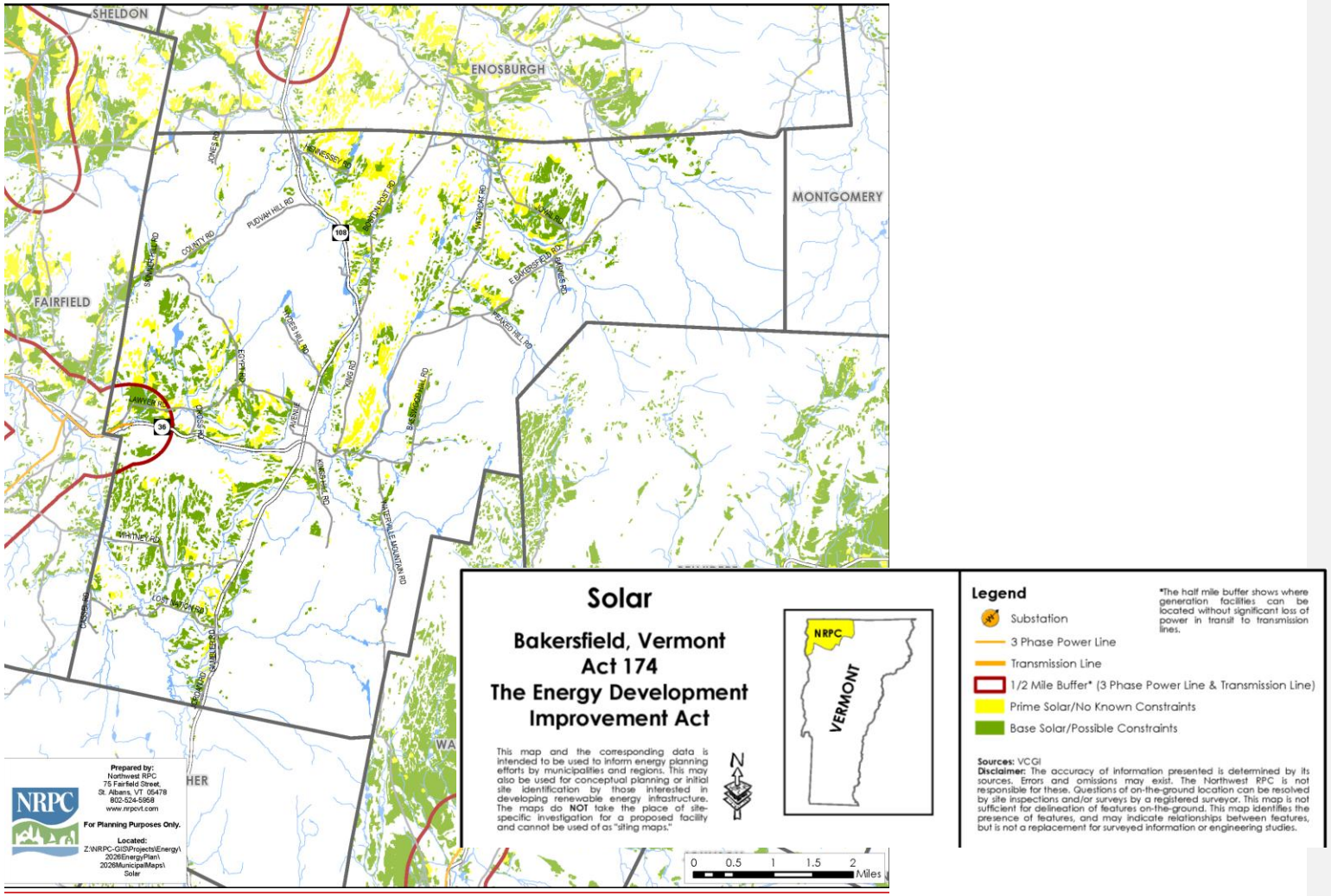
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ENOSBURGH
MONTGOMERY
FAIRFIELD
Solar
Bakersfield, Vermont
Act 174
The Energy Development Improvement Act
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N
NRPC
VERMONT
Legend
*The half mile buffer shows where generation facilities can be located without significant loss of power in transit to transmission lines.
Substation
3 Phase Power Line
Transmission Line
1/2 Mile Buffer* (3 Phase Power Line & Transmission Line)
Prime Solar/No Known Constraints
Base Solar/Possible Constraints
Sources: VCGI
Disclaimer: The accuracy of information presented is determined by its sources. Errors and omissions may exist. The Northwest RPC is not responsible for these. Questions of on-the-ground location can be resolved by site inspections and/or surveys by a registered surveyor. This map is not sufficient for delineation of features on-the-ground. This map identifies the presence of features, and may indicate relationships between features, but is not a replacement for surveyed information or engineering studies.
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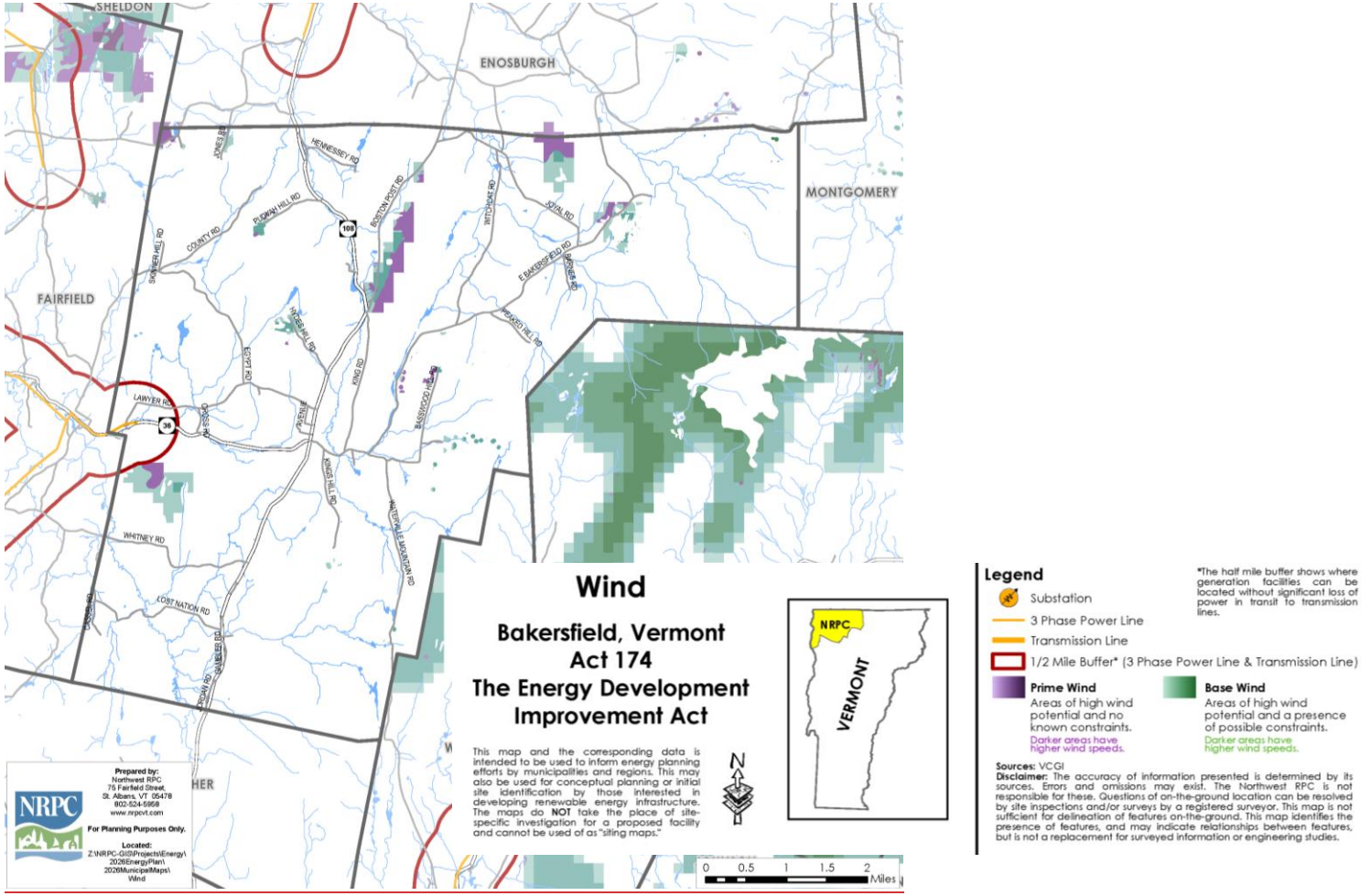
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OROSS RD
AVENUE
KINGS HILL RD
WATERVILLE MOUNTAIN RD
WHITNEY RD
LOST NATION RD
GAMBLER RD
ORCHAR RD
