



RICHMOND: OUR TOWN, OUR FUTURE

RICHMOND, VERMONT 2018 TOWN PLAN

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CONTENTS

Introduction

- Overview ...3
- Vision...3
- Purpose...4
- Responsibilities ...4
- Acts 171 and 174...5
- Policy on Inclusion...6
- Plan Structure...6

Technical Plans and Accompanying Maps

- Community Development ...7
- Economic Development...10
- Education...13
- Emergency Resilience ...15
- Energy...17
- Future Land Use...21
- Historic Resources... 26
- Housing...29
- Natural Resources...31
- Transportation...35
- Utilities and Facilities...38

Plan Implementation...41

Appendices

- a) Glossary of Terms...51
- b) References and Resources..52
- c) Town Plan Map Index...53
- d) Richmond Almanac...54
- e) Visioning Process: From Vision to Action...73
- f) Richmond Community Data Profile (as amended periodically, available digitally)

Introduction

Overview

Richmond is a small, rural town located in the eastern uplands of Chittenden County. The town's 34.41 square miles are characterized by the forested foothills of the Green Mountains and the open agricultural land of the Winooski River valley. Our significant natural resources provide essential ecological services, habitats for countless animal, bird and plant species, outdoor educational classrooms, and a wide range of economic, scenic and recreational benefits as they enrich the lives of the estimated 4,129 residents and the many visitors to the town. Agriculture and trading were Richmond's earliest economic activities, yet today most residents find employment elsewhere. Many travel daily to Burlington, Vermont's largest city and urban center, 15 miles to the west; to Montpelier, the small state capital, 25 miles to the east; or to neighboring Essex Junction.

The village center, located at the crossroads of Main Street (US Route 2) and Bridge Street, functions as the community hub and is host to a handful of small retail and commercial businesses, the library, post office, municipal offices, residential side streets, the elementary and middle schools, Volunteers Green and the iconic Round Church. It is served by a municipal water and wastewater system. The village is bisected by the Winooski River and a functioning railway. There are many homes within the village, but most residents now live outside this historic settlement area

Located 3 miles to the east of the village along Route 2 is Jonesville. A small post office and a cluster of commercial businesses define a once-thriving small village center. One additional area known locally for its historic settlement significance is Fays Corner. Located approximately 2 miles west of the village up Hinesburg Road at the intersection with Kenyon Road and East Hill Road, Fays Corner was once a small hamlet defined by its one room school house, store, mill and tannery operation and clustering of farm houses at a crossroad location. One of the largest mobile home parks in the state, Riverview Commons, is located in the northern part of the Town and is a source of affordable housing.

Vision

During the Our Town, Our Future planning process we heard that Richmond residents love the strong community, the available services and amenities, the small-town character, the people, and the rural landscape and environment. Eleven specific vision statements for the future emerged. We heard that people wanted new and improved businesses, safe biking and walking routes, and more recreational offerings. We also learned that Richmond residents are different and the same. Youth and seniors, newcomers and longtime residents have similar values but different needs and priorities. A full and detailed exploration of these ideas can be found in the "Planning Process: From Vision to Action" section of the Appendix.

Richmond's vision is to be the most livable small town in Vermont. We value our unique combination of authentic Vermont character, diverse local services and accessible location. We want Richmond to be an affordable and appealing place for people to live, work, shop, play, and connect. We will take a forward-thinking approach to emerging opportunities and challenges while honoring and strengthening our close-knit community and rural character.

In order to fulfill our vision, we will:

- Ensure **transparent and inclusive decision-making**, with a representative and open government, civil discourse, and an active and informed community
- Promote **affordability and a reasonable cost of living**, so that people with a mix of ages, backgrounds, and income levels can afford housing, food, goods, and services in Richmond
- Be a healthy and accessible **community for all ages**, where youth are nurtured and included; teens have opportunities and support; adults can live and raise families; and seniors can comfortably live and actively contribute
- Foster **economic opportunity** by supporting local businesses, developing good jobs, nurturing a diverse local economy, and promoting renewable energy
- Enhance our **history and traditions**, celebrating our agricultural heritage, treasured community events, and unique historic sites and architecture
- Support safe, sustainable, and convenient **mobility and transportation options**, so that people can bike, walk, ride, and drive in Richmond and beyond
- Wisely steward our **natural and working lands**, ensuring the beauty and health of our landscapes,

waterways, open spaces, wildlife, and agricultural resources

- Nurture a **safe and resilient community** with strong volunteerism, public services, caring and self-reliant neighbors, and a proactive approach to preparing for challenges
- Foster and enhance our **small-town character**, including our quiet pace and rural way of life, friendly and involved community, and scenic beauty
- Support a wide range of **social, cultural and recreational offerings**, including open space and recreation facilities, arts and cultural activities, and community gathering places
- Have a **vibrant and appealing downtown**, with attractive streets and buildings, convenient services, and diverse businesses, where people can connect and meet their daily needs

Purpose

The purpose of this plan is to guide community members and leaders in protecting what we love about Richmond and enhancing the aspects we wish to improve. We have great power and responsibility to bring the community's aspirations and intentions to life, through public investments, incentives, land use regulations and other implementation programs.

First and foremost, this is a plan for and by the Richmond community. Dozens of Richmond community members and groups played a role in developing actions and writing the plan, and they incorporated ideas and suggestions from hundreds more residents. This plan represents the first time in 10 years that Richmond has conducted an extensive community outreach process to reach many diverse community members and developed a common community vision to guide and shape our policies and actions.

This plan places a strong emphasis on supporting and enhancing the community vision and values identified by community members. It is meant to be a roadmap for our future, but also offer clear and concrete guidance to the people and groups who live and work in Richmond every day. We understand that there are inherent conflicts in planning values and priorities that will affect future zoning and development, however, we recognize the responsibility to act on a case-by-case basis and make the best possible decisions as a multifaceted town government. This Plan will:

- Include an assessment of the assets and conditions in Richmond at this moment in time
- Articulate Richmond's community vision, and the ways in which community members want to enhance and protect core community values
- Identify interconnections and relationships between key values, goals and actions
- Identify partners for implementation and opportunities for collaboration among a broad range of community groups and organizations
- Provide clear guidance on Richmond's goals and policies to organizations, developers, businesses and property owners, and state agencies or commissions
- Provide community officials and leaders clear standards for evaluating proposals by private individuals
- Clearly identify state and regional connections, including consistency with state policies and opportunities to coordinate with regional plans
- Provide the foundation for municipal regulations and programs, such as zoning and subdivision regulations, an official map, a capital budget and program, and impact fees

Responsibilities

○ **Planning Commission**

The Richmond Planning Commission (PC) is responsible for preparing the plan, holding public hearings on the plan and submitting it to the Selectboard for final approval and adoption. The PC is also responsible for submitting the proposed plan to the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC) for their approval and certification that it meets statutory and regional criteria. The plan must be updated and readopted every eight years to remain in good standing. The commission will review progress annually prior to the restructuring of committees and boards in the spring.

○ **Town Plan Steering Committee**

The Town Plan Committee was appointed specifically to guide this planning process and to reach as many community members and diverse community groups as possible. The Committee's responsibilities are complete with the publication of this plan, and the committee will dissolve.

- **Selectboard**

The Selectboard must officially approve or endorse the Planning Commission's recommended plan after holding its own required public hearings. The SB is also responsible for adopting town policies and making critical decisions to guide the plan's implementation.

- **Town Staff**

Town staff have provided technical and logistical support and guidance throughout this planning process, including helping to organize and publicize events and opportunities to engage the public. They are also charged with leading many of the implementation steps, and with supporting and following the plan as they carrying out their responsibilities.

- **Town Boards + Committees**

Richmond has several official town boards and committees which oversee particular aspects of the community's activities. Each board provided input into relevant goals or plan sections, and each is responsible for leading or implementing actions related to its area of expertise. A list of these groups can be found in the "References" section of the Appendix.

- **Community Members + Other Groups**

This plan has made a sustained effort to engage the community and identify a broadly supported vision. Implementation will in turn require the support and involvement of these community members and groups. The community was responsible for providing the input that shaped the vision, actions and priorities, and will be subject to the policies and actions that the plan defines. Many actions cannot happen without resources and energy from local non-profits, businesses, schools or community members, and the involvement of many community members is critical for the success of the plan.

- **Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission**

The CCRPC is responsible for confirming that a municipal plan is consistent with the state planning goals as defined in Vermont statute 24 VSA §4302 and contains all the required elements as specified in 24 VSA §4382. This board also ensures that each municipality's plan does not conflict with the plans of neighboring towns and with regional goals. CCRPC also assists in the preparation and printing of the maps found in the Plan. There are significant benefits from maintaining a CCRPC-approved municipal plan, including the ability to levy impact fees and to compete effectively for state planning funds and grants for technical assistance programs. A confirmed plan enables a town to adopt and revise bylaws and can be considered a regulatory document in legal proceedings. To achieve those benefits, town plans must be approved by voters, confirmed by the Regional Planning Commission (RPC), and updated regularly.

Acts 171 and 174

Since the 2015-2016 visioning process for this plan, two important pieces of state legislation have been adopted that significantly impact our final document. These are Act 171, the "Timber Harvesting and Forest Lands" Act; and Act 174, the "Energy Development Improvement" Act. Both new statutes aim to promote statewide goals through the planning and actions of individual towns. These goals cannot be achieved without the active participation of the towns, and the Vermont legislature has determined that the health and welfare of all residents will be negatively impacted if these goals are not met.

The sections of the plan most directly affected are Energy, Transportation, Natural Resources and Future Land Use, but other sections such as Economic Development and Community Development are influenced to a lesser degree. Goals and Actions within the technical plans have been aligned with these statutes, but because Acts 171 and 174 are of such recent origin (adopted in summer of 2016) this planning will undoubtedly be a work in progress over the 8-year timeframe of this plan.

The goal of Act 171 is to maximize the significant benefits that intact blocks of forested land provide by reducing fragmentation into the foreseeable future. "Development," which includes most activities that significantly alter the natural state of the areas, is not prohibited, but is to be done carefully, respecting the work that has been done to understand how the economic and ecological functions of forests can be best preserved. Employment opportunities in the timber and biomass industries; recreation and tourism, and natural resource management and study, will be protected by this law, as will the natural resources contained within these areas.

Act 174 “seeks to improve the integration of planning for energy and land use” in order to facilitate the process by which new renewable facilities (such as solar arrays and wind towers) can be sited. These infrastructure projects are essential if Vermont is to achieve its climate change goal of meeting 90% of our energy needs from renewable sources by 2050. The energy section of this plan was developed with assistance from the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC) such that it meets the criteria for “enhanced energy planning” and thus will be given greater weight in hearings before the state Public Utilities Commission (PUC).

Compatibility

This plan in its entirety has been determined to be compatible with the plans of the surrounding towns including Williston, Jericho, Bolton, Huntington, and Hinesburg. It has also been determined to be compatible with the Chittenden County ECOS Plan.

Policy on Inclusion

This plan and the planning process are subject to Richmond’s Policy on Inclusion, which was passed as a non-binding resolution on March 7, 2017 at Town Meeting: “Be it resolved, that we the people of Richmond celebrate diversity and welcome all people no matter their color, the religion they practice, their ethnicity, nationality, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status or gender identity.

Plan Structure

- **Introduction**
 - Basic information that locates the Town of Richmond in a geographical and political context and sets forth the Town’s vision.
- **Technical Plans with Accompanying Maps**
 - Each of the eleven sections covers a topic that state statutes require us to consider in a municipal plan. The initial **Narrative** discusses current conditions and issues for the future. This is followed by **Goals** and the **Actions** that we plan to take to achieve these goals. Finally, a **map or maps** relevant to the topic appears at the end of most sections.
- **Implementation**
 - The action items from all the technical plans are gathered together in an **Implementation Table**, which sets out a time-frame for and ownership of these tasks. This table may be distributed to all town committees to be used as a self-contained guide to municipal goals and actions to be undertaken over the lifetime of the Plan.
- **Appendices**
 - **Glossary of Terms**
 - **References and Resources**
 - List of relevant state statutes, documents referenced in the technical plans, list of community organizations and town governing bodies, sources for explanatory or background information
 - **Map Index**
 - **Almanac**
 - History, inventories and community information that is helpful to understanding the Town and its people
 - **Visioning Process**
 - “From Vision to Action:” A description of the public outreach process that solicited input from residents to discover the vision and values of the community. Survey results and community-generated strategies that have informed the technical plans.
 - **Community Data Profile (as amended periodically, current draft available digitally)**
 - Charts, statistics and other data related to the themes described in the technical plans

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

A strong sense of community is a quintessential characteristic of many Vermont towns, and Richmond is no exception. The Richmond community was heavily involved in the creation of this plan which reflects a strength and the special value of this particular Technical Plan. The 11 visions that the community created for Richmond's future are all based on what constitutes a thriving society and what sets Richmond apart from the rest.

A most basic component of community development is that a community be able to access its most basic needs: food, water, energy, emergency and medical services, shelter, mobility, and supplies. While most residents can meet these needs locally, vulnerable populations such as the elderly or low-income residents face greater risks. Vulnerable populations are more likely to face food insecurity, require advanced medical care, and live in housing in vulnerable locations such as floodplain. Richmond does have a few notable gaps in services, such as a pharmacy and laundromat. Other needs Richmond residents would like to be able to access are more local opportunities for childcare, education, employment, and recreation.

Another basic component of a community is its government. Richmond has a strong desire for a transparent and inclusive government. Vermont statutes require that all government officers are accountable to the public, and the Open Meeting Law requires that municipal boards and committees publicly announce all meetings and agendas, conduct business in open meetings, and post minutes afterward. The changing culture and demographics in Richmond (and Vermont overall) mean that fewer residents are attending public meetings and engaging through these traditional channels, which is a challenge Richmond must overcome.

These same trends are driving the decline in town government volunteerism overall. Today, the Town struggles to recruit volunteers for a variety of positions on boards and commissions. Other local volunteer-based organizations are not necessarily in the same struggle as the town, and do have thriving memberships. Many Richmond residents expressed a need for increased volunteer recruitment and coordination, including better communication, to meet ongoing volunteer needs and volunteer needs during emergencies. Strong volunteerism and civic engagement are common aspects of small town life, and small town character is an aspect of Richmond that is highly valued.

The most visible defining aspects of Richmond's small town character are its landscapes and architecture. Scenic views and pastoral landscapes are important to the community, along with the authentic working farms and treasured historic buildings like the Round Church. Community members also value Richmond's small size and scale. Land development can greatly affect community development. A small rural community like Richmond with the desire to stay small and rural must strike a balance between economic prosperity of the town and residents while preserving the town's character.

Strong traditions and local culture also contribute to a treasured small town community feel. Existing social, cultural and recreational offerings in Richmond include a wide range of options, from long-standing events and traditions, to public spaces and gathering places that support informal activities, to open-access recreation facilities, trails and parks. Richmond's beloved community traditions include general themes like Richmond's working landscape and agricultural economy; shared Vermont traditions such as Town Meeting Day and strong local democracy; and standalone events like the 4th of July parade, Friday Night Food Affair, and Holiday Market. Some of these events have lasted for generations, while others (like the three-year-old Floatapalooza) are just starting and growing now. More than ten different groups, including several Town Committees and departments, currently coordinate core activities and facilities and publicize them in a variety of ways. Richmond does not have a staff position responsible for coordinating activities, and current communication channels where events and activities are listed are underutilized.

VISION CONNECTION

- **Affordability:** Being able to afford the community you live in is a major and integral part of choosing to stay or leave
- **Safe + Resilient Community:** Safety assurance is a major factor in community sustainability and spirit
- **Community For All Ages:** Inclusivity of all ages makes for a closer-knit community with greater social resources
- **History and Traditions:** These are what make a community unique. Traditions can bring new people in and help to keep them as well
- **Mobility and Transportation:** Mobility of residents allows for social interaction and the ability to access their basic needs
- **Small-Town Character:** Quiet, rural, friendly communities are a strong desire for many people when it comes to choosing a place to live
- **Social, Cultural + Recreational Offerings:** Free time opportunities are important not only for the enjoyment of residents but can also draw in visitors
- **Transparent + Inclusive Decision-Making:** Government plays a large role in residents lives both actively and passively. They must uphold their charge of acting for the good of the public

Richmond's prime location in Chittenden County offers residents convenient access to a wide array of cultural activities in Burlington, Montpelier and beyond, but residents value the offerings right in town. Many participants in the planning process expressed a desire for more programs and facilities within Richmond. While they value the many activities already available, residents – and particularly youth – have expressed a strong desire for additional facilities including a community pool, tennis courts, more basketball courts, safer bike routes, a permanent building for a community/senior center. The physical and financial feasibility, as well as predicted level of use, of such facilities is still to be determined. Many Richmond residents have voiced a desire for more public transportation options and better access or parking for important destinations like the Village or schools. While there are many hiking trails throughout town and sidewalks within the Village, there are few sidewalks and no designated bike or shared use lanes for people walking along important routes.

Richmond must also address the needs of an aging population — not only helping older adults to age in place, but finding ways to celebrate and benefit from their talents and helping them to retain vital roles in the community. Richmond community members also expressed a desire to retain and attract more young adults. That means ensuring that they can afford to live in Richmond and can find viable employment, but also providing some of the vibrancy and amenities that are drawing many younger people to cities. The town cannot directly guarantee employment or affordable housing rates, but they can support education and business growth that helps employment, as well as programs that support affordable housing. Looking to the future, Richmond must also focus on providing supports to its youngest residents. Across the nation and throughout Vermont, leaders are recognizing the strategic importance of improving early childhood education and services. Investing in young children at this critical stage can improve outcomes and reduce the need for later support and services. Richmond's afterschool programs, library programs, the Our Community Cares Camp, childcare centers, and Radiate Art programs are exceptionally valuable to children and their families.

A major issue facing the nation, Vermont, and Richmond is the opiate addiction crisis. This crisis is leading to an increase in crime, and a decrease in public health and safety. This deeply affects community spirit and sustainability. Richmond needs to ensure that our policies and services follow the path to ending the crisis and supporting our community members however this crisis may affect them. We can address many needs and build community by creating stronger volunteer networks, collaboration between organizations, and better communication systems. These efforts will need to be a collaborative process between government and residents in order to be successful.

GOALS + ACTIONS

GOAL 1: Ensure that Richmond residents can meet basic needs and access affordable goods and services, including in times of emergency, as well as support or provide further services for residents when possible

ACTIONS:

1. Continue to support currently established local businesses and service providers by creating a municipal purchasing policy that gives preference to local vendors where applicable and reasonable
2. When updating zoning regulations, explore ways to allow for non-traditional housing types, ways to encourage the creation of new business enterprises
3. Support public health programs and resources in and outside of Richmond by ensuring that town policies and regulations allow for their presence, the development of healthcare and critical facilities, and by supporting and allowing access for all individuals to facilities and programs
4. Support and allow for affordable food and clothing sources such as the Thrift Shop and Food Shelf
5. Convene an essential goods and services summit with local providers to identify where gaps exist in Richmond and determine a course of action to increase availability
6. Support new and/or unique employment opportunities for Richmond residents through policy and regulation, such as continued or expanded allowance of cottage industry and home occupations
7. Support childcare provider opportunities by maintaining programs such as the Children's Librarian
8. Continue to utilize and allow public use of municipal buildings and grounds, such as the Community Room and Volunteers Green, for the Richmond Farmer's Market, Holiday Market, book sale, and other local or affordable buying opportunities
9. Include access to goods, services, and basic needs in the emergency management plan
10. Continue to support Richmond's schools and other educational opportunities for residents

GOAL 2: Increase civic infrastructure, community engagement, and communication through transparent government

ACTIONS:

1. Ensure that all town staff, boards, and commissions are following the requirements of Vermont's Open Meeting Law
2. Hold an annual meeting of town boards, commissions, and staff to increase collaboration and communication

3. Continue to utilize open and transparent communication channels through established platforms such as Front Porch Forum, Times Ink, and MMCTV and publicize accommodations for participation in meetings such as the livestream from MMCTV
4. Maintain a user friendly and regularly updated town website and social media platforms which will include a list of volunteer opportunities; public contact information for all town boards, commissions, and staff; and a link to Western Slopes Business Association website
5. Maintain the town's inclusivity policy, and explore the creation of a civility policy for the municipal workplace, boards, commissions, and town media presence
6. Continue the fair and equitable application and enforcement of town, state, and federal laws
7. Recognize and reward volunteer service through celebration and promotion

GOAL 3: Support and create outdoor recreation opportunities that are available to the public

ACTIONS:

1. Work with landowners who are willing to allow public access to privately accessed natural and open space areas
2. Support the Richmond and Vermont Land Trusts in their endeavors to protect natural resources that will have public access for recreational purposes
3. Encourage collaboration between the trails committee, conservation commission, planning commission, and regional organizations
4. Create and distribute materials that foster responsible use and enjoyment of Richmond's natural areas, including trail maps, kiosks, improved parking and access, and signage
5. Support long-standing outdoor recreation opportunities such as Cochran's Ski Area and Chittenden County Fish & Game
6. Support outdoor recreation opportunities and programs that include canoe access on the Winooski River, swimming, cross country skiing, skating, mountain biking, etc.