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Wind
Bakersfield, Vermont
Act 174
The Energy Development
Improvement Act
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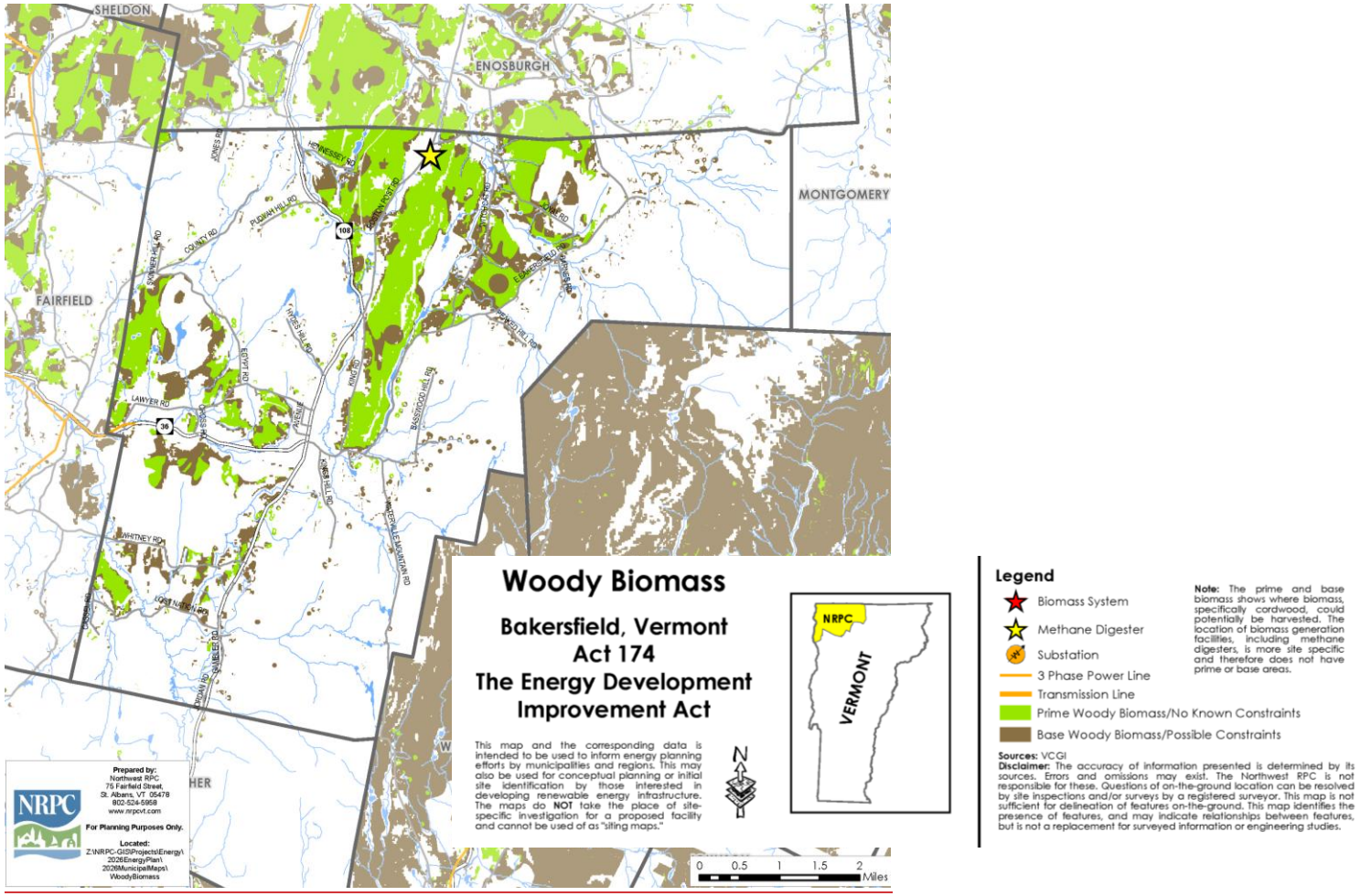
Legend
Substation
3 Phase Power Line
Transmission Line
1/2 Mile Buffer* (3 Phase Power Line & Transmission Line)
*The half mile buffer shows where generation facilities can be located without significant loss of power in transit to transmission lines.
Prime Wind
Areas of high wind potential and no known constraints.
Darker areas have higher wind speeds.
Base Wind
Areas of high wind potential and a presence of possible constraints.
Darker areas have higher wind speeds.
Sources: VCGI
Disclaimer: The accuracy of information presented is determined by its sources. Errors and omissions may exist. The Northwest RPC is not responsible for these. Questions of on-the-ground location can be resolved by site inspections and/or surveys by a registered surveyor. This map is not sufficient for delineation of features on-the-ground. This map identifies the presence of features, and may indicate relationships between features, but is not a replacement for surveyed information or engineering studies.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MONTGOMERY
FAIRFIELD
HER
Woody Biomass
Bakersfield, Vermont
Act 174
The Energy Development Improvement Act