GOAL 4: Continue to support and maintain various social and community recreation opportunities

ACTIONS:

1. Support arts and cultural programming and opportunities for residents and visitors
2. Explore the creation of a town community outreach and recreation staff position
3. Identify possible methods of funding further recreation and community engagement opportunities
4. Support public and private recreational businesses or endeavors by ensuring that zoning regulations allow for sustainable recreational uses of public and private lands including, but not limited to, the potential development of community centers, outdoor seating or gathering, performance spaces, etc.
5. Educate the community and visitors of Richmond's recreational opportunities through the town website and social media
6. Continue to support and allow community use of the library and Community Room
7. Create a management plan for municipal public spaces, facilities, and lands that includes capital improvements and budget as well as opportunities for expanded or new uses
8. Continue to allow for public events such as festivals, parades, and vendor fairs and create a streamlined approval process for such uses

GOAL 5: Work to maintain and increase public health and safety, and reduce crime

ACTIONS:

1. Continue to support the provision of critical services including, but not limited to, law enforcement, fire, and emergency medical services through policy and work to keep these services both affordable and effective
2. Ensure that Richmond's first responders are trained and sufficiently equipped to deal with a variety of scenarios and threats
3. Support public health programs and resources in and outside of Richmond by ensuring town policies allow for their presence and the development of critical facilities
4. Continue to collaborate with and support efforts and resources that are tackling the opiate crisis, as well as other major issues such as domestic abuse and substance abuse
5. Monitor for safety opportunities such as increased security measures, grants for safety equipment or projects, new crosswalks, and educational trainings or resources

(see also Transportation, Housing, Utilities & Facilities, Natural & Cultural Resources, Future Land Use, Emergency Resilience, Economic Development, Education)

MAPS:

- Recreation

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Richmond is a unique community in that it serves as a bedroom community for the surrounding urban areas, but it also has historically hosted a thriving local and farm economy. Although many residents now work outside of Richmond, the town remains an economic and service center for surrounding rural areas. Community members value the businesses and services in town, and people expressed strong desires for targeted economic growth during the Our Town, Our Future process.

Specifically, community members are interested in attracting new businesses that meet daily needs and cater to locals; that provide high-quality and sustainable jobs; that provide new opportunities for recreation, culture, and social connections; and that support Richmond's natural resources and working lands. Those interests echo economic growth trends and goals across the state, which focus on high-tech jobs and the creative sector, the farm and food economy, outdoor recreation, and entrepreneurship.

As in the past, the commercial hub of Richmond is in the village. It serves as Richmond's downtown, but also as the unofficial downtown for the surrounding rural towns of Bolton and Huntington. The town's largest employers are located within the village; they include the school system (Camel's Hump Middle School, Richmond Elementary School and the school district offices), Harrington's of Vermont, Richmond Market and the Town Center. Limited industrial space is located in the northeast corner of Richmond, and commercial growth is centered primarily in the downtown area and along Route 2.

While traditional dairies and larger-scale farms are declining in Vermont, working lands are a valued part of the economy. Richmond is home to a few large farms and a number of small producers and value-added agricultural and forestry businesses. Increased interest in local food is evidenced by the Farm-to-Table movement, the growth of CSA's, the increasing number of local farmer's markets, and Farm to School programs. Vermont Act 171 has put an increased emphasis on forest based businesses that serve the additional goal of protecting our core forest blocks. Richmond is in a unique and critical location that provides opportunity for forest management and other private environmental enterprises to conduct business here.

Vermont has recognized that recreation and tourism are major crucial economic sectors. An abundance of money comes into Vermont through skiing, hiking, biking, and many other similar channels. Recreation, conservation, and tourism also have deep historical roots in Richmond, while contributing to the modern economy. Richmond's working lands, natural areas, and historic resources continue to draw visitors to venues such as Cochran's Ski Area, the Vermont Youth Conservation Corps, the Round Church, and other neighboring attractions. These visitors then help to support our local retail businesses. During the visioning process, these areas of town were pointed out as valuable town assets. Flexible zoning regulations in these areas of town can increase the longevity of their presence, and provide further economic opportunities for the town.

Another emerging industry is renewable energy, which is currently increasing throughout the state in response to Vermont's energy goals. It is unclear how the commercial opportunities presented by this growing industry will impact Richmond, but there will likely be some movement in this direction over the life of this plan. Richmond currently has a large solar array in the northwest corner of town, and numerous individual and small-group installations. Biomass products, such as firewood or wood pellets, are considered a renewable energy source and can also contribute to both the forestry economy of Richmond and our energy goals. The town is supportive of creative and innovative energy technologies that can bridge the gap between renewable energy need and preservation of the landscape's aesthetic appeal.

Overall, there are approximately 375 acres designated primarily for commercial and/or industrial uses in Richmond, located primarily in the Gateway, River Road area, and the Villages of Richmond and Jonesville. The relatively small amount of developable land in these areas means that the development of entirely new, large-scale facilities and industries is unlikely. Given the commercial landscape and available sites, we believe that most economic growth is likely to fall into three categories: 1) retail or service sector businesses; 2) small-scale, home-based, or cottage industries; and 3) food, farm, and recreation enterprises. These sectors align strongly with community

VISION CONNECTION

- **Affordability:** A strong economy can drive up demand and displacement, but can also increase income and earning potential.
- **Community for All Ages:** All ages benefit from increased access to goods and services, and economic development particularly benefits young people who would like to find work locally.
- **Economic Opportunity:** New job opportunities, mobility options, and choice in the marketplace.
- **Mobility:** Transportation and mobility are critical for supporting economic development, which can in turn increase demand for new transportation options.
- **Small Town Character:** Without clear direction, economic development can undermine character; well-planned development can reinforce it.

values and state priorities, and represent important areas to target growth and support. Emerging industries such as communications and internet-based businesses may present additional opportunities. Reuse of existing structures to house modern infrastructure in the rural area may serve to provide additional revenue sources while preserving our valued rural character. The near universality of computers provides new work-from-home opportunities.

Factors that influence current and future economic development in Richmond include our current business zoning and permitting processes, access to high-speed internet, cell phone coverage, and access to water and wastewater infrastructure. The potential for water and wastewater system expansion could open up possibilities for new businesses. Three-phase power is also important for commercial and industrial operations, which is currently available along Route 2, in the village, and along Cochran and Huntington Roads. An increase in internet speeds and wider coverage of cellphone service would benefit commercial, industrial, and home-based businesses as well as residents.

Economic growth also depends on having an adequate workforce, which in turn relies on many community services and resources. Other sections of this plan address in more detail issues such as high housing costs, scarcity and expense of childcare and transportation options and lack of specific job training programs.

GOALS & ACTIONS

GOAL 1: Support and Encourage strong and diverse local businesses and a local economy

ACTIONS:

1. Create clear guidelines and information resources for permit applicants, clarifying requirements and steps for permitting and approval.
2. Streamline the business permitting process and reduce permitting costs for small businesses or entrepreneurs
3. Create a permit to support pop-up and experimental businesses such as special events, temporary markets, food trucks and pop-up stores.
4. Promote economic opportunities on town media platforms, and create economic development incentives for development that meets “smart growth” standards and preserves Richmond’s history and character
5. Support the Richmond Farmers’ Market and other local agricultural business enterprises
6. Create, maintain and distribute a list of state and regional resources and incentives for local businesses, such as Local First programs or state designation and cost-sharing programs; including an inventory of available properties, facilities and spaces for commercial, industrial or cottage business use.
7. Use local businesses for municipal purchases of goods and services whenever feasible.
8. Allow for and encourage expanded utility infrastructure for three-phase power, high-speed internet and municipal water and wastewater
9. Adjust land use regulations to allow for and encourage new industrial/commercial and mixed use development, and explore the creation of zones or districts to attract and support businesses in specific sectors such as a cultural district or green development zone

GOAL 2: Support Richmond’s agricultural and forestry industries including wood products, maple products, recreation, tourism, and a variety of farm enterprises

ACTIONS:

1. Update Richmond’s land use regulations to protect these industries by incorporating strategies to reduce forest and farm fragmentation and allow for approved forest and farm based commercial activities
2. Support occupational opportunities in the fields of scientific study and inventory, pest identification and management, invasive species control, reforestation, as well as outdoor classrooms and a variety of recreational activities
3. Keep track of ongoing strategies and studies being pursued at the state and regional levels to understand the implementation and ramifications of Act 171
4. Promote the production and purchasing of local food whenever possible
5. Explore regulatory means of supporting the viability of farm and forest based land uses
6. See also Natural Resources Technical Plan goals related to forestry and agriculture

GOAL 3: Direct growth and investment to Richmond’s downtown and village centers

ACTIONS:

1. Study the potential for expanding Richmond’s village center, the benefits of the Designated Downtown program, and renew the Village Center Designation

2. Develop a Downtown Master Plan that will direct growth to the village area and address streetscape improvements identified in existing plans. Pursue strategies to attract and focus commercial activity in Jonesville
3. Maintain and upgrade zoning regulations and development review policies to ensure that concentrated growth occurs in designated growth centers, thus bringing residents and businesses in close proximity

GOAL 4: Publicize and promote Richmond's special features such as the Round Church and Cochran's Ski Area, as well as our many recreational, lodging and dining opportunities that might attract visitors

ACTIONS:

1. Collaborate with the Trails Committee and Conservation Commission to conduct an assessment of current and needed trails and trail networking in Richmond
2. Maintain maps and up-to-date information on the town website
3. Support our local Western Slopes Business Association in its goals and efforts
4. Support economic development of local character areas through zoning regulations

GOAL 5: Support the growth of a skilled and adequate workforce.

ACTIONS:

1. Support mentoring, internships or community-based learning opportunities when possible
2. Support efforts to increase the supply of affordable housing in Richmond
3. Support childcare businesses, however possible, to support Richmond's workforce

GOAL 6: Support current and emerging renewable energy enterprises

ACTIONS:

1. Update land use regulations to include permitting steps, development parameters and mitigation requirements specific to renewable energy projects
2. Publicize and promote opportunities on the Town website to list or link to solar installers and other providers of renewable energy based services, particularly those with Richmond-based businesses.
3. See also Energy Technical Plan

(see also Natural Resources, Energy, Housing, Future Land Use, Education, Utilities & Facilities, Transportation)

TECHNICAL PLANS

EDUCATION

Richmond is a member of the Mount Mansfield Modified Union School District (MMMUSD), including Bolton, Huntington, Jericho, Richmond, Underhill, and Underhill ID. The excellent reputation of the district is a result of dedicated cooperative efforts of teachers, support staff, School Board members, administration, town residents, parent volunteers, and students. The mission of the school district is to provide high quality learning opportunities that are relevant to the needs of students and the community now and in the future. As our national economy has been shifting from manufacturing to a more service oriented economy which is knowledge based, our community and state have an opportunity to lead society by wise investment in education.

In the past few years, there has been significant expansion of community learning opportunities for preschool children and adult continuing education. About 81% of eligible preschool children are involved in preschool through partnership efforts of public and private preschools. There is still a need for a little more capacity and more private providers. The partnership pays for 10 hours per week. Bolton, Richmond, and Huntington have all started school based programs and can offer all day preschool for eligible (low income) students. Kindergarten is now full time in our school district. There is also adult continuing education through the "After Dark" program at the high school and extended programs in the arts.

Richmond Elementary School and Camel's Hump Middle School are located within Richmond, and Mount Mansfield Union High School is in Jericho. One of the significant challenges facing the school district and community is transportation to the respective schools. The district encompasses 200 square miles. Large school buses travel long distances transporting children to and from school. This uses expensive fossil fuel energy and results in long bus rides for children, many in excess of half an hour each way. It is important to examine ways in which energy and time could be saved through a more efficient transportation system. Currently, many parents drive their children to and from school to avoid long bus rides. Shorter bus rides would reduce stress levels for students and drivers and would improve student behavior on buses. Shorter routes may also reduce morning and afternoon traffic congestion in the village center. The potential use of electric buses, smaller buses for centralized or more remote areas, and possible expansion of opportunities for community use of buses could make more efficient use of energy and time.

The current opioid crisis is a growing concern to the school district. Increasing numbers of children are born addicted and live in homes where addicted parents are challenged to care for them. They come to school struggling to learn. Some children are being raised by their grandparents and other relatives. Significant trauma contributes to social, emotional, and learning challenges. School nurses and staff are working hard to meet students' needs, and this extra burden detracts from the general quality of education. The schools need help from the Town-- more community health services and treatment options.

In the mid 1990's, no one would have predicted a decline in student enrollment. However, in recent years, there has been a decline. Therefore, some space is available in the schools which opens up opportunities for other community uses. The school district wants to cooperate with the community in offering space options for additional continuing education, senior citizen activities, and other social, cultural and recreational uses. It is important to maintain the infrastructure of our school buildings as they are needed now and in the future. The schools are central gathering places for voting, Town meetings, sports events, concerts and other cultural events. In times of disaster, they are a hub offering safe haven as an emergency shelter. It is important to encourage the gathering of the community in the school buildings for as many occasions as possible. As people frequently visit the schools for various reasons, they experience pride in the community and are encouraged to support public education which is essential to our future as a town, state, and nation.

VISION CONNECTION

- **Safe + Resilient Community:** Camel's Hump Middle School is currently the designated building for shelter during a disaster.
- **Community for All Ages:** Education is a lifelong process in schools and other settings. Education contributes to culture and the understanding of challenges in our society. Good citizenry, wise decision making about government, and the role of Americans in the world are developed through education.
- **Mobility and Transportation:** The education transportation system insures that all children can get to school. The system has potential to expand to other community members and can be a model for efficiency.
- **Social, Cultural + Recreational Offerings:** The school buildings are the central gathering places for the town. They host meetings, sports events, voting, concerts and other cultural gatherings.
- **Economic opportunity:** Education prepares young people for careers and retrain adults for new careers. The schools also are a major local employer.

Richmond takes pride in our educational system and students. The town is committed to supporting student prosperity and safety. Although the town is a separate entity from the school, the two governments work closely together. Richmond Police Department currently staffs the Camels Hump Middle School Resource Officer, and our town center is the home to the MMMUSD offices.

GOALS & ACTIONS

GOAL 1: Actively support education for all ages and income levels

ACTIONS:

1. Continue to develop more programs for preschool students, including more private providers as partners.
2. Encourage education programs which address the need for new technological training for emerging careers.
3. Encourage the development of more programs which research shows develop the brain, such as the arts.
4. Provide education programs to help solve problems caused by the opiate crisis.
5. Support the expansion of nursing and other social support staff as needed within the schools.
6. Continue to provide venues such as the Community room at the Library and other facilities for recreational and educational programs for all ages.
7. Support policies that improve the mental health and readiness of students such as later start times and shorter bus routes
8. Continue to work with the MMMUSD to staff a School Resource Officer position and implement other safety measures

GOAL 2: Partner with the school district to seek a more efficient transportation system to benefit students, parents, drivers, and commuters

ACTIONS:

1. Work with the school district to explore the potential of electric buses. Support the school district in their current grant application for an electric bus
2. Consider altering bus routes to use smaller buses for outlying areas, shortening lengths of rides and saving fuel for large buses covering so much distance
3. Consider a shuttle service for students to and from local afterschool activities

GOAL 3: Partner with the school district to maintain infrastructure and maximize use of the school buildings for educational and other community purposes.

ACTIONS:

1. Support the maintenance and improvement of the building infrastructure with an emphasis on energy conservation
2. Promote efficient use of water within the buildings
3. Seek more early care (birth through age 5) providers for available space within the school buildings
4. Encourage the use of buildings for community arts and adult continuing education programs
5. Continue to support the use of schools for voting, meetings, and other important community group activities
6. Foster community support for education in general by maximizing opportunities to draw the public to the school

(see also Transportation, Utilities & Facilities, Energy, Economic Development, Community Development, Emergency Resilience)

MAPS:

- Education

EMERGENCY RESILIENCE

Resilience is defined as the ability of a community to respond to and recover from threats or challenges, whatever they may be. Building resilience means strategically strengthening our infrastructure and environment to mitigate or prepare for expected and unexpected hazards, such as floods or major accidents. But it also means building the community connections, skills, and capacity that will allow us to pull together and respond to any challenge that arises.

Vermont has experienced 33 federally declared disasters since 1990 alone, nine of which were major floods causing major erosion and damage. Climate change projections predict more frequent and more intense precipitation in the future. That has big implications for Richmond’s safety, affordability, environment, and quality of life. Richmond has worked with Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC) and the statewide organization Community Resilience Organizations (CROs) to assess the town’s risks from flooding and other hazards, to identify resilience strengths and weaknesses, and to identify hazard mitigation and preparedness actions. Flood resilience is the most important category for Richmond to consider, since it is the most common hazard and the greatest area of risk.

Existing inventories in the *Town of Richmond, VT 2017 All-Hazards Mitigation Plan (Annex 11 of Chittenden County Multi-Jurisdictional All-Hazards Mitigation Plan)*, Community Resilience Organization’s assessment, and elsewhere show that most municipal infrastructure (roads and critical facilities) are stable and able to withstand normal storms and minor floods, but may be vulnerable to more intense storms. A recent culvert assessment showed that 93% of Richmond’s culverts may be undersized, relative to severe storms and current conditions. Richmond likewise has many miles of roads that are prone to erosion and flood hazards, due to their location next to streams, rivers, or their steep grade.

Homes and other structures are also of great concern; Richmond has more than 99 buildings in the 1% (100-year) floodplain (mostly single-family homes), which makes it one of the 10 highest-risk towns in the State. Although statistically speaking, a 100 year storm is predicted to occur once in 100 years, they can, and do, occur much more frequently in reality. Storms of greater intensity, such as 500 year storms, also occur and must be considered. Richmond began participating in the National Flood Insurance Program in 1984 and some structures are insured, but flood insurance costs can be extreme. Many homeowners have no flood insurance, and their property is at risk of complete losses. Richmond does not yet participate in the Community Rating System – an incentive program, which would lower flood insurance costs for property owners. Property owners have participated in buyout programs for flood-prone properties, which allow them to start over in a safe location while the house or structure is removed and the property is protected from further development. Many structures in the special flood hazard area have been elevated or flood-proofed, to reduce risk. While Richmond does have regulations preventing new development in the special flood hazard area, the 2013 Vermont State Hazard Mitigation Plan notes that 75% of flood-related damages in Vermont are due to *fluvial erosion* (not inundation flooding), which occurs when rivers naturally change course and readjust. For example, it is more likely that a streambank or road washes out than for standing water to linger, which is due to our naturally varying elevations on the landscape. This is also why damages are not necessarily limited to the floodplain. Key definitions related to this are included below.

River Corridor Protection Areas: Mapped areas showing where a river or stream naturally moves to establish equilibrium (formerly known as a Fluvial Erosion Hazard Area)

River Corridor: The River Corridor Protection Area plus adjacent land to provide “wobble room” for the river’s movement

Flooding is certainly not the only risk that the community must consider. Richmond is uniquely located in that it is bisected by a railway, interstate, the Winooski River, and is surrounded by steep terrain. Richmond is also in a climate where extreme weather conditions are expected, especially low temperatures and snow/ice storms. Extreme fluctuations in temperature have also caused major ice jams upstream and downstream of the town which have contributed to flooding and flood damages. Wind storms have also caused damage and risk for the town by knocking out power, felling trees, and creating debris. Although the railway or highway has not yet caused a major disaster, a derailment, massive accident, or hazardous materials spill could happen. Our emergency medical

VISION CONNECTION

- **Affordability:** Flooding and other hazards drive up costs for the town and individuals, through property and infrastructure damage. Short-term resilience actions have big impacts for long-term affordability.
- **Mobility + Transportation:** Roadways often follow rivers and intersect streams, leaving them particularly vulnerable to flooding and washouts. At the same time, they contribute to runoff that makes flooding and pollution worse.
- **Natural + Working Lands:** Natural areas including rivers and steep slopes – and farms – are especially vulnerable to climate change and flood hazards. Strong and healthy ecosystems are one of the best solutions.
- **Safe + Resilient Community:** Building resilience to floods and other hazards involves physical improvements and community capacity that will help us address any challenge or threat.

service, Richmond Rescue, could be in direct danger of being affected or cut off in the instance of a train-related emergency. The railway runs through the heart of the village and is surrounded by residences and business on both sides in some areas. Because the river bisects the town, southern half of the community could be cut off from the northern half in the event of a flood. This is especially problematic due to the fact that the emergency shelter is located on the northern side of town at the middle school.

Another unique hazard for Richmond is the Huntington Gorge in the Huntington River. Although the gorge is a beautiful attribute to the natural landscape, it can be extremely dangerous and deadly for those who choose to ignore warnings and swim there. Gorge incidents are not only dangerous or deadly for the person needing rescue or recovery, but it is especially precarious for our emergency personnel. The terrain, depths, and fast-moving water can result in more injuries or deaths. Richmond has been and is currently working to prevent such accidents.

As a result of Richmond being a major convergence point of jurisdictions and transportation lines, there are a lot of players involved in the management of emergencies. Richmond must ensure that emergency plans and communication systems are implemented and that proper staff and volunteers are trained and equipped to carry out procedures or these emergency planning efforts could be futile. It is a major undertaking, but every fathomable scenario and stakeholder must be taken into account in order to create effective emergency management plans.

GOALS & ACTIONS

GOAL 1: Reduce disruptions, injuries, and asset loss due to natural and man-made emergencies

ACTIONS:

1. Maintain and update emergency response and preparedness plans including our All-Hazards Mitigation Plan and Local Emergency Operations Plan
2. Inventory vulnerabilities of municipal and critical facilities and ways to mitigate potential damages, include this in capital planning and hazard mitigation planning
3. Create a Richmond Emergency Management plan that encompasses all hazards, emergencies, and disasters, and train employees and emergency service providers on the plan and procedures
4. Participate in the Red Cross Ready Rating program and certify Camel's Hump Middle School as a Red Cross ready shelter
5. Determine a sheltering plan for residents south of the Winooski River
6. Create a plan for domestic animal sheltering during emergencies and disasters
7. Include railway, interstate, hazmat, and other weather events in the emergency management plan
8. Ensure that critical facilities and personnel have adequate and proper backup power sources, equipment, and training for disasters, hazards, and emergencies, especially our most likely or common emergencies such as flooding or gorge rescues
9. Continue to support watershed management programs and projects that will help to mitigate flooding
10. Continue to strictly regulate development in the Special Flood Hazard Area
11. Educate property owners about flood risk, insurance, development options, and flood proofing, and educate residents about disaster and emergency protocol and resources
12. Maintain an emergency preparedness section on the town website as a resource for citizens on emergency resources and procedures
13. Create an emergency volunteer network and an emergency communication system to better coordinate procedures and notifications in the event of a hazard or disaster

GOAL 2: Increase resilience of town infrastructure to be able to withstand a variety of hazards and disasters

ACTIONS:

1. Utilize the Richmond Stormwater Master Plan to maintain, upgrade, or implement stormwater systems and water conveyance systems such as ditches, culverts, and the municipal water and wastewater systems to withstand at least 1% storms (100 year storms)
2. Utilize the Richmond Stormwater Master Plan to maintain and upgrade bridges and roads to withstand inundation from at least 1% storms
3. Identify opportunities where increased levels of resilience are possible, such as improvements that could withstand a 500-year storm
4. Maintain and upgrade backup power and heating systems in town and critical facilities
5. Ensure that critical facilities are structurally sound and able to withstand heavy snowfall and high speed wind gusts, and implement storm windows and doors where necessary in critical facilities

(see also Transportation, Natural Resources, Housing, Utilities & Facilities, Future Land Use)

MAPS:

- Emergency Resilience

ENERGY

Richmond supports the Vermont Comprehensive Energy Plan (CEP), adopted into state statute in 2016, which states “Energy adequacy, reliability, security and affordability are essential for a vibrant, resilient and robust economy.” In addition, the CEP recognizes “the urgent need to mitigate the global climate change that is resulting from greenhouse gas emissions.” These two key realizations combine in a single comprehensive goal of transitioning our energy supply as quickly as possible to renewable sources. The CEP includes an ambitious statewide goal of ensuring that 90% of Vermont’s energy will be derived from renewable sources by 2050 -- this is often referred to as “90X2050.” Interim goals for 2025 include reducing per capita energy consumption 15%, and meeting 25% of the remaining energy needs from renewable sources. The draft 2018 Chittenden County ECOS Regional Plan is solidly behind this effort, and Richmond will also support and work towards these goals.

As renewable energy is needed in three major areas -- transportation, space heating (and cooling) and electricity -- we will need to focus on the specific strategies that can help us reach this goal across these areas. Benchmarks are included in the CEP to help drive forward progress towards the 90X2050 goal, as are additional policies such as the Renewable Energy Standard (RES) and the Residential and Commercial Building Energy Standards (VT-RBES, VT-CBES).

The concept of the “negawatt” cuts across all strategies. This is the idea that the most cost-saving and effective way to cut greenhouse gas emissions is to use less energy. Thus, energy conservation, and using energy in the most efficient way possible, are strategies that should always be in the forefront. Education is the big tool here and becoming informed and informing others about ways to use less energy and save money is high on the list of things we can do. Specific actions include reducing electricity waste by turning off lights and appliances when they are not being used and increasing energy efficiency by replacing inefficient lighting and appliances with ENERGY STAR labeled models. Renewable energy in Richmond can be increased in several ways through the use of sustainably generated electricity for heating and for transportation as we transition away from traditional power plants. Advanced stoves and boilers can heat our homes efficiently and affordably with sustainably grown wood. New cold climate heat pumps and heat pump water heaters are several times more energy efficient than old-fashioned electric resistance space and water heaters. Electric vehicles hold the promise of lowering our transportation costs and breaking our addiction to petroleum.

Green Mountain Power (GMP) and Vermont Electric Co-op (VEC) are the electric utilities that supply Richmond residents. GMP offers customers the option of purchasing renewable electricity through its “Cow Power” program. GMP also owns a sizable solar farm in the Industrial District by the Interstate exchange. The solar panels that have sprung up on roofs and in backyards throughout the town show that many Richmond residents have already taken direct action to generate their own green electricity. Local solar arrays capable of powering a neighborhood or a small number of homes are appearing or are being developed. Legal and regulatory frameworks to enable these efforts are being refined as we enter this new territory. More electric/gasoline hybrid cars and plug-in electric vehicles are showing up on Richmond’s roads. Local organizations such as Local Motion actively promote walking and bicycling and the infrastructure that supports these transportation alternatives. Programs and tools such as the Vermont Community Energy Dashboard, “Smart Grid technology” and Efficiency Vermont (the nation’s first electric efficiency utility) facilitate changes in habits and physical improvements for more efficient energy usage. The Richmond Climate Action Committee is working with other town energy committees and the statewide organization Vermont Energy and Climate Action Network (VECAN) to explore all ways of conserving energy, using it efficiently and transitioning to renewable energy sources.

The significant negative effects of climate change from fossil fuel consumption are already evident in Richmond and the rest of Vermont. Vermont is experiencing increased flooding and more extreme weather events. We are seeing more invasive species, in water (blue-green algae) and on land (tick-borne diseases such as Lyme disease). Climate-specific local industries, like skiing and maple sugaring, are experiencing hardships. Heavier rains in the summer have negative impacts on health and agriculture. Burning fossil fuels also causes negative health impacts when people breathe the exhaust from cars and trucks or flue gases from heating equipment.

VISION CONNECTION

- **Affordability:** Energy is one of the greatest costs for nearly all Richmond residents. Conservation and renewable energy sources will help reduce costs.
- **Economic Opportunity:** The renewable energy sector is growing rapidly and represents high potential for Richmond to grow jobs and businesses.
- **Mobility:** Some of the greatest opportunities lie with transportation –creating opportunities for sustainable transportation.
- **Safety + Resilience:** Reliance on fossil fuels is a challenge to our resilience every day, and our use of fossil fuels globally is directly leading to more climate-related hazards.

Cutting fossil fuel usage will also benefit Richmond’s economy. More than 80% of the money that Vermonters pay for heating oil, natural gas, gasoline and diesel fuel leaves the state. If this money were instead used to buy locally produced energy it would create local jobs in local businesses. Vermont’s clean energy industry already employs 1 in 16 working Vermonters (2017 Vermont Clean Energy Industry Report), and many of these jobs offer more competitive wages than the low-wage, end-distribution jobs in the fossil fuels industry.

During the height of the national energy crisis in 1975 the Vermont Legislature created the office of Town Energy Coordinator to promote alternative energy and energy conservation. State law encourages towns to appoint a person to this position who can help local government study both public and private energy use in their communities, and to develop policies to encourage the development and utilization of alternative energy resources. Richmond has had a Town Energy Coordinator since the early 1990’s.

Renewable Energy Generation

Act 174 of 2016, establishes a new set of municipal energy planning standards that provides municipalities substantial deference or greater weight in the Section 248 siting process for energy generation. This plan serves as Richmond’s enhanced energy plan which meets the Act 174 energy planning standards. The siting policies of this section contain the land conservation measures and specific actions or policies that should be given substantial deference in the context of a project review under 30 V.S.A. § 248. These policies consider factors including resource availability, environmental constraints, and the land use goals of this plan. Additionally, the Almanac contains estimates of current energy use and future targets for the heating, electric, and transportation sectors and renewable energy generation intended to provide the Town with a baseline and a sense of the pace of change needed to meet the State’s energy goals.

The Town prefers that any proposed renewable energy project be in a location that is consistent with the siting policies below. In addition, the Town believes that renewable energy projects are more likely to receive public support if the public can see a direct benefit to the community. One way this benefit can be seen is if a significant portion of the off-takers (similar to a shareholder) are from one or more of the following groups:

- Low to moderate income
- Municipal or public institutions
- Affiliated with an educational institution
- Affiliated with a non-profit organization
- Reside or is a business in the Town of Richmond

Siting Policies

To identify an appropriate location for a grid connected renewable energy generation facility, an energy developer should first determine whether there is a presence of constraints listed in Table 1 on the proposed location, then apply the policies below:

- Renewable energy generation development should be located to avoid state and local known constraints that have been field verified and minimize impacts to state/local possible constraints that have been field verified. (see also the Natural Resource Section Goal 1 Actions 5 and 6)
- Preferred sites for solar generation (including but not limited to net metering) are on previously impacted areas (such as, parking lots, previously developed sites, brownfields, and gravel pits/quarries, or on or near existing structures).
- Prioritize homes and businesses in Downtown Richmond Village and locate ground-mounted solar larger than 15 kW AC and wind turbines with a hub height larger than 30 meters (98 ft.) outside of Downtown Richmond Village.
- Locate wind generation in areas with high wind potential, such as the prime and base wind potential areas shown on the Potential Wind Energy Resource Map.

State and Local Known and Possible Constraints

State Known Constraints: Development Prohibited	State Possible Constraints: Development must minimize impacts to these	Local Known Constraints: Development Prohibited	Local Possible Constraints: Development must minimize impacts to these
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ FEMA Floodways ○ DEC River Corridors ○ National Wilderness Areas ○ State-Significant Natural Communities ○ Rare, Threatened, and Endangered Species ○ Vernal Pools (<i>confirmed and unconfirmed</i>) ○ Class 1 and 2 wetlands (<i>VSWI and advisory layers</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Agricultural Soils + Hydric Soils ○ Act 250 Ag. Soil Mitigation Areas ○ FEMA Special Flood Hazard Areas ○ VT Conservation Design Highest Priority Forest Blocks (<i>Forest Blocks – Connectivity, Forest Blocks – Interior, Forest Blocks - Physical Land Division</i>) ○ Highest Priority Wildlife Crossings ○ Protected Lands (<i>State fee lands and private conservation lands</i>) ○ Deer Wintering Areas ○ Slopes 20% or greater 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Slopes equal to or greater than 35% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Slopes between 20% grade and 35% grade* ○ Science to Action Contiguous Habitat Units and ○ Wildlife Travel Corridors* ○ Ridgelines over 900ft elevation* ○ Trails ○ Conserved Lands*

*Constraints were added after the 2018 Chittenden ECOS Plan was developed. However, CCRPC determined that Richmond’s renewable energy generation target could still be achieved.

The following goals and actions are intended to guide Richmond Town Government, Town Energy Coordinator and residents in meeting our share of the Vermont's 90X2050 goals for reducing energy consumption and transitioning to renewable energy.

GOALS & ACTIONS

GOAL 1: Decrease the amount of fossil fuels used for transportation by the town government, residents and businesses in Richmond through conservation and improved efficiency. Encourage walking and the use of bicycles and facilitating the substitution of electricity and renewable fuels for fossil fuels.

ACTIONS:

1. Adopt and maintain a zoning ordinance based on "smart growth" principles, with most development concentrated in the village, neighborhoods, downtown, gateway mixed use areas to reduce vehicle miles travelled from housing to shopping and to public transit options.
2. Support public transit opportunities such as Park and Ride lots; commuter rapid transit buses such as the Burlington-Montpelier Link; a Burlington-Montpelier light rail commuter train station in Richmond if the opportunity becomes available and local shuttle bus service, carpooling, and ridesharing programs.
3. Consider energy efficiency and alternative fuels when purchasing municipal vehicles, recognizing there may be limited options at this time for heavy duty vehicles and vehicles for first responders.
4. Facilitate conference calls, webinars and other virtual meetings when feasible to decrease travel by town employees.
5. Promote the Go! Vermont webpage which provides information on the above transportation options.
6. Support the installation of private and public electric vehicle (EV) charging stations in convenient locations. Consider installing one at the Town Center, the Park and Ride and along travel corridors.
7. Work with GMP and VEC to find funding for EV charging infrastructure.
8. Collaborate with Drive Electric Vermont to publicize their webpage, host electric vehicle demonstrations, and inform residents about electric vehicle technology, incentives and resources.
9. Work with the Vermont Energy and Climate Action Network, Drive Electric Vermont and the Vermont Clean Cities Coalition to support the use of electric and bio-diesel vehicles.
10. Consider requiring EV charging stations for new commercial development.
11. Update zoning regulations to include language to clarify permitting requirements for new electric vehicle charging installations and support the ongoing development of this infrastructure.
12. Plan upgrades to town roads to make them more bicycle and pedestrian friendly.
13. Support upgrading sidewalks in the village to encourage walking.

GOAL 2: Dramatically decrease the amount of fossil fuels used for heating and cooling buildings through weatherization, efficiency and renewable energy sourcing (e.g. heat pumps and wood heating).

ACTIONS:

1. Identify conservation and efficiency opportunities in municipal buildings and facilities and build efficiency improvements into annual maintenance upgrades and into the town's capital plan. The Town will fully participate in Efficiency Vermont and Vermont Gas's high-performance programs whenever building, renovating or upgrading any Town buildings. Develop policies for evaluating purchases and capital improvements that use life cycle analysis.
2. Support educational activities such as town energy fairs, the Community Energy Dashboard, literature distribution and energy committee activities that provide residents with information about energy conservation and renewable energy opportunities such as advanced wood heating, air-source heat pumps, geothermal, solar PV and programs to reduce energy use.
3. Coordinate with Efficiency Vermont, Vermont Gas and the state Weatherization Assistance Program and promote these programs through the town website.
4. Promote any state or regional program that encourages and/or incentivizes the removal of older inefficient woodstoves for newer EPA certified models.
5. Consider including anaerobic digestion with methane capture as part of the wastewater treatment system.
6. Support the efficient and sustainable use of wood for fuel and maintain forest health and forest carbon storage and uptake.
7. Consider adopting all or part of the State's Energy Stretch Code in the town's zoning regulations for new construction, renovations, and/or additions.

GOAL 3: Encourage and support local renewable electric generation in the Town that are in conformance with the actions outlined in this plan

ACTIONS:

1. Develop potential standards for renewable energy generation facilities, including mitigation of aesthetic and natural resources impacts
2. Designate specific locations as preferred sites for the siting of net-metered solar generation projects.
3. Continue to participate in and promote net-metering arrangements whenever possible.
4. Ensure that the long term management plan for the Town Forest allow for sustainable energy production for the benefit of the town, such as sustainable biomass harvesting (firewood).

GOAL 4: Continue to fully utilize the position of Town Energy Coordinator to help the Selectboard and Planning Commission develop plans and policies to reduce the Town's energy consumption, reduce its reliance on fossil fuels, increase the percentage of renewables used to meet its energy needs and help town residents make progress towards these goals.

ACTIONS:

1. Develop an energy action plan for the Town to implement the energy goals and actions in this plan and assist with evaluating investments in energy efficiency and renewable energy opportunities that benefit the town.
2. Maintain energy consumption data for municipal buildings using the Environmental Protection Agency Portfolio Manager software for analyzing energy efficiency and renewable energy opportunities and to evaluate the results from investments to reduce energy consumption and costs.
3. Work with the Richmond Climate Action Committee to educate the community on energy efficiency, energy conservation and renewable energy technologies and techniques.
4. Assist the Town with applying for grants and incentives to reduce energy use and increase the use of renewable energy.
5. Work with the Town Manager to fully implement the 2007 Town Energy Conservation Policy.
6. Inform the Town about the Vermont Climate Pledge and assist with joining this organization to demonstrate the town's commitment to meeting Vermont's energy and climate goals.

(see also Transportation, Housing, Natural Resources, Education)

MAPS:

- Potential Solar Energy Resource
- Potential Wind Energy Resource

FUTURE LAND USE

Vermont statute requires municipal plans to include a map and statement of current and prospective land use. Below is our statement followed by the maps

As this section is most likely to become the major framing basis for our future discussions and debates on subsequent zoning decisions, it is imperative that we meticulously seek to strike the proper balance between as many of the competing land use interests as possible. Though incredibly challenging to attempt to peer into the uncertain years ahead, we owe it to ourselves, as citizens of this vibrant community, not only to embrace and preserve that which we perceive to be the best of the past, but also to have the courage to ensure sufficient flexibility in our plan to allow future growth and development to unfold and flourish in ways yet to be imagined.

Since much of Richmond’s land is currently already constrained from certain uses or types of development in one or more ways, what remains deserves our cautious consideration and thoughtful application of any regulatory requirements. As is well known, our varied landscape includes substantial floodplains and wetlands, steep slopes, challenging soils, and other areas that cannot practically be developed, or are protected by state or local regulations such as Act 250. Various parcels in Richmond also have legal or regulatory development constraints, such as conservation easements.

Given this reality, as well as a number of troubling socioeconomic trends such as our population demographics, the continuing declines in both the agriculture and forestry industries, and the region’s economic health, it behooves us to make sure that our future land use planning supports the viability of our community. We want to “leave the door open” to future growth and development that will allow future generations to thrive locally in their own life aspirations.

Richmond is prepared to proactively direct future growth, investment, and land use, which will help the town strategically advance the vision and the goals outlined in this plan. Revisiting and adjusting our land use regulations will help us sustain and grow vibrant village centers, maintain our rural character and working lands, preserve our natural resources, create efficient transportation options, improve affordability, and reduce our dependence on fossil fuels. This revision of zoning and subdivision regulations will require substantial public input. Newly adopted Vermont legislation will also play a role in this process including Act 171 and Act 174, as well as the regional planning documents for Chittenden County. Lawfully existing businesses and residences will be grandfathered.

Current Land Use

Today, Richmond’s land use is primarily a combination of undeveloped and agricultural land, scattered homes and compact neighborhoods, and areas of denser mixed-use or commercial development in village centers and along Richmond’s main transportation corridors. Richmond’s land use is also impacted by trends across the region. Our location on the eastern edge of Chittenden County means that Richmond is part of a regional growth center. We face less pressure than towns closer to Burlington, but if Burlington continues to grow and housing prices to rise, more people will be seeking housing in Richmond and towns on the outskirts of the county. Williston has become the regional center for major chain stores, which means that Richmond is unlikely to face that type of development pressure. Richmond borders three towns that are even more rural (Huntington, Hinesburg, and Bolton), so the outlying agricultural areas are unlikely to face growth pressure from adjacent towns.

Future Land Use

Richmond’s desired future land uses take into account a number of factors: developable areas, Richmond’s vision, data on expected trends and demand, and public input during the town planning process. The Future Land Use Map and the following list of areas illustrate broad categories of land use that we wish to see and encourage in town. It does not necessarily reflect current land uses, or even what is allowed under current zoning regulations. It does represent our vision for future land use, and a goal toward which we will work. We have identified **7 future land use areas**. Each area has unique characteristics and varying levels of existing density and development potential. Below you will find further detail for each area including the current and prospective uses. The remaining technical plans in our town plan also provide guidance for future land use.

VISION CONNECTION

- **Affordability:** Concentrating development in village areas means fewer roads to maintain and less auto dependence for residents.
- **Community for All Ages:** Younger and older generations increasingly want to live in downtowns, close to services, social opportunities, and more people.
- **Natural + Working Lands:** Directing development to village centers reduces the development pressure on our prime agricultural and natural lands.
- **Vibrant Downtown:** Focusing growth in village centers allows us to focus resources and amenities there, while attracting more people and energy.

Upon completion of the Town Plan, the planning commission will begin to update our land use regulations to align with the goals and actions articulated in the plan. Regulations will be flexible to allow for creative economic opportunities that can, in turn, support current patterns of development and rural character. Any new development constraints will need to be designed to preserve valued resources while still allowing for growth. This task will require significant public input and discussion.