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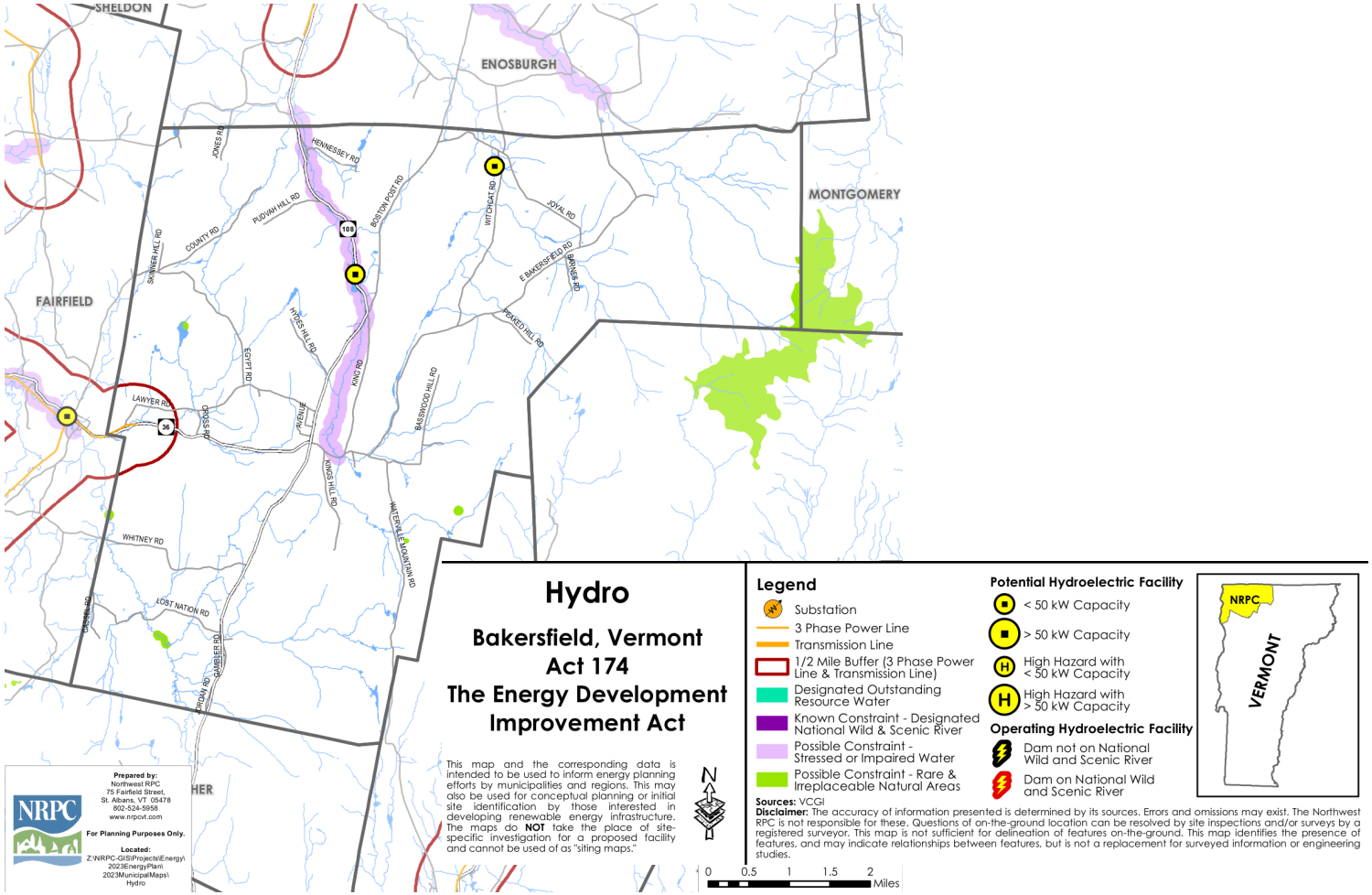
Legend
Biomass System
Methane Digester
Substation
3 Phase Power Line
Transmission Line
Prime Woody Biomass/No Known Constraints
Base Woody Biomass/Possible Constraints
Note: The prime and base biomass shows where biomass, specifically cordwood, could potentially be harvested. The location of biomass generation facilities, including methane digesters, is more site specific and therefore does not have prime or base areas.
Sources: VCGI
Disclaimer: The accuracy of information presented is determined by its sources. Errors and omissions may exist. The Northwest RPC is not responsible for these. Questions of on-the-ground location can be resolved by site inspections and/or surveys by a registered surveyor. This map is not sufficient for delineation of features on-the-ground. This map identifies the presence of features, and may indicate relationships between features, but is not a replacement for surveyed information or engineering studies.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LOST NATION RD
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GAMBLER RD
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Hydro
Bakersfield, Vermont
Act 174
The Energy Development
Improvement Act
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N
Legend
Substation
3 Phase Power Line
Transmission Line
1/2 Mile Buffer (3 Phase Power Line & Transmission Line)
Designated Outstanding Resource Water
Known Constraint - Designated National Wild & Scenic River
Possible Constraint - Stressed or Impaired Water
Possible Constraint - Rare & Irreplaceable Natural Areas
Potential Hydroelectric Facility
< 50 kW Capacity
> 50 kW Capacity
High Hazard with < 50 kW Capacity
High Hazard with > 50 kW Capacity
Operating Hydroelectric Facility
Dam not on National Wild and Scenic River
Dam on National Wild and Scenic River
NRPC
VERMONT
Sources: VCGI
Disclaimer: The accuracy of information presented is determined by its sources. Errors and omissions may exist. The Northwest RPC is not responsible for these. Questions of on-the-ground location can be resolved by site inspections and/or surveys by a registered surveyor. This map is not sufficient for delineation of features on-the-ground. This map identifies the presence of features, and may indicate relationships between features, but is not a replacement for surveyed information or engineering studies.
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St. Albans, VT 05478
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For Planning Purposes Only.
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B. Energy Plan Data and LEAP Modeling