Additional thinking will be required to incorporate Vermont's two new major statutes that have become law since the visioning process for this plan was undertaken. These laws, enacted in 2016, are Act 174, the "Energy Improvements Development Act," and Act 171, the "Timber Harvesting and Forest Lands Act." Public discussion will need to consider siting for renewable energy facilities, which will be essential to meet the state's energy supply goals, and to consider ways to minimize forest fragmentation and loss of habitat connectors.

Land Use Areas

1. Northwest Industrial-Commercial:

- **Location:** Land near and around River Road (Route 117) to the northwestern side of i-89 interchange, extending along primarily the east side of Governor Peck Road and a portion of the western most end of West Main Street (Route 2) to the Winooski River Bridge.
- **Purpose:** This area, with its existing 3-phase power and broadband, and minimal existing residences, is ideally suited for commercial and industrial uses that might not be suitable in the Village downtown area.
- **Current Uses:** A mix of commercial, industrial, and vacant properties as well as a solar array and gas station/quick stop
- **Future Uses:**
 - A mix of commercial and industrial uses, such as warehousing, manufacturing, wholesale and retail businesses
 - Uses that may require larger tracts of land than are available in other commercial areas of Richmond
 - Secondary multi-family or other residential or mixed uses
 - Energy and utility facilities
 - Could be served by a future water and wastewater system

2. Gateway:

- **Location:** Area extending along the north/northeast side of Route 2 (West Main) from the village boundary to the I-89 interchange.
- **Purpose:** The Gateway was created and named as such to be the attractive entrance to the historic Richmond Village. It is an area with commercial, light industrial, and residential uses that may not fit spatially in Richmond Village but could be advantaged by proximity to the downtown area.
- **Current Uses:** Moderately dense commercial, residential, and mixed uses
- **Future Uses:**
 - Commercial, light industrial, residential, and mixed uses
 - Development that would not be suitable for the village or downtown commercial spaces
 - Historic preservation or creative reuse of existing structures is encouraged to maintain Richmond's character
 - Could be served by the construction of walkable or bikable transportation systems that link the area to Richmond Village, the Park and Ride, or the Northwest area of town
 - Could be served by a future extension of the Richmond water and wastewater system

3. Villages:

a. Richmond Village:

- **Location:** Land encompassing areas of Jericho Road, Bridge Street, East Main Street, West Main Street, Thompson Road, Cochran Road, Huntington Road, and side streets, south and west of the interstate, contiguous to the existing water and wastewater district.
- **Purpose:** Serves as the commercial and residential hub of the Town. This area reinforces the traditional settlement pattern and provides a central location for civic activities and services. There should be a variety of housing options, while respecting the historic character of the existing dwellings. The Town will maintain the "Vermont State Village Center" designation and consider a "Designated Downtown" for a portion of this area to help direct resources to property owners for economic development and historic preservation. Different parts of the Richmond Village Area may be considered separate districts for zoning purposes.
- **Current Uses:** Commercial, agricultural, and residential uses, mixed commercial and residential use, and public spaces and buildings
- **Future Uses:**

- Commercial and residential uses, including a broader application of mixed uses and multiple-story buildings
- Single family, two-family, and multi-family homes and accessory dwellings
- Accessory uses such as home-based businesses or cottage industries
- Agricultural and accessory agricultural uses
- Public open spaces and buildings
- Historic preservation and creative reuse or redevelopment of existing buildings and structures
- “Complete streets” improvements, including enhanced transportation modes such as sidewalks, paths, public transit stops, and bike paths/lanes,
- Compatible scale recreational areas

b. Jonesville:

- **Location:** Land within surrounding the Route 2 and Cochran Rd intersection
- **Purpose:** A secondary commercial and residential center with the potential for providing services for nearby residences as has been the case historically. The purpose is similar to that of Richmond Village, with high density development potential, only on a smaller scale.
- **Current Uses:** Currently residential and a few commercial businesses as well as a post office and recreational access to the Winooski River, and agriculture
- **Future Uses:**
 - Commercial and small scale industrial and mixed uses
 - Residential uses including single family, two-family, and multi-family homes and accessory dwellings
 - Accessory uses such as home-based businesses or cottage industries
 - Agricultural and accessory agricultural uses
 - “Complete streets” improvements including enhanced transportation modes such as paths, public transit stops, and bike paths/lanes
 - Recreational areas

4. High Density Residential

a. Riverview Commons Area:

- **Location:** Land in the northwest corner of Richmond that includes the Riverview Commons Mobile Home Park and surrounding residential lands.
- **Purpose:** To provide affordable housing in a densely settled neighborhood, which provides residents with efficient traffic facilities, public utilities such as water and wastewater services, and community areas. Shared amenities such as a park, playground, bus shelter, or other gathering areas are desirable as are street tree plantings and bike and pedestrian transport options.
- **Current Uses:** Primarily residential with some accessory uses
- **Future Uses:**
 - Single-family mobile homes
 - Other single-family, two-family, and multi-family and accessory dwellings
 - Accessory uses such as home-based businesses or cottage industry.
 - Could be served by a future extension of the water and wastewater system
 - Could be served by the construction of walkable or bikeable transportation systems that link the neighborhood with Richmond Village, the Park and Ride facility, and the schools.

b. North of Richmond Village Area:

- **Location:** Land north of Richmond Village and north of i-89 up to the Jericho town border
- **Purpose:** Moderate to high density residential and accessory uses, Shared amenities such as parks, playgrounds, and community areas are desirable, as are street tree plantings and bike and pedestrian options within the neighborhoods.
- **Current Uses:** Primarily residential, some cottage industry, or home-based businesses, and some forestry, agricultural, and accessory agricultural uses
- **Future Uses:**
 - Single-family, two-family, and multi-family homes that are compatible in scale with adjacent development, accessory dwellings
 - Accessory uses such as home-based businesses and cottage industries.
 - Forestry, agriculture, and accessory agricultural uses
 - Could be served by a future extension of the water and wastewater system
 - Could be served by the construction of walkable or bikeable transportation systems that connect the neighborhoods with the Richmond Village, the Park and Ride facility, and the schools

c. North and South of Jonesville Area:

- **Location:** Areas surrounding Jonesville
- **Purpose:** To provide moderate to high density residential areas and accessory uses near the commercial center of Jonesville. Amenities such as parks, playgrounds, and community areas are desirable, as are street tree plantings, and bike and pedestrian transport options.
- **Current Uses:** Primarily residential, some cottage industry, or home-based businesses, agriculture, forestry, and some accessory agricultural uses
- **Future Uses:**
 - Single-family, two-family, , and multi-family homes that are compatible in scale with adjacent development, and accessory dwellings
 - Accessory uses such as home-based businesses and cottage industries
 - Could be served by a future water and wastewater system

5. Adaptive Agricultural-Residential

• **Location:**

a. **Route 2:** Area on either side of Route 2, west of Greater Jonesville

b. **Cochran Road:** Area on either side of Cochran Road east of Richmond Village

- **Purpose:** These are currently open space lands containing unique enterprises that contribute to Richmond's special character. Additional commercial activities that diversify and support the existing uses of these enterprises will be allowed. New buildings that reflect a similar scale to that of historical, agricultural, and manufacturing complexes are desirable. Examples of this style include the Goodwin Baker building, Blue Seal Feeds building, and Monitor Barn. Commercial strip development will be prohibited.
- **Current Uses for both locations:** Agriculture, forestry, residential, and recreational/commercial uses, and some accessory commercial or recreational uses-
- **Future Uses for both locations:**
 - Forestry and agriculture
 - Commercial and recreational uses that complement or diversify current uses, such as provision of event spaces, recreational activities, value-added enterprises, and agricultural and forestry-related uses or accessory uses

6. Significant Natural Areas:

- **Location:** Portions of High Priority Contiguous Habitat Units, High Priority Forest Blocks, and Habitat Connectors. These areas are found in Richmond's northeast quadrant, eastern and southern borders, southwest border and Bryant Hill. They have been defined by state and regional mapping efforts.
- **Purpose:** To minimize forest and habitat connector fragmentation and protect significant natural resources and the ecological services they provide. These areas will have the lowest density of development in Richmond.
- **Current Uses:** conserved lands, low density residential, ~~er~~ and agricultural and forestry uses, with some accessory uses such as cottage industries and home-based businesses
- **Future Uses:**
 - further conservation or protection of these areas
 - uses that minimize forest and habitat connector fragmentation, soil erosion, and water pollution
 - uses that minimize impacts to scenic views, ridgeline habitat connectors, sensitive ecosystems, and steep slopes
 - low density residential or agricultural development that is clustered and in the fringes of these areas,
 - cottage industries and home-based businesses
 - other uses that are compatible with Act 171

7. Agricultural-Residential:

- **Location:** Land that occurs throughout Richmond outside of the previously described land use areas.
- **Purpose:** These are rural areas with low density residential development, agriculture and forestry uses. They contribute to Richmond's prized rural character and natural resource benefits Cottage industries, home-based businesses and commercial activities that directly support the economic viability of agricultural and forestry industries are allowed.
- **Current Uses:** Primarily residential, some agricultural and forestry, some small scale accessory commercial, cottage industry, or home-based businesses
- **Future Uses:**
 - Low to moderate density residential uses
 - Development that occurs on agricultural and forested land should be clustered and should minimize fragmentation of forest lands and prime agricultural soils

- Home occupations, cottage industry, agricultural, and forestry businesses will be encouraged as well as commercial activities that directly support economic viability of agricultural and forestry uses.
- All development in this area should be compatible with rural landscapes

GOALS & ACTIONS

GOAL 1: Encourage “smart growth” as defined in Vermont statutes, which allows development while preserving Richmond’s rural character.

ACTIONS:

1. Invest in municipal infrastructure improvements that allow for new development where appropriate
2. Create policies that encourage affordable housing development
3. Provide technical assistance to property owners
4. Create zoning regulations that support the above mentioned uses and prohibitions
5. Create form-based zoning regulations that include architectural and design requirements to be met in certain districts, especially mixed-use areas
6. Explore density-based zoning when updating the land use regulations

GOAL 2: Protect important natural lands including but not limited to floodplain, scenic viewsheds, and high priority forest blocks

ACTIONS:

1. Continue to prohibit damaging or dangerous types of development in sensitive or conserved areas such as floodplain or steep slopes
2. Restrict certain types of development in sensitive or high priority natural areas
3. Encourage development that protects natural resources and preserves scenic and/or historic character of Richmond

(see also other Technical Plan actions related to future land use)

MAPS:

- Current Land Use
- Future Land Use
- Richmond Village Center Designation
- see also Natural Resources Maps for certain development constraints

HISTORIC RESOURCES

It is hard to imagine Richmond without its historic architecture. From the Round Church to the downtown business area to bridges and farms, Richmond’s historic sites and structures contribute to its distinctive small-town character. These places have retained their vitality because their owners have maintained and adapted them to serve evolving needs without obscuring their ties to the past. Upholding Richmond’s character as a vibrant small town that is both forward-looking and grounded in tradition will depend in part on preserving the integrity of these historic structures as the town continues to evolve.

Richmond’s historic resources also include the documents, photographs and artifacts that tell the story of its past. The Town preserves and assures accessibility of public records such as land transactions, birth, death and marriage records, and accounts of Town business. The non-profit Richmond Historical Society also collects and preserves Richmond-related historic documents, photographs and other artifacts, as well as maintains the Round Church on behalf of the Town.

Additional historic grounding comes from traditions and events that celebrate continuity with the past. The Town provides space for events that have become popular local traditions, such as the 4th of July festivities and the Richmond Farmer’s Market. History programs sponsored by the Richmond Historical Society, Richmond Community Senior Center and the Richmond Free Library, among others, also take place in Town facilities.

Sites and Structures

More than 100 sites in Richmond are listed in the Vermont Register of Historic Places. Most of these were identified in a Historic Sites and Structures Survey conducted in 1976 by the state’s Division for Historic Preservation. The survey designated North (West) Main Street and Bridge Street as historic districts, with 28 and 34 sites, respectively, meeting its historic significance criteria. It also identified 50 historically important sites outside the two districts.

Eight of these state-recognized historic places also appear in the National Park Service’s National Register of Historic Places. These include the Round Church (which has been designated a National Historic Landmark as well), the Jonesville Academy building, the Winooski River Bridge (Checkered House Bridge), the Martin Bates farmstead (Birdseye Building and Anand properties), the Richmond Underwear Factory (Goodwin-Baker Building), the M.S. Whitcomb farm (Venture Farm/Monitor Barn farm), Gray Rocks (Andrews Farm), and the Richmond Congregational Church.

State and/or nationally recognized historic sites for which the Town of Richmond is directly responsible include the Round Church, the Town Center and Library buildings and the Bridge Street Bridge. The Town also maintains two historic cemeteries dating back to the early 1800s: the Village Cemetery on Bridge Street and the Hill (Fays Corner) Cemetery accessed from Cemetery Road.

A site’s historic significance derives from its distinctive architectural features and from elements that bear witness to its traditional importance in the community. The Vermont Register of Historic Places describes the features deemed historically significant in each listed property.¹ Maintenance, restoration and reuse of historic properties in Richmond should include stewardship of these distinctive features to retain as much as possible the site’s historic integrity. To help owners understand their properties’ historic significance, a list of all of Richmond’s State and National Register sites should be included on the Town website. Links to organizations that can help owners of historic properties plan and fund appropriate preservation projects would also be valuable additions.

Re-securing Richmond’s Designated Village Center status would provide important resources for protecting the historic integrity of Richmond Village. Designated Village Center benefits include tax credits for eligible preservation projects and priority consideration for state grants aimed at village revitalization.

VISION CONNECTION

- **History & Traditions:** Historic sites and traditions contribute to the identity and evolution of a community.
- **Vibrant Downtown:** Maintaining historic characteristics contributes to visual attraction and tourism.
- **Small Town Character:** Preserving historic aesthetics, styles, and landmarks contribute to the overall rural Vermont character of places unspoiled by time.
- **Social, Cultural, + Recreational Opportunities:** Historic sites serve as social and sometimes recreational gathering places and provide education and tourism opportunities.

¹ State of Vermont Agency on Commerce and Community Development Online Resources Center.

Public awareness is critical to preserving Richmond's historic sites and other assets. Building placards, informational brochures and an expanded Richmond history section of the Town website would help residents and visitors better appreciate the heritage of the town's developed landscape as well as the people and events that shaped it.

Records and Artifacts

Historic photos, records, artifacts and stories provide context for understanding Richmond's historic settings and the people who have inhabited them. Continued Town stewardship of these resources entails continued preservation of public records. It also includes working with the Richmond Historical Society and others interested in Richmond history to save, interpret and share materials that deepen an understanding of Richmond's past. As the Town and RHS collections continue to grow, more storage space will be needed. A long-term goal should be to work with the RHS to secure safe, climate-controlled storage space to meet future needs. Another long-term goal should be to collect digital images of fragile historic artifacts and records and make these images available online. Yet another goal should be to have all gravestones in the Town's two historic cemeteries digitally inventoried as well as cleaned and repaired.

Traditions

Traditional public gatherings offer generations of residents a common ground of shared experience which strengthens their connection to the community. History programs also strengthen community ties by broadening public understanding of the events, people and traditions that have made Richmond what it is today. The Town should continue to embrace these activities by providing facilities and helping with publicity and volunteer recruitment.

Richmond's most well-known structure – the Round Church – illustrates how stewardship of historic resources can enrich the town. The church's more than 200-year history is deeply woven into the life of the community. For 160 years, it served as Richmond's Town Meeting hall, site of many difficult decisions regarding how to keep the community safe and strong. As a place of marriages, christenings and funerals, the Round Church has touched the lives of thousands of families, leaving indelible memories. Over the years, thousands more have collected memories of church services, concerts, the annual Carol Sing, the sledding hill, etc. Others have come as tourists, seeking out a historic landmark and finding an attractive town. Like the Round Church, Richmond's historic places, artifacts, traditions and stories are reminders and beacons: they bear witness to the past, provide links between generations, and weave into the memories of those who engage with them. By protecting and celebrating these resources, the Town helps residents and visitors alike to know and care more about Richmond.

GOALS & ACTIONS

GOAL 1: Protect, maintain and celebrate Richmond's buildings of historic significance

ACTIONS:

1. Protect and preserve the Round Church by continuing to provide liability and property insurance as well as routine grounds maintenance
2. Work with the Richmond Historical Society to plan funding and implementation of major renovations as needed to preserve historical integrity and enhance the building and grounds.
3. Protect, preserve and continue to fully utilize the Town Center and Library buildings.
4. Encourage the preservation and utilization of privately owned buildings of historic significance within the town
5. Reapply for the State of Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development's Village Center Designation
6. Revise the Town website to include a list of Richmond's state- and nationally recognized historic sites as well as links to historic preservation resources that could help owners to manage these properties so as to preserve their integrity
7. Ensure that town regulations allow for historic interpretive signage and historic markers.
8. Work with the Richmond Historical Society to develop a walking and/or driving tour of the Town's historic sites

GOAL 2: Preserve and protect Richmond's archaeological sites and cemeteries

ACTIONS:

1. Oversee regular maintenance of the grounds, public access routes and grave markers at the Town's two historic cemeteries: the Village Cemetery on Bridge Street and the Hill (or Fay's Corner) Cemetery accessed from Cemetery Road.
2. Work with Cemetery Trustees and the Richmond Historical Society to establish a trained corps of volunteers to do grave marker maintenance not requiring professional intervention

3. Create and preserve digital files of all Town cemetery listings, including images of gravesite markers as well as burial records
4. When archaeological sites or artifacts are discovered during Town or State projects requiring an archaeological resource review, work with the Richmond Historical Society to document the material and assess preservation options

GOAL 3: Preserve, share and celebrate Richmond's historic cultural assets including records, photographs, artifacts and oral histories

ACTIONS:

1. Continue to publicize and provide space for Richmond history programs and displays sponsored by the Richmond Historical Society and Richmond Community Senior Center, among others, and continue to support and advertise public events that have become local cultural traditions
2. Revise the Richmond History page of the Town website to include historic photos as well as links to other Richmond history online resources. Links could include the Richmond Historical Society website, information for Richmond history researchers or owners of historic artifacts and/or properties, and lists and/or photo galleries of the town's historic sites
3. Develop a plan to digitally preserve fragile public records, such as land records and birth, marriage and death records dating back to the late 18th and 19th centuries
4. Work with Richmond Historical Society to find secure, climate-controlled storage locations for historic cultural assets not stored in the Town Vault
(see also Utilities & Facilities)

MAPS:

- Historic Resources

HOUSING

Chittenden County’s 2018 ECOS Plan suggests that diverse housing is essential for community sustainability, workforce development, vibrancy and minimization of personal stressors. Across Vermont, communities including Richmond, are working on the challenge of increasing the diversity and affordability of housing options, while ensuring that new housing is sited and designed to support other goals such as downtown vitality, energy and transportation efficiency, community connections, and historic preservation.

The cost of purchasing a single-family home is high; in fact, the median cost of housing in Richmond is higher than the median in both Vermont and Chittenden County, and beyond the reach of many potential residents. Organizations such as the Champlain Housing Trust attempt to address the problem by keeping certain housing stock at perpetually affordable levels. Other factors that contribute to the overall affordability of living in Richmond include transportation and energy costs, local school and municipal taxes, utility costs, difficult building locations such as flood hazard or steep slopes, cost and availability of childcare, and location of employment opportunities. Many of these same factors also contribute to the desirability of living in Richmond.

Housing costs and demand have led to diversifying housing options, including multifamily housing, in which both buying (condominiums) and renting (apartments) may be more affordable. Although Richmond has a reasonably diverse housing stock, there is opportunity for growth in certain areas of town. New housing should be made energy efficient, and affordable housing types should be allowed by our land use regulations that support diversity, workforce, and community development goals.

Concentrated growth and protection of open spaces was a common theme during the Our Town, Our Future visioning process. It is also a pattern that is highly encouraged by the State of Vermont. Expansion of Richmond Village boundaries and exploration of varying densities in residential areas can allow for growth while maintaining Richmond’s familiar character and appeal.

Richmond Village

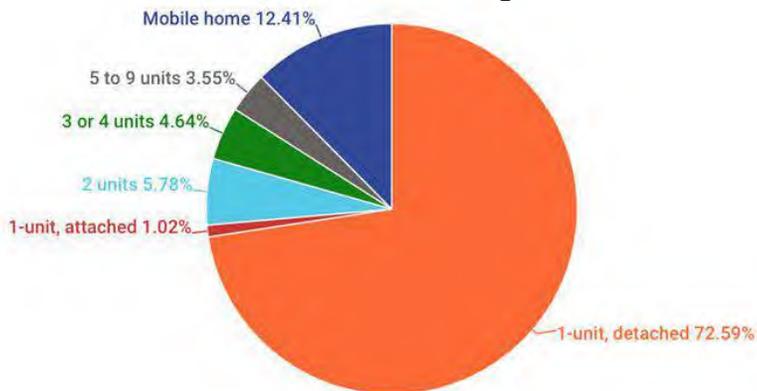
Much of the historic character and charm of Richmond Village lies in the traditional style and architecture of its homes and public buildings. Although many houses in the village today were designed for a different time and context, many residents value the traditional appearance and historic significance. Residents of Village streets and neighborhoods value the close ties formed with neighbors, and the proximity of services and amenities. As is befitting for the hub of the Town, the housing density of the Village is higher than that of the surrounding areas of the Town.