Under 24 V.S.A § 4348a(a)(3) municipal enhanced energy plans must include data on current energy use by sector and municipal targets for 2025, 2035 and 2050 which comply with the Vermont Comprehensive Energy Plan. This appendix describes how current use and municipal targets were developed.

Current Use

Data on current energy use was developed using the Department of Public Service municipal consumption tool. The following details the data sources for each sector of energy use. The best available data sources were used.

There are several limitations on the data. With the exception of metered electricity and natural gas, there is no direct measures of energy usage. Therefore, the current use data relies heavily on state estimates of energy use per house or business. Additionally, at the town level, there is a high margin of error for U.S. Census American Community Survey data which impacts accuracy.

Thermal Energy Use

Residential thermal energy use was estimated based on the number of housing units in the municipality and the average state heating use per household. Commercial thermal energy use was estimated using data from the Vermont Department of Labor on the number and type of businesses and a statewide estimate of the typical heating energy use of those types of businesses.

Transportation Energy Use

Transportation energy use was estimated based on the total Vermont DMV registrations for internal combustion and electric vehicles and statewide estimates of average vehicle mile travelled and fuel economy. Vermont registrations are based on address, differences between zip code address and municipal boundaries exist in some communities which make this data less accurate.

Electrical Energy Use

Metered electrical energy use is reported by the distribution utilities to Efficiency Vermont for residential and commercial uses. Farm operations may choose to select the residential or commercial energy rate.

2025, 2035 and 2050 Consumption Targets

The 2025, 2035 and 2050 municipal targets are based on a proportion of the regional targets found in the Northwest Regional Energy Plan. Regional targets were developed by the Department of Public Service based on the 2022 Vermont Comprehensive Energy Plan.

The 2022 Vermont Comprehensive Energy Plan included a Low Emissions Analysis Platform (LEAP) analysis of one pathway towards reaching the state's statutory 2050 energy goals. This scenario is known as the CAP mitigation scenario. Information on the state's LEAP modeling process can be found at https://publicservice.vermont.gov/document/2022-cep-analysis-greenhouse-gas-emission-reduction-pathways-vermont.