While most of the Village housing was built for single-family/owner-occupied use, many of the homes have been divided into two or more units, and many village homes are now rental units. Within the current borders of Richmond Village, major housing growth is difficult. There are few areas that are not already occupied by existing houses, commercial uses, the Winooski River and its floodplain, railroad land, municipal buildings, our several cemeteries, and our roadways. Expansion of the current village boundary will help to provide more opportunities concentrated growth. When there are opportunities for infill projects, these need to be carefully considered to meet both diversification and preservation goals, in addition to other goals such as transportation, energy, and neighborhood character

VISION CONNECTION

- **Affordability:** Most housing in Richmond costs more than the affordable housing benchmark – 30% of household income.
- **Community for All Ages:** Our aging population needs new housing options, as do younger residents with limited income or different priorities.
- **Economic Opportunity:** Adequate housing near job sites and convenient transportation, is one of the top indicators of economic growth and opportunity.
- **Mobility:** The location of housing can dramatically impact people’s mobility and options.
- **Vibrant + Appealing Downtown:** Many people want to live in walkable, vibrant neighborhoods, close to businesses and services.

Richmond’s Current Housing Stock



Jonesville Village

This relatively small area to the east of Richmond Village traditionally has consisted of residential and commercial uses. While there are few businesses there today, the potential remains for it to be a small hub serving the surrounding residences. Mixed use in the commercial center should be considered, with varying types of housing allowed. Several adjacent neighborhoods consist mostly of single-family homes. Similar, and possibly greater, opportunities exist here as in Richmond Village, as we try to diversify and lower the cost of housing.

Outside the Villages

Most of Richmond's housing, outside the two Villages, consists of scattered single-family homes. There are several compact neighborhoods adjacent to Richmond Village – Southview, and Hidden Pines, for example – but most homes are located along five main roads and their subsequent side streets. Most residents of these side streets regard their areas as “neighborhoods” and interact frequently with nearby families. This is a familiar and comfortable pattern of development for many people both within and outside of Richmond.

The challenge in these areas going forward will be to allow for more housing while minimizing the fragmentation of farm and forest land. The Planned Unit Developments (clustered housing) may allow for more options while still maintaining a relatively low overall density in and near agricultural or forested land. Housing may also be directed toward the expansion of existing neighborhoods, resulting in a compact settlement pattern that could support public transit and shared amenities. Additional residential centers that complement, rather than compete with, Richmond Village may be considered over time if the need arises.

GOALS & ACTIONS

GOAL 1: Strive to have diverse, resilient, affordable, and quality housing options for residents, and potential residents, from all walks of life throughout the Town.

ACTIONS:

1. When updating zoning regulations, identify opportunities for development of a variety of housing types, for example allowing mixed residential and commercial use, higher unit density, or unique accessory housing in certain areas that will be identified during said update
2. Continue to support the existence of the mobile home park, and support additional affordable housing development
3. Create a town housing committee that can identify needs and partner with organizations to help secure funding and identify opportunities for construction or adaptation of housing stock, as well as aid in the creation of affordable housing policies that are welcomed by both developers and residents
4. Encourage concentrated residential development in areas identified for growth
5. Provide guidance to homeowners in the Special Flood Hazard Area who seek to implement flood proofing measures
6. Support, and share information about, programs and resources that assist seniors or low mobility residents remain in their homes such as HomeShare Vermont, Meals on Wheels, and Neighbor Rides
7. Support, and share information about, programs and resources that help to lower cost of home ownership such as energy conservation, weatherization, and utility assistance
8. Support programs and funding sources for preserving and renovating historic or older homes that can help owners maintain historic character and livability

(See also Future Land Use, Economic Development, Transportation, and Energy)

MAPS:

- Housing

NATURAL RESOURCES

Richmond's natural and working lands form the landscape of our community, enriching our lives, and drawing many visitors to the area. This landscape provides ecological services, diverse natural communities, outdoor education laboratories for local schools, and a wide range of economic, recreational, and scenic benefits. In this technical plan, Natural Resources refers to "natural areas" and "working lands". Natural areas are areas that are mostly undeveloped, and working lands are agricultural or forestry lands.

Natural areas may include forests, waterbodies, wetlands, vernal pools, floodplains, river corridors, cliffs, gorges, and steep slopes. These areas provide benefits such as habitat, waterbody buffering, groundwater protection, recreational opportunities, and scenic views. Richmond contains portions of the Mount Mansfield Forest Block and Camels Hump State Forest. A table of Richmond's significant natural resources is located on the following page, and a more thorough description of Richmond's natural environment can be found in the almanac and the Science to Action Natural Resources Inventory. Natural resources also include working lands. Forests and prime agricultural lands and soils are natural resources that contribute directly to Richmond's economy and quality of life. Forests and fields also provide ecosystem services such as air and water filtration and flood storage.

While some traditional dairies are still thriving, the agricultural community as a whole in Vermont is diversifying due to changing market demands, declining milk prices, and increased regulation. The cost of operation for certain farms has become increasingly difficult, and adaptation has become necessary to maintain the integrity of their businesses and properties. Evolving forest and agricultural enterprises provide employment, food, and fuel, and contribute to the rural and entrepreneurial character of Richmond, and Vermont as a whole. New and evolving enterprises include local food and energy production. As these industries change, we need to consider how our town regulations affect the adaptability and future success of these local businesses.

Richmond is home to a very unique natural landscape, thanks to its location between the high peaks of the northern Green Mountains and the fertile lowlands of the Champlain Valley and Winooski River Basin. Areas of special conservation interest include but are not limited to the Huntington Gorge, the Silver Maple-Ostrich Fern Floodplain Forest, Snipe Island Brook and East Cliffs, Contiguous Habitat Units, and significant wetlands and vernal pools.

The following three categories of natural areas are the most pertinent to future land use planning, because they cover large ecologically significant tracts of land. Although the town, and state, would not likely prohibit all land uses in these areas, these categories must be considered when creating regulations and developing land.

- **Contiguous Habitat Units (CHUs)**, are areas of contiguous natural cover and are defined and mapped in the Science to Action Natural Resources Inventory as "assemblage(s) of wildlife habitat features such as forested riparian buffers, ledges, deer wintering areas, wetlands, mast stands, and early successional habitats which function together as "units of diverse and relatively continuous wildlife habitat." CHUs are important because they provide food, refuge, and breeding areas for a variety of animal species identified in the State of Vermont's Wildlife Action Plan as "species of greatest conservation need." The concept of protecting forest blocks also received strong support from Act 171, adopted by the legislature in 2016, which requires town plans to indicate where these areas are and how their fragmentation is to be minimized
- **Habitat connectors** are corridors needed by wildlife to move among the forest blocks and CHUs to meet their needs as well as to respond to pressures brought on by climate change, forest fragmentation, habitat loss and other factors. These are also identified by our Science to Action Natural Resources Inventory and Act 171
- **Riparian areas** are ecosystems comprised of rivers, streams, lakes, and ponds, as well as the land directly adjacent to these surface waters such as river corridors and floodplains. These ecosystems are important for ecological diversity, habitat connection, water quality, and flood management. Much of this land area is already regulated by the FEMA National Flood Insurance Program and Richmond's current zoning regulations.

VISION CONNECTION

- **Affordability + a Reasonable Cost of Living:** A healthy environment saves money by providing clean water, controlling temperatures, and absorbing floodwaters. Food from local agricultural enterprises and energy provided by solar and wind development are also secondary natural benefits.
- **Community for All Ages:** Residents of all ages and backgrounds enjoy outdoor recreation and nature in Richmond.
- **Economic Opportunity:** New and traditional agricultural, forestry, and recreational businesses support Richmond's, and Vermont's, economy.
- **Safety + Resilience:** Healthy soils and intact ecosystems can make us safer and more resilient because they can better withstand storms and other hazards.
- **Small-Town Character:** The rural landscape is central to Richmond's character

Richmond’s conservation priorities are categorized in the following table:

Category	Conservation Priorities
Geology and Landforms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Steep slopes over 30% grade ○ Huntington River Gorge ○ East Cliffs along Dugway Road and cliffs west of Snipe Island Brook ○ Scenic viewsheds including the view of Camel’s Hump from the Gateway, Bryant Hill, and Gillett Pond ○ Ridgelines over 900ft in elevation
Soils and Deposits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Primary agricultural soils (state mapped) ○ Sand and gravel deposits not yet identified
Agricultural and Forestry Lands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Soil erosion prevention ○ Flood mitigation ○ Current Use Program
Groundwater Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ State Source Protection Areas ○ Groundwater Recharge Areas
Wetlands, Riparian Areas, Surface Waters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Winooski River floodplain ○ Gillett Pond, Richmond Pond, Lake Iroquois ○ Wetlands and vernal pools including 6 significant wetland natural communities and 8 vernal pools ○ Huntington and Winooski Rivers Riparian Areas
Rare and Sensitive Ecological Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 13 significant natural communities ○ Silver Maple-Ostrich Fern Floodplain Forest, dry oak forests, and rich northern hardwood forests
Habitat and Wildlife	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 11 Contiguous Habitat Units (CHUs) and critical habitats ○ Habitat for species identified in Vermont’s Wildlife Action Plan ○ Habitat Connectors ○ Forest Blocks

Current protections, policies, and plans for these areas include Richmond Zoning Regulations, Federal Floodplain Regulations, the Richmond Water Supply Protection Ordinance, Act 17, Act 250, Act 64, the Current Use program, the CCRPC ECOS Plan, Chittenden County Uplands Conservation project, Lake Champlain and Winooski River Tactical Basin Plans, etc. See the almanac or Science to Action Natural Resources Inventory for more details.

Natural lands and waters are facing wide-reaching threats such as climate change, encroaching development, pollution, and spread of invasive species. Vermont is currently facing a forest fragmentation problem. Fragmentation of existing forest can cause cascading effects on the environment and economy such as decreased biodiversity, increased erosion, and the disappearance of forestry, agricultural, and recreational businesses. Richmond is not immune to these threats, but does have the conservational advantage of a landscape that is difficult to develop by nature with very steep slopes and a wide floodplain. Richmond also has a large amount of existing contiguous forest that has not been fragmented either by happenstance or through parcel conservation efforts by local organizations and landowners.

Richmond has a few notable conservation organizations. Among them is the Richmond Conservation Commission which informs government decisions and recommend conservation related expenditures. We also have the Richmond Land Trust which has helped conserve the Willis Sledding Hill, Gillett Pond, the VYCC Monitor Barn, Forest, and Farm, the Ruth and Warren Beeken Rivershore Preserve, among other locations. The Great Richmond Root-Out! has led invasive plant control efforts along the Winooski River for the past 10 years. Richmond also has an extensive trail system which the Richmond Trails Committee manages. The Town of Richmond votes have also created and maintained a conservation reserve fund in the annual budget since 2005.

In line with the state’s forest block preservation goals, the town has recently acquired its first town forest, previously owned by the Andrews Family. Roughly 428 acres were purchased and conserved by the town on March 27th 2018 through the generosity of the Andrews Family and joint efforts and support from the Town of Richmond, Richmond Conservation Commission, Vermont Housing and Conservation Board, Vermont Land Trust, and many community members. The Town intends to utilize a management plan for continuous stewardship of this land to protect its ecological, timber, recreational, educational, open space, and scenic resources

GOALS & ACTIONS

GOAL 1: Protect priority natural areas in order to maintain the health and function of those areas and their ecosystem services

LAND ACTIONS:

1. Identify opportunities to conserve lands containing or adjoining above listed conservation priorities
2. Encourage conservation or protection of above listed conservation priorities on private lands
3. Utilize the best available science to inform the creation of supplemental land use regulations and maps that would further conserve or protect sensitive natural areas

4. Continue to support the efforts of the public and private organizations such as the Richmond Conservation Commission, Richmond Trails Committee, and Richmond Land Trust to protect sensitive natural areas
5. Facilitate a town-wide discussion about the development and management of trails and trail networks in Richmond
6. Minimize the fragmentation of and intrusion into sensitive wildlife habitats and forests, including Contiguous Habitat Units and Wildlife Travel Corridors, through land use regulation that promotes Vermont's Smart Growth principles such as clustering development, siting development in a manner to preserve contiguous habitat areas, and through coordinating with neighboring towns on border areas.
7. Restrict development on steep slopes between 20% and 35%, cliffs, and ridgelines over 900ft in elevation, and prohibit all structural development (including renewable energy generation facilities and distribution/transmission infrastructure) on slopes greater than 35% , in order to maintain habitat connectors and mitigate erosion
8. Create and maintain a library of ecological studies and maps
9. Partner with state and regional organizations to secure funding and collaborate on projects that would support conservation efforts
10. Construct trails to avoid sensitive natural areas and minimize impact on water quality, wildlife, soils, and other resources
11. Continue to support invasive species control efforts including removal and mitigation of Japanese Knotweed, Garlic Mustard, Barberry, Buckthorn, and other fast spreading non-native plants.
12. Provide educational materials, and consider conducting outreach, to landowners about best management practices for sustainability, conservation, and environmental stewardship of natural areas

WATER ACTIONS:

13. Continue to prohibit the construction of new principal structures in the Special Flood Hazard Areas of the Winooski and Huntington Rivers
14. Protect river corridors to ensure that streams and rivers have the room they need to move and change over time by utilizing Vermont's River Corridor maps and establishing setbacks for small streams during development review (small stream: less than 2 square miles of drainage area)
15. Safeguard water quality, stream channel stability, habitats, and habitat connectivity by protecting riparian areas
16. Support and cooperate with water quality testing efforts in Richmond and the region
17. Support the completion and updates of stream geomorphic assessments, wetland maps, and river corridor maps
18. Implement feasible projects identified in the 2018 storm water master plan
19. Control road runoff and erosion by implementing and maintain best management practices required by the Vermont Municipal Roads General Permit
20. Integrate applicable Low Impact Development (LID) standards into land use regulations
21. Review land use regulations to ensure compliance with all Vermont and federal regulations that provide surface water protection
22. Support and participate in the Vermont Watershed Management Division's Tactical Basin Planning for the Winooski River and Lake Champlain basins.

GOAL 2: Preserve healthy and resilient working lands, agricultural soils

ACTIONS:

1. Encourage the implementation of best environmental management practices in farm or forest businesses
2. Explore amending zoning regulations to allow for value-added or accessory enterprises, that are not necessarily agricultural in nature, on farm or forest properties as a means of financially maintaining large parcels
3. Avoid the creation of landlocked parcels during subdivision of farm or forestry lands by encouraging the maintenance of rights of way and accesses
4. Encourage on-site projects or developments that provide ecosystem services or mitigate runoff
5. Continue to support the farmers market, VYCC, and other agriculturally related enterprises
6. Encourage Richmond residents and businesses to buy or procure locally grown foods or value-added products by providing space for markets and allowing sale of goods
7. Support property owner participation in the VT Use Value Appraisal (Current Use) Program, the federal Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (LESA) program, and other voluntary programs as options for land conservation and financial benefits

GOAL 3: Maintain Richmond's rural character and scenic beauty

ACTIONS:

1. Update the previously performed (2002) Scenic Viewshed Assessment to ascertain public priorities for viewshed conservation, and restrict development that would compromise those identified viewsheds
2. Encourage creative development that minimizes both visual and environmental impacts on the landscape
3. Adopt zoning regulations that mitigate noise pollution and light pollution
4. Adopt zoning regulations that include Vermont's Smart Growth principles such as concentrated downtown development in order to maintain Richmond's historic settlement pattern and village character.

GOAL 4: Utilize best management practices for Richmond-owned, publicly accessible natural and recreational areas

ACTIONS:

1. Utilize a management plan for the Town Forest, and continually assess for necessary amendments to the plan to ensure best stewardship of that land and forest and to ensure that the requirements of the *Grant of Development Rights, Conservation Restrictions and Public Access Easement* are being met.
2. Manage trail development and usage on Town lands to protect neighboring property owner rights and possible sensitive natural areas or conservation priorities such as those listed previously
3. Create a municipal properties management policy including rights of way, access, safety, and maintenance in order to ensure both natural resource protection and proper land stewardship.
4. Control the growth and spread of invasive species on town properties.
5. Utilize the conservation reserve fund to protect important natural resources and public access to them where appropriate
(see also Future Land Use, Community Development, Energy, Economic Development, Housing, Emergency Resilience, Natural Resources Maps)

MAPS: These maps will be used in conjunction with the Future Land Use map to inform future zoning maps due to the constraints to development they may pose.

- Hydrologic Features
- Agricultural Soils
- Ridgelines and Slopes
- Forest Blocks and Wildlife Habitat Connectors
- Current Use and Conserved Areas

TRANSPORTATION

Most Richmond residents have and rely on personal vehicles, but demand is increasing for a wide variety of transportation options, including bus and rail service, bikeable and walkable streets and trails, and electric vehicles. Rural communities notoriously struggle to provide public transit and walkable streets, but they are increasingly embracing urban ideas for improving the diversity, affordability, and sustainability of transportation methods.

A leading philosophy is “Complete Streets” – the notion that we should design streets for many uses and transportation types, rather than just for cars. Complete Streets can result in less car use, which means that we need fewer parking spaces, fewer roads, and less auto-oriented development, which can help increase the vibrancy and attractiveness of the town while reducing impermeable surfaces and municipal costs. Less car use also contributes to Vermont’s energy reduction goal, which has been adopted statewide to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and the harmful effects of climate change. We can then focus resources on improving the safety, efficiency, and sustainability of our auto infrastructure. All of these changes will help improve quality of life for Richmond residents – whether they drive cars or not.

Richmond includes some infrastructure or support for a diverse range of transportation modes, but options are limited for anything other than personal vehicles. Most Richmond residents own at least one car, and Richmond has approximately 85 miles of roadway (including state-owned, town-owned, and private). The town also maintains extensive road infrastructure to support them, including more than 30 bridges and 712 culverts. Richmond also maintains numerous parking spaces and lots; a 2015 study showed that most public lots are sufficient for parking volumes, but the Depot Street Lot is overburdened. While electric vehicle popularity is growing, there are currently no known public charging stations for electric vehicles in Richmond (or anywhere between Waterbury and Williston).

Changing demographics and regional growth do impact traffic patterns and volumes locally. Traffic counts overall are relatively stable, or even decreasing on many roads. At the same time, increased volumes and congestion are causing problems on certain key commuter routes and choke points— such as the Route 2 and Bridge Street intersection, which also has the worst safety rating in town. The majority of Richmond residents (82%) commute out of town for work, the largest employment centers are Williston/South Burlington/Burlington, and Waterbury/Montpelier.

Richmond has a popular Park and Ride near Interstate 89, which enables carpooling and access to an I-89 commuter bus, but most commuters (88%) still travel in personal vehicles. It also currently has inadequate capacity for the parking demand. There is no weekend or evening bus service and no stop or access point in the downtown or villages. A rail line runs through Richmond, carrying freight and the once-daily Amtrak passenger service, but the nearest stops are in Essex Junction and Waterbury. The supplemental ride service Neighbor Rides helps fill transportation gaps for seniors or those with disabilities or special needs, but there are no supplemental ride services for most residents. Richmond is also near the Burlington International Airport, thus private and public aviation options should be considered in transportation and land use policies.

Active or human-powered transportation (primarily biking and walking) is increasingly popular among many residents. This low impact choice of transportation has many benefits – recreation, health, sustainability, convenience, affordability, energy efficiency, and more. Richmond has a sidewalk system in the village area, which helps improve safety and vibrancy downtown, but there is no dedicated infrastructure to support biking or walking outside the village, or to make these options safer. Richmond has long held a goal of improving bikeability and walkability, and it was one of the most common themes during the visioning process.

Several studies, including our Bridge St. Bicycle and Pedestrian Feasibility Study, and the Route 2 Scoping Study, detail specific recommendations and locations for bike lanes, signage, sidewalk extensions, and other high-priority improvements. Richmond conducted a pop-up installation of high-priority enhanced crosswalks in the village during

VISION CONNECTION

- **Affordability:** Personal vehicles are a major cost for most residents.
- **Economic Opportunity:** Convenient transportation opens many doors, i.e. jobs, schools, business expansion, and cultural and social opportunities.
- **Mobility + Transportation Options:** Increasing options for mobility and transportation is one of the best ways to accommodate shifting demographics.
- **Natural + Working Lands:** Roads account for a great deal of impermeable surface, resulting in pollution, while fragmenting habitat and wildlife passages. Land use regulation also contributes to placement of housing and thus, affects the distances traveled by residents
- **Safe + Resilient Community:** Roads can be a big public safety hazard (car accidents, washouts, etc.), but can increase safety and resilience, when they are designed and built well.

this planning process, and found a need for updated and potentially relocated crosswalks in the village. Richmond has an extensive trail system established and maintained by the Trails Committee, which is used for recreation as well as point-to-point travel. Trail connectivity is an important factor in usage and travel efficiency, as well as in reducing vehicle traffic.

In addition to its impact on mobility, Richmond should focus on increasing the sustainability and resilience of transportation systems. With miles of impermeable surfaces, roads are one of the greatest contributors to non-point source pollution and water quality problems. When storms wash out or erode roadways, they further contribute to sedimentation and pollution problems, while cutting off travel routes and requiring expensive repairs. Richmond's culverts are critical to preventing storm damage; a 2015 study showed that only 50 need immediate attention, but 93% may be too small to accommodate flows during heavy storms. Road maintenance and construction are among the greatest costs to the town; reducing vehicle use and improving road resilience are critical strategies for controlling municipal costs and tax rates and meeting energy goals.

Improvements to transportation infrastructure are also expensive, but can be minimized by integrating them into other planned upgrades (such as paving projects or bridge replacements) and by using pop-up design demonstrations to test and refine designs before final installation. Local, regional, and state documents inform our transportation policies and activities. These include The Chittenden Active Transportation Plan, VTrans goals and Better Roads and General Roads Permit, and the CCRPC Metropolitan Transportation Plan. Please refer to the resources section of the appendices for a complete list of Richmond's transportation studies and plans. The studies and plans mentioned in this section can also be found on the Town of Richmond website.

GOALS & ACTIONS

GOAL 1: Maintain a "Complete Streets" policy that encourages multi-modal transportation options such as walking and biking in addition to vehicle traffic

ACTIONS:

1. Implement high priority actions from completed planning studies, such as new sidewalks within the village along the east side of Bridge St. and 4 new crosswalks at the Bridge/Railroad/Jolina intersection as soon as is feasible. This may require identifying funding sources and/or integrating the projects into the Capital Budget's road maintenance schedule
2. Support the construction of sidewalks and bike paths or line striping for cyclists on State and Town road projects. Consider making wider shoulders on Town roads, especially Cochran, Huntington, and Hinesburg Roads. Work with VTrans to prioritize rebuilding Route 2 (Main Street) including sidewalks and bicycle/pedestrian accommodation
3. Work with partner agencies and organizations to identify and test (through pop-up demonstrations or other means) best practices in bike and pedestrian safety and implement low-cost improvements that have been identified such as better signage and road markings
4. Support Safe Routes to School and other walking projects, and road running races on town roadways
5. Support interconnectivity of trails and connectivity of trails with destinations such as the market or park and ride in order to provide non-motorized means of travel
6. Publicize and support the Cross Vermont Trail and other public trails
7. Consider handicap accessibility when making decisions about location of paths, parking, crosswalks, and transit routes

GOAL 2: Improve safety and efficiency of public roads and bridges

ACTIONS:

1. Work with VTrans to adjust the signaling at the Route 2/Bridge Street intersection to improve traffic flow and safety rating and continue to support policing and traffic management during morning and evening busy times
2. Identify road segments where noise, speed, congestion or safety is/are a problem and work to develop strategies to reduce the negative impacts.
3. Work with VTrans and CCRPC to keep bridges on a good maintenance and repair schedule
4. Implement pedestrian and bike traffic signage in the village and heavily bike-trafficked areas
5. Implement necessary improvements for compliance with the Municipal Roads General Permit

GOAL 3: Increase the resilience of transportation infrastructure

ACTIONS:

1. Identify and upgrade undersized culverts to prevent washouts. Use best management practices for managing runoff during road construction or reconstruction.

2. Work to site new roads away from rivers and streams, and reroute or stabilize roads that are susceptible to flooding
3. Reduce stormwater runoff by using best practices and incorporating green infrastructure into town road construction, facilities and landscaping.

GOAL 4: Encourage transportation policies and programs that reduce single-occupancy vehicle travel on town roads

ACTIONS:

1. Support public and private policies, programs or other efforts that promote alternatives to single-occupancy vehicle travel such as public transit improvements, car-sharing, telecommuting, flexible work schedules and school bus usage.
2. Work with other Chittenden County towns and the Agency of Transportation to add/expand Park and Ride facilities in Richmond and neighboring Towns to provide alternatives to the Richmond Park and Ride that is currently of inadequate capacity. Identify possible additional Park and Ride capacity space in Richmond, such as on the south side of the I89 interchange with a pedestrian crossing light at the existing interchange traffic light.
3. Encourage “smart growth” development in the village center or downtown, or near transit options, to reduce car travel distances.
4. Support social service transportation such as SSTA, Neighbor Rides and others for elderly, disabled or other non-drivers.
5. Partner with the Mount Mansfield Modified Union school District to increase bus ridership, or create other means to reduce morning congestion at the Four Corners
6. Work with the school district to examine the possibility of using school buses as a shuttle system around town during hours when buses are not transporting students

GOAL 6: See energy-related transportation goals and actions in the Energy technical plan

(see also Housing, Economic Development, Education, Community Development & Resilience)

MAPS:

- Transportation

UTILITIES + FACILITIES

The Richmond utilities and facilities have been discussed across multiple components of this action plan. For planning purposes, we are sorting this technical plan into three categories: Richmond Facilities, Richmond Utilities, and Private or External Utilities and Facilities.

The town owns multiple properties and facilities including the town center, library, Richmond Water Resources Department, Volunteers Green, Richmond Fire Department, Richmond Highway Department, and others. Several town facilities are currently being energy audited for potential upgrades and renovations. The town center and library are historic facilities and their maintenance requires more care and funding than others in order to preserve historic integrity and modernize the facilities simultaneously. The town has recently undergone a facilities assessment. The assessment was done to ascertain the maintenance level, energy efficiency, and safety of town-owned buildings.

The town-owned library building was opened on the first floor in 1991 and had a subsequent renovation and expansion in 2003 (paid entirely by private donations and grants). As a result, the heating and cooling is comprised of two different systems, one boiler and one furnace. The first floor radiant system, housed mainly in a dirt cellar, is subject to rodent and rust damage. The building's basic structure dates to 1879 and the entire building requires repairs (slate roof, siding) the steeple is in particular need of upgrading. The fascia and trim of the steeple is rotted or broken, slates are cracked or missing and the safety of the finial is uncertain. Space allocated to staff and work functions is nominal, and lines of sight, necessary to serve and monitor visitors, are poor.

The community room and the mezzanine lounge provide an important venue for community, governmental, and cultural groups to meet. An average of 460 people a week visited the library in 2016 and close cooperation with the Community Senior Center has increased visits. It is essential that the building be assessed, maintained and enhanced on a regular basis to ensure safety and access and provide the multitude of services to a growing community. Citizens of Richmond have voiced a desire to strengthen and enhance recreational, community, and cultural facilities in the Town. The Library is an integral part in meeting those demands.

Among the services Richmond provides to its residents are a municipal police force and a volunteer fire department. We also contract with a local private rescue service. A town police force is uncommon in our part of the county; most towns in eastern Chittenden County rely on the State Police to respond to calls. Most Richmond voters have long supported and valued our police service, and feel that the benefits outweigh the cost, although the cost is still on the minds of many tax payers. Our police department consists of a chief, 5 patrol officers and a part-time administrative assistant, with 6 vehicles and a police station. One officer is a School Resource Officer (SRO), spending much of his time at Camels Hump Middle School. Police coverage extends from 6:30 AM to 3 AM, and dispatch is handled by the state police in Williston. Our officers are part of the regional New England Police Benevolent Association Union. A feasibility study conducted in 2016 concluded that the police station was inadequate to meet current needs. Discussions have ranged from upgrading the present facility (within the Town Center building or building a new facility. County-wide discussions on regionalizing some or all of the police services have also been held over the last several years. The town currently has a committee that is charged with exploring all potential options for the future of policing in Richmond.

Our fire department is still, amazingly, a volunteer squad. The chief, assistant chief, 2 captains and approximately 15 volunteer firefighters do receive a per-call stipend, but the town budget is small for this critical and high risk service. The department responds to a variety of calls, from accident assists on I-89 or local roads, to medical assists in addition to reports of structure fires. They are dispatched from Shelburne and participate in a mutual assistance program with neighboring municipalities. The fire station is a 1970's structure, which will continue to be adequate for the fire department's requirements if some improvements are made. Their vehicles – 3 engines, 1 heavy rescue vehicle and an off-road brush truck with a small water tank – are on a town maintenance schedule and are adequate for current needs. Our new water storage tank and town water supply provide good water

VISION CONNECTION

- **Affordability:** Utilities are a major expense in general for residents, and contributes greatly to the cost of living
- **Safe & Resilient Community:** Town facilities and services are crucial during crises or emergencies and must be able to withstand and act during disasters
- **Social, Cultural, and Recreational Offerings:** Many town facilities such as the library and Volunteers Green are used for recreational, educational, or artistic purposes
- **Economic Development:** Availability of municipal water and wastewater service, as well as cellphone and internet coverage can play a role in siting of new businesses
- **Mobility:** Coordinated updates to highway department and water resources infrastructure helps reduce traffic, construction time, and increases the value of our streetscapes

pressure and volume for foreseeable firefighting needs. Richmond is lucky to have this service and will continue to celebrate its dedicated volunteers.

The Richmond Highway Department building is also a relatively new structure and is currently adequate for their needs. The Highway Department vehicles include a roadside mower, four dump trucks, an excavator, a grader, a bucket loader, two trailers, a small tractor with a snow blower, and 3 pickup trucks. Highway vehicles are replaced relatively often compared to other town vehicles and are maintained regularly due to their high level of wear and tear. The Highway Department also maintains other town vehicles including Water Resources vehicles and police cruisers.

Richmond Rescue, located on Railroad Street, is a private emergency medical and rescue organization that contracts with Richmond and other towns in the region to provide rescue services. Funds for the service are raised through subscriptions, donations, fees for service and town contracts. Dispatch is also provided by the Shelburne service that dispatches for fire, with some 911 calls being routed through the state police.

The town recently purchased forest land for municipal ownership, conservation, and public recreation. A long term management plan will be in place for the use of this property by the close of 2018. Volunteers Green is the main town recreational area serving farmers markets, sports, and general public use. The landmark Round Church is also under the supervision of the town and is maintained in a historic manner, used only for special purposes. More about the Round Church is located in the Historic Resources technical plan of this document.

Richmond has its own municipal water system. A high-quality well by the Round Church provides water to a 750,000 gallon reservoir which supplies water for customers and fire protection for the town. Substantial capital work has been done to modernize the system and upgrade supply lines concurrently with road improvements done by the town. A new water tank was recently constructed and the town is currently determining how to remove the old tank and what to do with the material. An ordinance governing the water system went into effect in 1965 and is on file in the Town Clerk's office. It specifies allowed uses in the service area, specific requirements for system hookups and requires the system to be managed by a board of Commissioners. Richmond's municipal Wastewater Treatment Facility is located on Esplanade. The secondary extended air facility underwent a \$3.9 million upgrade in 2005 to full tertiary capacity with septage receiving, filtration and biological and chemical phosphorus removal with dewatering. The collection system also completed a \$1.5 million upgrade in 2009 which included manhole replacements, pipe linings and line consolidations.

An ordinance governing the wastewater system went into effect in 1972 and is on file in the Town Clerk's office. It specifies allowed uses for the facility and in the service area, specific requirements for system hookups and requires the system to be managed by a board of Commissioners. In 1993 an ordinance was added and adopted for the allocation of future hookups. Richmond also has a stormwater system in the water/wastewater district to manage drainage. The system is currently undergoing a major upgrade on East Main Street, with Bridge Street and connecting streets soon to follow. The storm water is not a combined system, but customer drain lines will need to be addressed in the future to lessen impacts on the wastewater system. The Water Resources department manages the water/wastewater system and the stormwater is controlled by the Highway department.

Richmond has two major electrical providers: Green Mountain Power and Vermont Electric Co-Op. The capital budget is created and updated annually by the Selectboard with input from the Richmond Planning Commission, development review board, and other town boards and commissions. All upgrades or constructions are financed through the town fund or grants. This funding comes from the tax base, non-government organizations, state programs, or federal programs. Facilities and utilities that are constructed or maintained under the control or influence of the town shall take into account the 11 community visions as well as the goals of this and other technical plans.

GOALS & ACTIONS

GOAL 1: Maintain and upgrade, where reasonable and necessary, municipal facilities and grounds at reasonable costs

ACTIONS:

1. Implement changes or upgrades identified in the facilities assessment in order to maintain town facilities to a proper standard of function, safety, and efficiency that is necessary for continued use.
2. Identify opportunities to share municipal resources and facilities with neighboring towns or organizations
3. Ensure that Volunteers Green is maintained and publicly accessible/usable for residents and visitors
4. Follow the goals and intents of the Town Forest management plans
5. Support the efforts of the Historical Society in preserving the Round Church and its parcel
6. Maintain and upgrade the Town Center building and parking areas to support the needs of town officials and staff

7. Continue to rent or lease town spaces and grounds to businesses and organizations in order to best utilize space and maintain that income
8. Maintain and upgrade the Richmond Fire Department and Richmond Highway Department buildings
9. Continue efforts to create an affordable solution for the police department and their facility.
10. Implement stormwater projects on town properties identified in the Stormwater Master Plan
11. Ensure that the Water and Wastewater systems meet regulatory standards and have functional capacity as needed under the Town Plan.
12. Implement building improvement projects for the library in order to maintain the use of the historical building
13. Utilize multiple funding sources in conjunction with tax resources to implement facility upgrades and maintenance in affordable ways
14. Modernize town buildings with energy efficiency measures and accessibility measures to ensure continued usability, especially in the historic facilities

GOAL 2: Maintain and upgrade, where reasonable and necessary, municipal utilities and associated infrastructure at reasonable costs

ACTIONS:

1. Continue to upgrade water/wastewater/stormwater infrastructure in joint projects with the highway department.
2. Implement an Asset Management maintenance program in water/wastewater/stormwater and highway infrastructure and use it for a maintenance schedule.
3. Directly connect the capital budget to the Asset Management maintenance schedule to create collaboration and cohesion in all water/wastewater/stormwater/highway projects within the water/wastewater district.
4. Upgrade the water/wastewater/stormwater systems to meet functional capacity and regulatory standards
5. Extend water/wastewater/stormwater lines to protect public health and the environment where feasible
6. Encourage the upgrade of customer's water/wastewater/stormwater connections in the service area
7. Encourage upgrades that protect critical infrastructure such as the water line under the Bridge Street Bridge.
8. Seek out and utilize multiple funding sources in conjunction with possible tax resources to implement the asset management maintenance program with the least impact to water/wastewater rates and town taxes.
9. Continue to charge impact fees to offset costs of operations.

GOAL 3: Support the provision of external or private utilities and facilities for residents, such as rubbish removal, electricity, heat, and telecommunication services

ACTIONS:

1. Identify opportunities to work with providers to increase internet speed and availability and increase cell service coverage in town
2. Utilize and support the initiatives of the Chittenden Solid Waste District
3. Work with Vermont Electric Cooperative and Green Mountain Power to ensure all residents have access to reliable electricity
(see also Transportation, Community Development, Energy, Emergency Resilience, Historic Resources)

MAPS:

- Utilities & Facilities

RICHMOND TOWN PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

Technical Plan	Goal, Action	Action Language	Primary Party	Time
Community Development (CD)	1,1	Continue to support currently established local businesses and service providers by creating a municipal purchasing policy that gives preference to local vendors where applicable and reasonable	Selectboard	Short Term
CD	1,2	When updating zoning regulations, explore ways to allow for non-traditional housing types, ways to encourage the creation of new business enterprises	Planning Commission	Short Term
CD	1,3	Support public health programs and resources in and outside of Richmond by ensuring that town policies and regulations allow for their presence, the development of healthcare and critical facilities, and by supporting and allowing access for all individuals to facilities and programs	Planning Commission, Selectboard	Ongoing
CD	1,4	Support and allow for affordable food and clothing sources such as the Thrift Shop and Food Shelf	Town-Wide	Ongoing
CD	1,5	Convene an essential goods and services summit with local providers to identify where gaps exist in Richmond and determine a course of action to increase availability	Economic Development Committee	Short Term
CD	1,6	Support new and/or unique employment opportunities for Richmond residents through policy and regulation, such as continued or expanded allowance of cottage industry and home occupations	Planning Commission	Short Term
CD	1,7	Support childcare provider opportunities by maintaining programs such as the Children's Librarian	Selectboard, Library Trustees	Ongoing
CD	1,8	Continue to utilize and allow public use of municipal buildings and grounds, such as the Community Room and Volunteers Green, for the Richmond Farmer's Market, Holiday Market, book sale, and other local or affordable buying opportunities	Selectboard	Ongoing
CD	1,9	Include access to goods, services, and basic needs in the emergency management plan	Town Administration	Short Term
CD	1,10	Continue to support Richmond's schools and other educational opportunities for residents	Town-Wide	Ongoing
CD	2,1	Ensure that all town staff, boards, and commissions are following the requirements of Vermont's Open Meeting Law	Selectboard, Town Administration	Ongoing
CD	2,2	Hold an annual meeting of town boards, commissions, and staff to increase collaboration and communication	Selectboard, Town Administration	Ongoing
CD	2,3	Continue to utilize open and transparent communication channels through established platforms such as Front Porch Forum, Times Ink, and MMCTV and publicize accommodations for participation in meetings such as the livestream from MMCTV	Town Administration	Ongoing
CD	2,4	Maintain a user friendly and regularly updated town website and social media platforms which will include a list of volunteer opportunities; public contact information for all town boards, commissions, and staff; and a link to Western Slopes Business Association website	Town Administration	Ongoing
CD	2,5	Maintain the town's inclusivity policy, and explore the creation of a civility policy for the municipal workplace, boards, commissions, and town media presence	Selectboard	Ongoing
CD	2,6	Continue the fair and equitable application and enforcement of town, state, and federal laws	Town Boards and Administration	Ongoing
CD	2,7	Recognize and reward volunteer service through celebration and promotion	Town Boards and Administration	Ongoing
CD	3,1	Work with landowners who are willing to allow public access to privately accessed natural and open space areas	Conservation Commission	Ongoing
CD	3,2	Support the Richmond and Vermont Land Trusts in their endeavors to protect natural resources that will have public access for recreational purposes	Town-Wide	Ongoing
CD	3,3	Encourage collaboration between the trails committee, conservation commission, planning commission, and regional organizations	Conservation Commission	Ongoing
CD	3,4	Create and distribute materials that foster responsible use and enjoyment of Richmond's natural areas, including trail maps, kiosks, improved parking and access, and signage	Conservation Commission	Short Term
CD	3,5	Support long-standing outdoor recreation opportunities such as Cochran's Ski Area and Chittenden County Fish & Game	Town-Wide	Ongoing

CD	3,6	Support outdoor recreation opportunities and programs that include canoe access on the Winooski River, swimming, cross country skiing, skating, mountain biking, etc.	Town-Wide	Ongoing
CD	4,1	Support arts and cultural programming and opportunities for residents and visitors	Town-Wide	Ongoing
CD	4,2	Explore the creation of a town community outreach and recreation staff position	Recreation Committee	Short Term
CD	4,3	Identify possible methods of funding further recreation and community engagement opportunities	Recreation Committee	Short term
CD	4,4	Support public and private recreational businesses or endeavors by ensuring that zoning regulations allow for sustainable recreational uses of public and private lands including, but not limited to, the potential development of community centers, outdoor seating or gathering, performance spaces, etc.	Planning Commission	Short Term
CD	4,5	Educate the community and visitors of Richmond's recreational opportunities through the town website and social media	Recreation Committee	Short Term
CD	4,6	Continue to support and allow community use of the library and Community Room	Selectboard, Library Trustees	Ongoing
CD	4,7	Create a management plan for municipal public spaces, facilities, and lands that includes capital improvements and budget as well as opportunities for expanded or new uses	Selectboard	Short Term
CD	4,8	Continue to allow for public events such as festivals, parades, and vendor fairs and create a streamlined approval process for such uses	Selectboard	Ongoing
CD	5,1	Continue to support the provision of critical services including, but not limited to, law enforcement, fire, and emergency medical services through policy and work to keep these services both affordable and effective	Selectboard	Ongoing
CD	5,2	Ensure that Richmond's first responders are trained and sufficiently equipped to deal with a variety of scenarios and threats	Selectboard	Short Term
CD	5,3	Support public health programs and resources in and outside of Richmond by ensuring town policies allow for their presence and the development of critical facilities	Planning Commission	Ongoing
CD	5,4	Continue to collaborate with and support efforts and resources that are tackling the opiate crisis, as well as other major issues such as domestic abuse and substance abuse	Selectboard	Ongoing
CD	5,5	Monitor for safety opportunities such as increased security measures, grants for safety equipment or projects, new crosswalks, and educational trainings or resources	Town Administration	Ongoing
Economic Development (ED)	1,1	Create clear guidelines and information resources for permit applicants, clarifying requirements and steps for permitting and approval.	Planning Commission	Short Term
ED	1,2	Streamline the business permitting process and reduce permitting costs for small businesses or entrepreneurs	Planning Commission	Short Term
ED	1,3	Create a permit to support pop-up and experimental businesses such as special events, temporary markets, food trucks and pop-up stores	Planning Commission	Short Term
ED	1,4	Promote economic opportunities on town media platforms, and create economic development incentives for development that meets "smart growth" standards and preserves Richmond's history and character	Economic Development Committee	Short Term
ED	1,5	Support the Richmond Farmers' Market and other local agricultural business enterprises	Town-Wide	Ongoing
ED	1,6	Create, maintain and distribute a list of state and regional resources and incentives for local businesses, such as Local First programs or state designation and cost-sharing programs; including an inventory of available properties, facilities and spaces for commercial, industrial or cottage business use	Economic Development Committee	Short Term
ED	1,7	Use local businesses for municipal purchases of goods and services whenever feasible	Town Boards and Administration	Ongoing
ED	1,8	Allow for and encourage expanded utility infrastructure for three-phase power, high-speed internet and municipal water and wastewater	Water Commission, Selectboard	Ongoing
ED	2,1	Update Richmond's land use regulations to protect these industries by incorporating strategies to reduce forest and farm fragmentation and allow for approved forest and farm based commercial activities	Planning Commission	Short Term
ED	2,2	Support occupational opportunities in the fields of scientific study and inventory, pest identification and management, invasive species control, reforestation, as well as outdoor classrooms and a variety of recreational activities	Town-Wide	Ongoing