The statewide LEAP model targets were then divided among the Regional Planning Commissions by the Vermont Department of Public Service. NRPC has divided each consumption target by municipality based on the percentage of current energy use in the municipality. For thermal energy use, the natural gas portion of the target was allocated only to communities with existing natural gas lines, as large-scale expansions of the existing natural gas pipelines are not expected.

2025, 2035 and 2050 Generation Targets

NRPC developed the regional energy generation targets using the Vermont Department of Service's generation scenarios tool. NRPC assumed that 50% of the regional energy supply would be produced by renewable sources within the region. More information on the regional target can be found in the Northwest Regional Energy Plan.

The regional target was then divided by municipality based on total population, under the assumption that municipalities with higher population will have higher energy demand. These targets were divided between ground-mount and rooftop solar under the assumption that one-quarter of the total available rooftop solar potential will be developed.

Finally, the targets were adjusted to remove the ground-mount solar target for St. Albans City, as under regional policy the entire community is within a growth area where ground-mount solar is not appropriate. This adjustment had the impact of adding roughly 800 kW of ground-mount solar to all other municipal targets. All other municipalities have sufficient land area outside of growth areas for ground-mount solar.

C. Energy Resource Mapping Constraints

Solar, Wind and Biomass Maps

Known Constraints

- **Confirmed Vernal Pools:** There is a 600-foot buffer around confirmed vernal pools. (*Source: ANR*)
- **State Significant Natural Communities and Rare, Threatened, and Endangered Species:** Rankings S1 through S3 were used as constraints. These include all of the rare and uncommon rankings within the file.For more information on the specific rankings, explore the methodology for the shapefile. (*Source: VCGI*)
- **River Corridors:** Only mapped River Corridors were mapped. Does not include 50 foot buffer for streamswith a drainage area less than 2 square miles. (*Source: VCGI*)
- **National Wilderness Areas:** (*Source: VCGI*)
- **FEMA Floodways:** (*Source: VCGI*)
- **Class 1 and Class 2 Wetlands:** (*Source: VCGI*)
- **Downtowns, Planned Growth Areas, Village Centers, Village Areas and Transitional Areas:** These areas are the current or planned areas of dense development in the region. Larger solar generation facilities are land-intensive and interrupt the desired pattern of smart growth development. This constraint does not apply to ground-mounted solar of 500 kW or less in all areas other than downtowns, roof-mounted solar, or parking lot canopy solar within such designated areas. The inclusion of this resource as a regional constraint is consistent with goals and policies of the Northwest Regional Plan. (Source: NRPC) (*Source: NRPC*)
- **FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) Special Flood Hazard Areas:** Special flood hazard areas as digitized by the NRPC were used—just 100-year flood plain (500-year floodplain not mapped). The inclusion of this resource as a regional constraint is consistent with goals and policies of the NorthwestRegional Plan. (*Source: NRPC*)
- **Ground and Surface Waters Drinking Protection Areas:** Buffered Source Protection Areas (SPAs) are designated by the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC). SPA boundaries are approximate but are conservative enough to capture the areas most susceptible to contamination. Theinclusion of this resource as a regional constraint is consistent with goals and policies of the Northwest Regional Plan. (*Source: Vermont Agency of Natural Resources [ANR]*)
- **Vermont Conservation Design Highest Priority Forest Blocks:** The lands and waters identified here arethe areas of the state that are of highest priority for maintaining ecological integrity. Together, these lands comprise a connected landscape of large and intact forested habitat, healthy aquatic and ripariansystems, and a full range of physical features (bedrock, soils, elevation, slope, and aspect) on which

plant and animal natural communities depend. The inclusion of this resource as a regional constraint isconsistent with goals and policies of the Northwest Regional Plan. (*Source: ANR*)

- **Public Water Sources:** A 200-foot buffer is used around public drinking water wellheads. The inclusion ofthis resource as a regional constraint is consistent with goals and policies of the Northwest Regional Plan.(*Source: ANR*)
- **National Natural Landmark – Chazy Fossil Reef:** The Chazy Fossil Reef in Isle La Motte has beendesignated a National Natural Landmark by the US Department of Interior. (*Source: NRPC*)
- **Municipal Conservation Land Use Areas:** Conservation Land Use Districts, as designated in municipalplans, that include strict language that strongly deters or prohibits development have been included as a known constraint.