ED	2,3	Keep track of ongoing strategies and studies being pursued at the state and regional levels to understand the implementation and ramifications of Act 171	Conservation Commission	Ongoing
ED	2,4	Promote the production and purchasing of local food whenever possible	Town-Wide	Ongoing
ED	2,5	Explore regulatory means of supporting the viability of farm and forest based land uses	Planning Commission	Short Term
ED	3,1	Study the potential for expanding Richmond's village center, the benefits of the Designated Downtown program, and renew the Village Center Designation	Planning Commission	Short Term
ED	3,2	Develop a Downtown Master Plan that will direct growth to the village area and address streetscape improvements identified in existing plans. Pursue strategies to attract and focus commercial activity in Jonesville	Planning Commission	Long Term
ED	3,3	Maintain and upgrade zoning regulations and development review policies to ensure that concentrated growth occurs in designated growth centers, thus bringing residents and businesses in close proximity	Planning Commission	Short Term
ED	4,1	Collaborate with the Trails Committee and Conservation Commission to conduct an assessment of current and needed trails and trail networking in Richmond	Planning Commission	Long Term
ED	4,2	Maintain maps and up-to-date information on the town website	Recreation Committee	Short Term
ED	4,3	Support our local Western Slopes Business Association in its goals and efforts	Town-Wide	Ongoing
ED	4,4	Support economic development of local character areas through zoning regulations	Planning Commission	Short Term
ED	5,1	Support mentoring, internships or community-based learning opportunities when possible	Town-Wide	Ongoing
ED	5,2	Support efforts to increase the supply of affordable housing in Richmond	Town-Wide	Long Term
ED	5,3	Support childcare businesses, however possible, to support Richmond's workforce	Town-Wide	Ongoing
ED	6,1	Update land use regulations to include permitting steps, development parameters and mitigation requirements specific to renewable energy projects	Planning Commission	Short Term
ED	6,2	Publicize and promote opportunities on the Town website to list or link to solar installers and other providers of renewable energy based services, particularly those with Richmond-based businesses	Economic Development Committee	Short Term
Education (Ed)	1,1	Continue to develop more programs for preschool students, including more private providers as partners	MMMUSD, Town-Wide	Ongoing
Ed	1,2	Encourage education programs which address the need for new technological training for emerging careers	MMMUSD, Town-Wide	Ongoing
Ed	1,3	Encourage the development of more programs which research shows develop the brain, such as the arts	MMMUSD, Town-Wide	Ongoing
Ed	1,4	Provide education programs to help solve problems caused by the opiate crisis	MMMUSD, Town-Wide	Long Term
Ed	1,5	Support the expansion of nursing and other social support staff as needed within the school	MMMUSD, Town-Wide	Long Term
Ed	1,6	Continue to provide venues such as the Community room at the Library and other facilities for recreational and educational programs for all ages	Selectboard, Library Trustees	Ongoing
Ed	1,7	Support policies that improve the mental health and readiness of students such as later start times and shorter bus routes	MMMUSD, Town-Wide	Ongoing
Ed	1,8	Continue to work with the MMMUSD to staff a School Resource Officer position and implement other safety measures	MMMUSD, Selectboard	Ongoing
Ed	2,1	Work with the school district to explore the potential of electric buses. Support the school district in their current grant application for an electric bus	MMMUSD, Town Administration	Long Term
Ed	2,2	Consider altering bus routes to use smaller buses for outlying areas, shortening lengths of rides and saving fuel for large buses covering so much distance	MMMUSD, Town-Wide	Long Term
Ed	2,3	Consider a shuttle service for students to and from local afterschool activities	MMMUSD	Long Term
Ed	3,1	Support the maintenance and improvement of the building infrastructure with an emphasis on energy conservation	MMMUSD	Ongoing
Ed	3,2	Promote efficient use of water within the buildings	MMMUSD	Ongoing

Ed	3,3	Seek more early care (birth through age 5) providers for available space within the school buildings	MMMUSD	Long Term
Ed	3,4	Encourage the use of buildings for community arts and adult continuing education programs	MMMUSD, Town-Wide	Ongoing
Ed	3,5	Continue to support the use of schools for voting, meetings, and other important community group activities	MMMUSD, Town-Wide	Ongoing
Ed	3,6	Foster community support for education in general by maximizing opportunities to draw the public to the school	MMMUSD, Town-Wide	Ongoing
Emergency Resilience (ER)	1,1	Maintain and update emergency response and preparedness plans including our All-Hazards Mitigation Plan and Local Emergency Operations Plan	Town Administration	Ongoing
ER	1,2	Inventory vulnerabilities of municipal and critical facilities and ways to mitigate potential damages, include this in capital planning and hazard mitigation planning	Town Administration	Short Term
ER	1,3	Create a Richmond Emergency Management plan that encompasses all hazards, emergencies, and disasters, and train employees and emergency service providers on the plan and procedures	Town Administration	Short Term
ER	1,4	Participate in the Red Cross Ready Rating program and certify Camel's Hump Middle School as a Red Cross ready shelter	Town Administration	Long Term
ER	1,5	Determine a sheltering plan for residents south of the Winooski River	Town Administration	Short Term
ER	1,6	Create a plan for domestic animal sheltering during emergencies and disasters	Town Administration	Long Term
ER	1,7	Include railway, interstate, hazmat, and other weather events in the emergency management plan	Town Administration	Short Term
ER	1,8	Ensure that critical facilities and personnel have adequate and proper backup power sources, equipment, and training for disasters, hazards, and emergencies, especially our most likely or common emergencies such as flooding or gorge rescues	Town Administration	Short Term
ER	1,9	Continue to support watershed management programs and projects that will help to mitigate flooding	Town-Wide	Ongoing
ER	1,10	Continue to strictly regulate development in the Special Flood Hazard Area	Planning Commission	Short Term
ER	1,11	Educate property owners about flood risk, insurance, development options, and flood proofing, and educate residents about disaster and emergency protocol and resources	Town Administration	Long Term
ER	1,12	Maintain an emergency preparedness section on the town website as a resource for citizens on emergency resources and procedures	Town Administration	Short Term
ER	1,13	Create an emergency volunteer network and an emergency communication system to better coordinate procedures and notifications in the event of a hazard or disaster	Town Administration	Short Term
ER	2,1	Maintain, upgrade, or implement stormwater systems and water conveyance systems such as ditches, culverts, and the municipal water and wastewater systems to withstand at least 1% storms (100 year storms)	Town Administration, Water Commission, Selectboard	Ongoing
ER	2,2	Maintain and upgrade bridges and roads to withstand inundation from at least 1% storms	Town Administration, Selectboard	Ongoing
ER	2,3	Identify opportunities where increased levels of resilience are possible, such as improvements that could withstand a 500-year storm	Town Administration, Selectboard	Ongoing
ER	2,4	Maintain and upgrade backup power and heating systems in town and critical facilities	Town Administration, Selectboard	Ongoing
ER	2,5	Ensure that critical facilities are structurally sound and able to withstand heavy snowfall and high speed wind gusts, and implement storm windows and doors where necessary in critical facilities	Town Administration, Selectboard	Short Term
Energy (E)	1,1	Adopt and maintain a zoning ordinance based on "smart growth" principles, with most development concentrated in the village, neighborhoods, downtown, gateway mixed use areas to reduce vehicle miles travelled from housing to shopping and to public transit options.	Planning Commission	Short Term
E	1,2	Support public transit opportunities such as Park and Ride lots; commuter rapid transit buses such as the Burlington-Montpelier Link; a Burlington-Montpelier light rail commuter train station in Richmond if the opportunity becomes available and local shuttle bus service, carpooling, and ridesharing programs.	Town-Wide	Ongoing

E	1,3	Consider energy efficiency and alternative fuels when purchasing municipal vehicles, recognizing there may be limited options at this time for heavy duty vehicles and vehicles for first responders.	Town Administration	Ongoing
E	1,4	Facilitate conference calls, webinars and other virtual meetings when feasible to decrease travel by town employees.	Town Administration	Ongoing
E	1,5	Promote the Go! Vermont webpage which provides information on the above transportation options.	Town-Wide	Ongoing
E	1,6	Support the installation of private and public electric vehicle (EV) charging stations in convenient locations. Consider installing one at the Town Center, the Park and Ride and along travel corridors.	Town Administration, Town-Wide	Short Term
E	1,7	Work with GMP and VEC to find funding for EV charging infrastructure.	Town Administration	Short Term
E	1,8	Collaborate with Drive Electric Vermont to publicize their webpage, host electric vehicle demonstrations, and inform residents about electric vehicle technology, incentives and resources.	Town Administration	Ongoing
E	1,9	Work with the Vermont Energy and Climate Action Network, Drive Electric Vermont and the Vermont Clean Cities Coalition to support the use of electric and bio-diesel vehicles.	Town-Wide	Ongoing
E	1,10	Consider requiring EV charging stations for new commercial development.	Planning Commission	Short Term
E	1,11	Update zoning regulations to include language to clarify permitting requirements for new electric vehicle charging installations and support the ongoing development of this infrastructure.	Planning Commission	Short Term
E	1,12	Plan upgrades to town roads to make them more bicycle and pedestrian friendly	Town Administration	Long Term
E	1,13	Support upgrading sidewalks in the village to encourage walking	Town-Wide	Ongoing
E	2,1	Identify conservation and efficiency opportunities in municipal buildings and facilities and build efficiency improvements into annual maintenance upgrades and into the town's capital plan. The Town will fully participate in Efficiency Vermont and Vermont Gas's high-performance programs whenever building, renovating or upgrading any Town buildings. Develop policies for evaluating purchases and capital improvements that use life cycle analysis.	Town Administration, Selectboard	Ongoing
E	2,2	Support educational activities such as town energy fairs, the Community Energy Dashboard, literature distribution and energy committee activities that provide residents with information about energy conservation and renewable energy opportunities such as advanced wood heating, air-source heat pumps, geothermal, solar PV and programs to reduce energy use.	Town-Wide	Ongoing
E	2,3	Coordinate with Efficiency Vermont, Vermont Gas and the state Weatherization Assistance Program and promote these programs through the town website.	Town Administration	Short Term
E	2,4	Promote any state or regional program that encourages and/or incentivizes the removal of older inefficient woodstoves for newer EPA certified models.	Town-Wide	Ongoing
E	2,5	Consider including anaerobic digestion with methane capture as part of the wastewater treatment system.	Selectboard	Long Term
E	2,6	Support the efficient and sustainable use of wood for fuel and maintain forest health and forest carbon storage and uptake.	Town-Wide	Ongoing
E	2,7	Consider adopting all or parts of the State's Energy Stretch Code in the town's zoning regulations for new construction, renovations, and/or additions.	Planning Commission	Short Term
E	3,1	Develop potential standards for renewable energy generation facilities, including mitigation of aesthetic and natural resources impacts	Planning Commission	Short Term
E	3,2	Designate specific locations as preferred sites for the siting of net-metered solar generation projects.	Planning Commission	Short Term
E	3,3	Continue to participate in and promote net-metering arrangements whenever possible.	Town-Wide	Ongoing
E	3,4	Ensure that the long term management plan for the Town Forest allow for sustainable energy production for the benefit of the town, such as sustainable biomass harvesting (firewood).	Town Forest Committee	Short Term, Ongoing
E	4,1	Develop an energy action plan for the Town to implement the energy goals and actions in this plan and assist with evaluating investments in energy efficiency and renewable energy opportunities that benefit the town.	Planning Commission, Energy Coordinator	Short Term
E	4,2	Maintain energy consumption data for municipal buildings using the Environmental Protection Agency Portfolio Manager software for	Energy Coordinator	Ongoing

		analyzing energy efficiency and renewable energy opportunities and to evaluate the results from investments to reduce energy consumption and costs.		
E	4,3	Work with the Richmond Climate Action Committee to educate the community on energy efficiency, energy conservation and renewable energy technologies and techniques.	Energy Coordinator	Ongoing
E	4,4	Assist the Town with applying for grants and incentives to reduce energy use and increase the use of renewable energy.	Energy Coordinator	Ongoing
E	4,5	Work with the Town Manager to fully implement the 2007 Town Energy Conservation Policy.	Energy Coordinator	Long Term
E	4,6	Inform the Town about the Vermont Climate Pledge and assist with joining this organization to demonstrate the town's commitment to meeting Vermont's energy and climate goals.	Energy Coordinator	Short Term
Future Land Use (FLU)	1,1	Invest in municipal infrastructure improvements that allow for new development	Selectboard, Town Administration	Ongoing
FLU	1,2	Create policies that encourage affordable housing development	Planning Commission	Short Term
FLU	1,3	Provide technical assistance to property owners	Town Administration	Ongoing
FLU	1,4	Create zoning regulations that support the above mentioned uses and prohibitions	Planning Commission	Short Term
FLU	1,5	Create form-based zoning regulations that include architectural and design requirements to be met in certain districts, especially mixed-use areas	Planning Commission	Short Term
FLU	1,6	Explore density-based zoning when updating the land use regulations	Planning Commission	Short Term
FLU	2,1	Continue to prohibit damaging or dangerous types of development in sensitive or conserved areas such as floodplain or steep slopes	Planning Commission	Short Term
FLU	2,2	Restrict certain types of development in sensitive or high priority natural areas	Planning Commission	Short Term
FLU	2,3	Encourage development that protects natural resources and preserves scenic and/or historic character of Richmond	Planning Commission	Short Term
Historic Resources (HR)	1,1	Protect and preserve the Round Church by continuing to provide liability and property insurance as well as routine grounds maintenance	Selectboard	Ongoing
HR	1,2	Work with the Richmond Historical Society to plan funding and implementation of major renovations as needed to preserve historical integrity and enhance the property	Selectboard	Ongoing
HR	1,3	Protect, preserve and continue to fully utilize the Town Center and Library buildings.	Town-Wide	Ongoing
HR	1,4	Encourage the preservation and utilization of privately owned buildings of historic significance within the town	Town-Wide, Historical Society	Ongoing
HR	1,5	Reapply for the State of Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development's Village Center Designation	Planning Commission	Short Term
HR	1,6	Revise the Town website to include a list of Richmond's state- and nationally recognized historic sites as well as links to historic preservation resources that could help owners to manage these properties so as to preserve their integrity	Town Administration, Historical Society	Short Term
HR	1,7	Ensure that town regulations allow for historic interpretive signage and historic markers.	Planning Commission	Short Term
HR	1,8	Work with the Richmond Historical Society to develop a walking and/or driving tour of the Town's historic sites	Recreation Committee	Long Term
HR	2,1	Oversee regular maintenance of the grounds, public access routes and grave markers at the Town's two historic cemeteries: the Village Cemetery on Bridge Street and the Hill (or Fay's Corner) Cemetery accessed from Cemetery Road.	Historical Society, Cemetery Trustees	Ongoing
HR	2,2	Work with Cemetery Trustees and the Richmond Historical Society to establish a trained corps of volunteers to do grave marker maintenance not requiring professional intervention	Cemetery Trustees, Historical Society	Long Term
HR	2,3	Create and preserve digital files of all Town cemetery listings, including images of gravesite markers as well as burial records	Historical Society, Cemetery Trustees	Long Term
HR	2,4	When archaeological sites or artifacts are discovered during Town or State projects requiring an archaeological resource review, work with the Richmond Historical Society to document the material and assess preservation options	Town Administration	Ongoing
HR	3,1	Continue to publicize and provide space for Richmond history programs and displays sponsored by the Richmond Historical Society	Town-Wide	Ongoing

		and Richmond Community Senior Center, among others, and continue to support and advertise public events that have become local cultural traditions		
HR	3,2	Revise the Richmond History page of the Town website to include historic photos as well as links to other Richmond history online resources. Links could include the Richmond Historical Society website, information for Richmond history researchers or owners of historic artifacts and/or properties, and lists and/or photo galleries of the town's historic sites	Town Administration	Short Term
HR	3,3	Develop a plan to digitally preserve fragile public records, such as land records and birth, marriage and death records dating back to the late 18 th and 19 th centuries	Town Administration, Historical Society	Long Term
HR	3,4	Work with Richmond Historical Society to find secure, climate-controlled storage locations for historic cultural assets not stored in the Town Vault	Town Administration	Short Term
Housing (H)	1,1	When updating zoning regulations, identify opportunities for development of a variety of housing types, for example allowing mixed residential and commercial use, higher unit density, or unique accessory housing in certain identified districts	Planning Commission	Short Term
H	1,2	Continue to support the existence of the mobile home park, and support additional affordable housing development in the park	Planning Commission	Ongoing
H	1,3	Create a town housing committee that can identify needs and partner with organizations to help secure funding and identify opportunities for construction or adaptation of housing stock, as well as aid in the creation of affordable housing policies that are welcomed by both developers and residents	Planning Commission	Short Term
H	1,4	Encourage concentrated residential development in areas identified for growth	Planning Commission	Short Term
H	1,5	Consider participation in the FEMA Community Rating System which can lower overall home insurance costs for homeowners in the Special Flood Hazard Area	Planning Commission	Long Term
H	1,6	Provide technical assistance to homeowners in the Special Flood Hazard Area that desire to implement flood proofing measures	Town Administration	Ongoing
H	1,7	Support, and share information about, programs and resources that assist seniors or low mobility residents remain in their homes such as HomeShare Vermont, Meals on Wheels, and Neighbor Rides	Town Administration	Ongoing
H	1,8	Support, and share information about, programs and resources that help to lower cost of home ownership such as energy conservation, weatherization, and utility assistance	Town Administration, Energy Coordinator	Ongoing
H	1,9	Support programs and funding sources for preserving and renovating historic or older homes that can help owners maintain historic character and livability	Planning Commission, Historical Society	Ongoing
Natural Resources (NR)	1,1	Identify opportunities to conserve lands containing or adjoining to above listed conservation priorities	Conservation Commission	Ongoing
NR	1,2	Encourage conservation or protection of above listed conservation priorities on private lands	Conservation Commission	Ongoing
NR	1,3	Utilize the best available science to inform the creation of supplemental land use regulations and maps that would further conserve or protect sensitive natural areas	Planning Commission	Short Term
NR	1,4	Continue to support the efforts of the public and private organizations such as the Richmond Conservation Commission, Richmond Trails Committee, and Richmond Land Trust to protect sensitive natural areas	Planning Commission, Town-Wide	Ongoing
NR	1,5	Facilitate a town-wide discussion about the development and management of trails and trail networks in Richmond	Conservation Commission	Short Term
NR	1,6	Minimize the fragmentation and intrusion into sensitive wildlife habitats and forests, including Contiguous Habitat Units and Wildlife Travel Corridors, through land use regulation that promotes Vermont's Smart Growth principles such as clustering development, siting development in a manner to preserve contiguous habitat areas, and through coordinating with neighboring towns on border areas.	Planning Commission	Short Term
NR	1,7	Restrict development on steep slopes between 20% and 35%, cliffs, and ridgelines over 900ft in elevation, and prohibit all structural development (including renewable energy generation facilities and distribution/transmission infrastructure) on slopes greater than 35% , in order to maintain habitat connectors and mitigate erosion	Planning Commission	Short Term