Possible Constraints

- **Potential and Probable Vernal Pools:** There is a 600-foot buffer around unconfirmed vernal pools. (*Source: ANR*)
- **Protected Lands:** This constraint includes public lands held by agencies with conservation or natural resource oriented missions, municipal natural resource holdings (ex. Town forests), public boating and fishing access areas, public and private educational institution holdings with natural resource uses and protections, publicly owned rights on private lands, parcels owned in fee by non profit organizations dedicated to conserving land or resources, and private parcels with conservation easements held by nonprofit organizations. (*Source: VCGI*)
- **Features from ANR's Vermont Conservation Design:** Highest Priority Interior Forest Blocks, Highest Priority Connectivity Blocks, Highest Priority Physical Landscape Blocks and Highest Priority Surface Water and Riparian Areas.
- **Deer Wintering Areas:** Deer wintering habitat as identified by the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources.(*Source: VCGI*)
- **Hydric Soils:** Hydric soils as identified by the US Department of Agriculture. (*Source: VCGI*)
- **Agricultural Soils:** Local, statewide, and prime agricultural soils are considered. (*Source: VCGI*)
- **Act 250 Agricultural Soil Mitigation Areas:** Sites conserved as a condition of an Act 250 permit.(*Source: VCGI*)
- **Class 3 Wetlands:** Class 3 wetlands in the region have been identified have been included as a Regional Possible Constraint. The inclusion of this resource as a regional constraint is consistent with goals and policies of the Northwest Regional Plan (Source: ANR)
- **Municipal Conservation Land Use Areas:** Conservation Land Use Districts, as designated in municipal plans, that include strict language that deters, but does not prohibit development.

Hydro Maps

Known Constraints

- **National Scenic and Recreational Rivers:** Known constraint; Missisquoi and Trout Rivers. This constraint will only be incorporated into the Hydroelectric Resource Map. Dams occurring within an impacted area will be displayed as such on maps. (*Source: Digitized by the BCRC from Upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers,Wild and Scenic Study Management Plan*)

Possible Constraints

- **"303d" List of Stressed Waters:** Possible constraint. This constraint will only be incorporated into the Hydroelectric Resource Map. Dams occurring within an impacted area will be displayed as such on maps.(*Source: ANR*)
- **Impaired Water:** Possible constraint. This constraint will only be incorporated into the Hydroelectric Resource Map. Dams occurring within an impacted area will be displayed as such on maps. (*Source: ANR*)
- **State Significant Natural Communities and Rare, Threatened, and Endangered Species:** Rankings S1 through S3 were used as constraints. These include all of the rare and uncommon rankings within the file.For more information on the specific rankings, explore the methodology for the shapefile. (*Source: VCGI*)

APPENDIX 2: LIST OF SITES ON STATE HISTORIC REGISTER

The following structures in Bakersfield are listed on the Vermont State Register of Historic Structures (as conducted in 1985). The site numbers correspond to the map that follows this list. Some numbers are not used.

The full historic survey document, with information on each structure, is also available to view on the VT Agency of Commerce and Community Development Online Resource Center: https://accdservices.vermont.gov/ORCDocs/Bakersfield_HistoricSurvey__SurveyForm_00000003.pdf.

State Historic Register Sites in Bakersfield:

1. Bakersfield Village Historic District (~60 contributing structures, see map to the right)
2. Cochrane-Kalal Jordan Farm Complex
3. Gray-Gilbert-Preston Farm
4. Sinnett-Allen Farm
5. Holden Doane Farm
6. Whitney Farm
7. Hunt Farm
8. Woodrow Dezotelle House
9. Brigham-Stufflebeam-Clowes Farm
10. -
11. Allen Soule House
12. Bakker House
13. Paige-Howrigan-Reed Barn
14. Tupper-Lawyer Farm
15. Spofford-Watkins Barns



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16. -
17. E Brigham-Woolstenhulme House
18. Scott-Sears Farm
19. -
20. Britch-Madison Barn
21. Jones Farm
22. Maynard-Hyde Haible House
23. Tillotson House
24. Bakersfield United Methodist Church
25. Col. Hazeltine-Lamore House
26. G Moran Estate/Alan Murcury House
27. Tom Hooker House-Lamson House
28. Houghton & Hooker Store-Merritt Patch House
29. Marshia House
30. Stephan's Tavern-Pottier House
31. Albert Brigham Farm
32. District #12 Schoolhouse-Branch School-Dervuse House
33. Maple Hurst Farm-Ovitt Farm
34. Duane Ovitt Farm-Dennis Ovitt
35. Hennessey House
36. District #11 Schoolhouse-Schoolhouse #11-Stahl House
37. Will Johnson's Mill-Cooper House
38. Hayes-Hubert House
39. Childs-Rosenberg Farm
40. Bouchard Farm
41. Upton-Malone Farm
42. Giddings-Durham House
43. E Houghton-Archambault-Milnes House
44. Dunham-Evans House
45. Cutting House

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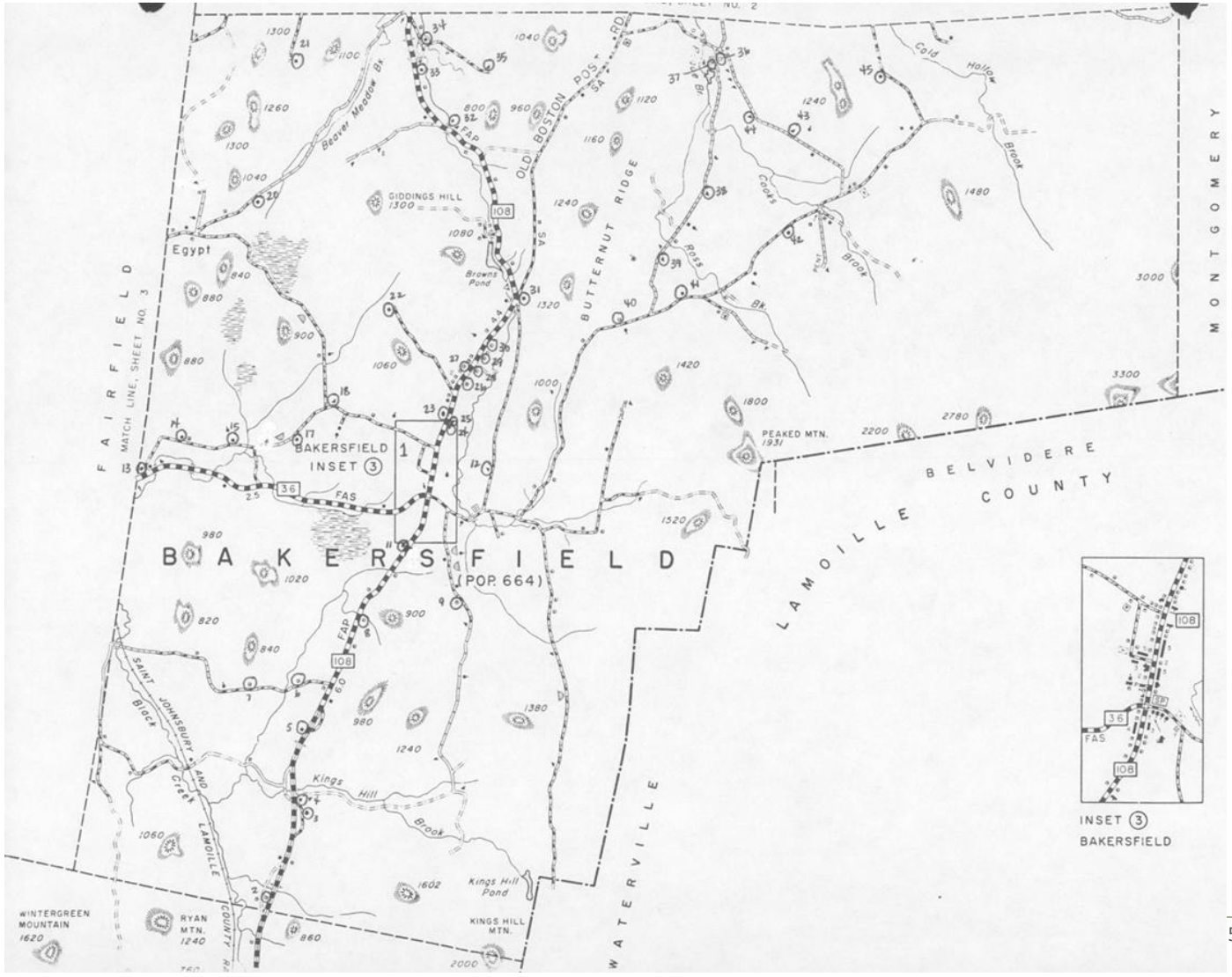
BAKERSFIELD

Town Plan



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