NR	1,8	Create and maintain a library of ecological studies and maps	Conservation Commission	Short Term
NR	1,9	Partner with state and regional organizations to secure funding and collaborate on projects that would support conservation efforts	Conservation Commission	Ongoing
NR	1,10	Construct trails to avoid sensitive natural areas and minimize impact on water quality, wildlife, soils, and other resources	Richmond Trails Committee	Ongoing
NR	1,11	Continue to support invasive species control efforts including removal and mitigation of Japanese Knotweed, Garlic Mustard, Barberry, Buckthorn, and other fast spreading non-native plants.	Town-Wide	Long Term, Ongoing
NR	1,12	Provide educational materials, and consider conducting outreach, to landowners about best management practices for sustainability, conservation, and environmental stewardship of natural areas	Conservation Commission	Ongoing
NR	1,13	Continue to prohibit the construction of new principal structures in the Special Flood Hazard Areas of the Winooski and Huntington Rivers	Planning Commission	Short Term
NR	1,14	Protect river corridors to ensure that streams and rivers have the room they need to move and change over time by utilizing Vermont's River Corridor maps and establishing setbacks for small streams during development review (small stream: less than 2 square miles of drainage area)	Planning Commission	Long Term
NR	1,15	Safeguard water quality, stream channel stability, habitats, and habitat connectivity by protecting riparian areas	Planning Commission	Long Term
NR	1,16	Support and cooperate with water quality testing efforts in Richmond and the region	Conservation Commission	Ongoing
NR	1,17	Support the completion and updates of stream geomorphic assessments, wetland maps, and river corridor maps	Conservation Commission	Ongoing
NR	1,18	Implement feasible projects identified in the 2018 storm water master plan	Town Administration	Long Term
NR	1,19	Control road runoff and erosion by implementing and maintaining best management practices required by the Vermont Municipal Roads General Permit	Town Administration	Ongoing
NR	1,20	Integrate applicable Low Impact Development (LID) standards into land use regulations	Planning Commission	Short Term
NR	1,21	Review land use regulations to ensure compliance with all Vermont and federal regulations that provide surface water protection	Planning Commission	Short Term
NR	1,22	Support and participate in the Vermont Watershed Management Division's Tactical Basin Planning for the Winooski River and Lake Champlain basins.	Conservation Commission	Ongoing
NR	2,1	Encourage the implementation of best environmental management practices in farm or forest businesses	Conservation Commission	Ongoing
NR	2,2	Explore amending zoning regulations to allow for value-added or accessory enterprises, that are not currently exempt through state law, on farm or forest properties as a means of financially maintaining large parcels	Planning Commission	Short Term
NR	2,3	Avoid the creation of landlocked parcels during subdivision of farm or forestry lands by encouraging the maintenance of rights of way and accesses	Planning Commission	Short Term
NR	2,4	Encourage on-site projects or developments that provide ecosystem services or mitigate runoff	Conservation Commission	Ongoing
NR	2,5	Continue to support agriculturally related enterprises	Town-Wide	Ongoing
NR	2,6	Encourage Richmond residents and businesses to buy or procure locally grown foods or value-added products by providing space for markets and allowing sale of goods	Town-Wide	Ongoing
NR	2,7	Support property owner participation in the VT Use Value Appraisal (Current Use) Program, the federal Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (LESA) program, and other voluntary programs as options for land conservation and financial benefits	Conservation Commission	Ongoing
NR	3,1	Update the previously performed (2002) Scenic Viewshed Assessment to identify and map public priorities for landscape conservation, and restrict development that would compromise those identified viewsheds	Planning Commission	Short Term
NR	3,2	Encourage creative development that minimizes both visual and environmental impacts on the landscape	Planning Commission	Ongoing
NR	3,3	Adopt zoning regulations that mitigate noise pollution and light pollution	Planning Commission	Short Term
NR	3,4	Adopt zoning regulations that include Vermont's Smart Growth principles such as concentrated downtown development in order to maintain Richmond's historic settlement pattern and village character.	Planning Commission	Short Term

NR	4,1	Utilize a management plan for the Town Forest, and continually assess for necessary amendments to the plan to ensure best stewardship of that land and forest and to ensure that the requirements of the <i>Grant of Development Rights, Conservation Restrictions and Public Access Easement</i> are being met.	Town Administration, Conservation Commission, Town Forest Committee	Ongoing
NR	4,2	Manage trail development and usage on Town lands to protect neighboring property owner rights and possible sensitive natural areas or conservation priorities such as those listed previously	Planning Commission	Ongoing
NR	4,3	Create a municipal properties management policy including rights of way, access, safety, and maintenance in order to ensure both natural resource protection and proper land stewardship.	Town Administration, Conservation Commission	Short Term
NR	4,4	Control the growth and spread of invasive species on town properties.	Conservation Commission	Ongoing
NR	4,5	Utilize the conservation reserve fund to protect important natural resources and public access to them where appropriate	Conservation Commission	Ongoing
Transportation (T)	1,1	Implement high priority actions from completed planning studies, such as new sidewalks within the village along the east side of Bridge St. and 4 new crosswalks at the Bridge/Railroad/Jolina intersection as soon as is feasible. This may require identifying funding sources and/or integrating the projects into the Capital Budget's road maintenance schedule	Town Administration	Long Term
T	1,2	Support the construction of sidewalks and bike paths or line striping for cyclists on State and Town road projects. Consider making wider shoulders on Town roads, especially Cochran, Huntington, and Hinesburg Roads. Work with VTrans to prioritize rebuilding Route 2 (Main Street) including sidewalks and bicycle/pedestrian accommodation	Town Administration, Town Wide	Long Term
T	1,3	Work with partner agencies and organizations to identify and test (through pop-up demonstrations or other means) best practices in bike and pedestrian safety and implement low-cost improvements that have been identified such as better signage and road markings	Town Administration	Ongoing
T	1,4	Support Safe Routes to School and other walking projects, and road running races on town roadways	Town-Wide	Ongoing
T	1,5	Support interconnectivity of trails and connectivity of trails with destinations such as the market or park and ride in order to provide non-motorized means of travel	Town-Wide, Richmond Trails Committee	Ongoing
T	1,6	Publicize and support the Cross Vermont Trail and other public trails	Richmond Trails Committee	Ongoing
T	1,7	Consider handicap accessibility when making decisions about location of paths, parking, crosswalks, and transit routes	Town Administration	Ongoing
T	2,1	Work with VTrans to adjust the signaling at the Route 2/Bridge Street intersection to improve traffic flow and safety rating and continue to support policing and traffic management during morning and evening busy times	Town Administration	Long Term
T	2,2	Identify road segments where noise, speed, congestion or safety is/are a problem and work to develop strategies to reduce the negative impacts.	Town Administration	Long Term
T	2,3	Work with VTrans and CCRPC to keep bridges on a good maintenance and repair schedule	Town Administration	Ongoing
T	2,4	Implement pedestrian and bike traffic signage in the village and heavily bike-trafficked areas	Town Administration	Long Term
T	2,5	Implement necessary improvements for compliance with the Municipal Roads General Permit	Town Administration	Ongoing
T	2,1	Identify and upgrade undersized culverts to prevent washouts. Use best management practices for managing runoff during road construction or reconstruction.	Town Administration	Ongoing
T	2,2	Work to site new roads away from rivers and streams, and reroute or stabilize roads that are susceptible to flooding	Town Administration	Ongoing
T	2,3	Reduce stormwater runoff by using best practices and incorporating green infrastructure into town road construction, facilities and landscaping.	Town Administration	Ongoing
T	3,1	Support public and private policies, programs or other efforts that promote alternatives to single-occupancy vehicle travel such as public transit improvements, car-sharing, telecommuting, flexible work schedules and school bus usage.	Town-Wide	Ongoing

T	3,2	Work with other Chittenden County towns and the Agency of Transportation to add/expand Park and Ride facilities in Richmond and neighboring Towns to provide alternatives to the Richmond Park and Ride that is currently of inadequate capacity. Identify possible additional Park and Ride capacity space in Richmond, such as on the south side of the I89 interchange with a pedestrian crossing light at the existing interchange traffic light.	Town Administration	Long Term
T	3,3	Encourage “smart growth” development in the village center or downtown, or near transit options, to reduce car travel distances.	Planning Commission	Short Term, Ongoing
T	3,4	Support social service transportation such as SSTA, Neighbor Rides and others for elderly, disabled or other non-drivers.	Town Administration	Ongoing
T	3,5	Partner with the Mount Mansfield Modified Union school District to increase bus ridership, or create other means to reduce morning congestion at the Four Corners	Town Administration	Long Term
T	3,6	Work with the school district to examine the possibility of using school buses as a shuttle system around town during hours when buses are not transporting students	Town Administration	Long Term
Utilities & Facilities (UF)	1,1	Ensure that Volunteers Green is maintained and publicly accessible/usable for residents and visitors	Town Administration	Ongoing
UF	1,2	Follow the goals and intents of the Town Forest management plans	Town-Wide, Town Administration	Ongoing
UF	1,3	Support the efforts of the Historical Society in preserving the Round Church and its parcel	Town-Wide	Ongoing
UF	1,4	Maintain and upgrade the Town Center building and parking areas to support the needs of town officials and staff	Town Administration	Ongoing
UF	1,5	Continue to rent or lease town spaces and grounds to businesses and organizations in order to best utilize space and maintain that income	Town Administration	Ongoing
UF	1,6	Maintain and upgrade the Richmond Fire Department and Richmond Highway Department buildings	Town Administration	Ongoing
UF	1,7	Continue efforts to create an affordable solution for the police department and their facility.	Town Administration	Short Term
UF	1,8	Implement stormwater projects on town properties identified in the Stormwater Master Plan	Town Administration	Long Term
UF	1,9	Ensure that the Water and Wastewater systems meet regulatory standards and have functional capacity as needed under the Town Plan	Town Administration, Water Commission	Short Term, Ongoing
UF	1,10	Implement building improvement projects for the library in order to maintain the use of the historical building	Town Administration, Library Trustees	Long Term, Ongoing
UF	1,11	Utilize multiple funding sources in conjunction with tax resources to implement facility upgrades and maintenance in affordable ways	Town Administration	Ongoing
UF	1,12	Modernize town buildings with energy efficiency measures and accessibility measures to ensure continued usability, especially in the historic facilities	Town Administration	Long Term, Ongoing
UF	2,1	Continue to upgrade water/wastewater/stormwater infrastructure in joint projects with the highway department.	Town Administration, Water Commission	Ongoing
UF	2,2	Implement an Asset Management maintenance program in water/wastewater/stormwater and highway infrastructure and use it for a maintenance schedule.	Town Administration, Water Commission	Long Term
UF	2,3	Directly connect the capital budget to the Asset Management maintenance schedule to create collaboration and cohesion in all water/wastewater/stormwater/highway projects within the water/wastewater district.	Town Administration, Water Commission	Long Term
UF	2,4	Upgrade the water/wastewater/stormwater systems to meet functional capacity and regulatory standards	Town Administration, Water Commission	Short Term, Ongoing
UF	2,5	Extend water/wastewater/stormwater lines to protect public health and the environment where feasible	Town Administration, Water Commission	Long Term, Ongoing
UF	2,6	Encourage the upgrade of customer’s water/wastewater/stormwater connections in the service area	Town Administration, Water Commission	Ongoing
UF	2,7	Encourage upgrades that protect critical infrastructure such as the water line under the Bridge Street Bridge.	Town Administration, Water Commission	Short Term, Ongoing

UF	2,8	Seek out and utilize multiple funding sources in conjunction with possible tax resources to implement the asset management maintenance program with the least impact to water/wastewater rates and town taxes.	Town Administration, Water Commission	Short Term, Ongoing
UF	2,9	Continue to charge impact fees to offset costs of operations.	Selectboard	Ongoing
UF	3,1	Identify opportunities to work with providers to increase internet speed and availability and increase cell service coverage in town	Town Administration	Long Term
UF	3,2	Utilize and support the initiatives of the Chittenden Solid Waste District	Town-Wide, Town Administration	Ongoing
UF	3,3	Work with Vermont Electric Cooperative and Green Mountain Power to ensure all residents have access to reliable electricity	Town Administration	Ongoing

GLOSSARY

Open Meeting Law-Vermont law requiring certain timelines and transparencies regarding municipal meetings such as selectboard or planning commission meetings

Low Impact Development (LID) - Development that includes onsite treatment of stormwater runoff

Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (LESA) - Agricultural technical framework used to numerically rank parcels based on non-soil resources

Current Use (Use Value Appraisal) Program- Property tax adjustment for large agricultural or forestry parcels based on amount of land in active production

Smart Growth- Describes a pattern of land development that uses land efficiently, reinforces community vitality, protects natural resources and helps mitigate the adverse impacts of population growth. Smart growth is about promoting development that is good for the economy, community and the environment. Key benefits of smart growth include the creation of diverse housing options; protection of farm and forestland; diverse transportation options and less dependence on the automobile; greater social interaction with neighbors; lower cost for public services resulting in reduced taxes; and a higher quality of life.

Complete Streets- Designed and operated to enable safe access for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities. Complete Streets make it easy to cross the street, walk to shops, and bicycle to work. They allow buses to run on time and make it safe for people to walk to and from train stations.

Special Flood Hazard Area- The SFHA is the area where the National Flood Insurance Program's (NFIP's) floodplain management regulations must be enforced and the area where the mandatory purchase of flood insurance applies (100-year floodplain)

Off-Taker- An agreement entered between a producer and a buyer to buy/sell a certain amount of the future production. It is generally negotiated long before the construction of a facility to guarantee a market for the facility's future production and improve chances of getting financing for the installation concerned.

Net-Metered- Is a billing system that credits small customers at the full retail electric price for any excess electricity they generate and sell to their local electric company via the grid from on-site small sources such as residential rooftop solar arrays.

CSA-Community Supported Agriculture

REFERENCES + RESOURCES

- State of Vermont Municipal Planning Grant
- 2012 Richmond Town Plan
- Richmond Community Members
- Richmond Community Resilience Organization
- Richmond Conservation Commission Planning Document
- Science to Action Natural Resources Inventory
- Vermont State Wildlife Plan
- Richmond Community Data Profile (amended periodically, current draft included in this plan)
- Vermont Planning Information Center
- Bridge St. Bicycle and Pedestrian Feasibility Study
- Route 2 Scoping Study
- Richmond Town Capital Plan FY2018-FY2023
- Richmond Town Budget FY2017, FY2018
- State and regional policies
 - Title 10 V.S.A. Chapter 21, Section 481-506
 - Title 24 V.S.A. Chapter 118
 - Title 1 V.S.A. Chapter 5, Sections 310-314
 - Title 10 VSA Chapter 151
 - Title 24 VSA Chapter 76A
 - Title 24 VSA Chapter 59
 - Title 24 VSA Chapter 131
 - Title 24 VSA Chapter 117, Section 4302,
 - Title 24 VSA Chapter 117
 - Act 171
 - Act 174

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- *Clare Rock, Former Town Planner*
- *Richmond Town Personnel*
- *Richmond Planning Commission*
- *Richmond Town Plan Steering Committee*
- *Richmond Conservation Commission*
- *Richmond Residents*
- *Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission*

MAP INDEX

(Maps included within the technical plans in print version)

- **Recreation**
- **Education**
- **Emergency Resilience**
- **Potential Solar Energy Resource**
- **Potential Wind Energy Resource**
- **Current Land Use**
- **Future Land Use**
- **Richmond Village Center Designation**
- **Historic Resources**
- **Housing**
- **Hydrologic Features**
- **Agricultural Soils**
- **Ridgelines and Steep Slopes**
- **Forest Blocks and Wildlife Habitat**
- **Current Use and Conserved Areas**
- **Transportation**
- **Utilities & Facilities**

RICHMOND ALMANAC

A companion resource to the Richmond Town Plan

CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION
2. COMMUNITY OVERVIEW
 - Geography + Land Use
 - Demographics
 - History
 - Government
 - Education
 - Community Facilities + Recreation
3. ECONOMY
4. BASIC NEEDS + SERVICES
 - Housing
 - Transportation
 - Energy and Utilities
 - Healthcare
5. ENVIRONMENT + CONSERVATION

INTRODUCTION

HOW CAN YOU GET VERY FAR, IF YOU DON'T KNOW WHO YOU ARE? HOW CAN YOU DO WHAT YOU OUGHT, IF YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'VE GOT?

- BENJAMIN HOFF, THE TAO OF POOH

In 2016 and 2017, the Town of Richmond launched **Our Town, Our Future** – a broad community visioning process that engaged hundreds of community members in describing the future they want for Richmond. The new vision serves as the framework for Richmond's 2018 Town Plan – a guiding document that maps out a path to achieving our vision.

Extensive community input is crucial to charting that path and identifying the needs, opportunities and strategies that lie ahead. Equally important is data – quantitative and qualitative information about conditions in the community today, an inventory of assets and characteristics, historic trends and patterns, and future projections.

The Richmond Community Almanac is a place to pull together all of that data and information. It is essential to informing and underlying our Town Plan and our strategies moving forward. It serves as a snapshot of the community at this moment in time. And we hope it will become an important community resource, of interest and value to a wide variety of community members and leaders.

GEOGRAPHY + LAND USE

The natural diversity of the 22,022 acres (34.41 sq. miles) that comprise Richmond's landscape is a reflection of the town's location astride the boundary of two of Vermont's physiographic regions: the Northern Green Mountains and the Champlain Lowlands. The landscape is dominated by foothills, which reach 1,640 feet at the town's highest elevation, and is bisected by the Winooski River, which carves out the town's lowest point at 250 feet where it flows through the lowlands into Jericho. With the exception of the extreme southwest corner of the town (which eventually drains into the LaPlatte River), the Richmond landscape is contained within the Winooski River Watershed.

The foothills are given their shape by the underlying metamorphic bedrock, which has slowly been eroding since its formation over 500 million years ago. The bedrock is part of the Mansville Complex, and is composed primarily of the Pinnacle Formation (mainly metawackes) and the Underhill Formation (mainly chlorite schist). Although the bedrock can be seen outcropping in numerous locations throughout the town, it is largely mantled by sediments left behind as the Laurentide ice sheet retreated from the landscape 10,000 years ago. Glacial till, a mix of particles ranging in size from clay to boulders, is the dominant surficial material above 600 feet, whereas gravels, sands and silts are common in the valleys where ancient river terraces and deltas are exposed. Clay deposits can also be

found in the lowlands, evidence that Lake Vermont (a precursor to Lake Champlain) once inundated the major river valleys with glacial meltwater for a period about 12,000 years ago.

The 74 different types of soil found in Richmond are a manifestation of the underlying geological diversity. The youngest (and most fertile) soils are found in the Winooski River floodplain, where frequent high-water events deposit fresh alluvial material on a regular basis. The soils in the higher elevations that formed in glacial till are rocky and of moderate fertility and most were abandoned agriculturally over 100 years ago. The Richmond landscape, which is approximately 80% forested, supports a diversity of natural communities. Northern hardwoods, with major components of sugar maple, red oak, white pine, and hemlock, dominate the uplands. The lowland areas that are not developed or in active agriculture are composed primarily of silver maple-dominated floodplain forests.

With the completion of the interstate in the 1960s Richmond became more readily accessible from Burlington, Montpelier and other major centers of employment. This coincided with the development of the IBM facility in Essex Junction. Together, these two factors translated into a significant increase in residential development in Richmond in the 1970s and 1980s. Some of this newer development has followed the typical linear pattern along rural roadsides. However, several subdivisions of 20 lots or more have also been constructed in the last two decades. Generally, these subdivisions offer a more compact pattern of development, in some cases incorporating open space to be protected for the future.

Many land parcels in Richmond have been broken up into tracts of 5 acres and less. Large parcels still exist in town, principally in floodplain areas, where most of the land is devoted to agriculture or recreation, and in steep upland areas which are not suited to development. The upland parcels are most commonly managed for timber production. Land suitable for development has become scarce in Richmond and surrounding towns because of growth and topography, resulting in more pressure to subdivide large parcels. Looking to the future, the commercial and residential growth that has taken place in neighboring towns is likely to put further pressure on land values in Richmond.

Due to the presence of excellent river valley soils and a relatively moderate climate, agriculture has always been an important land use in Richmond. Despite the development pressures of the last several decades and the decline of small family farms, Richmond still has an active agricultural community, with 21 parcels classified as "Farm" in the 2005 Grand List. These include dairy farms, beef farms, vegetable and fruit farms, and other agricultural operations. Several farm properties have more than one product. In addition, several landowners in Richmond harvest timber periodically from their land.

Richmond village has typical small town housing density with interspersed business and commercial units. Approximately 275 (or 17%) of the Town's 1,600 dwelling units are located in the central village. This village has seen a revival of its commercial core in recent years, with the renovation of the Goodwin Baker Building for offices, several new businesses and restaurants along Bridge Street, new commercial and residential development in the Railroad Street area, and new residential development at the end of Church Street. Additionally, the old cheese factory lot on Jolina Court is slated for redevelopment. The Jonesville area has small village housing density with approximately 70 houses, two apartment buildings and a small group of commercial buildings. Riverview Commons, the Town's largest mobile home community, has approximately 150 units.

Finally, Richmond has seen a significant increase in the amount of land devoted to recreation in the last 15 years. Volunteers' Green has expanded to include approximately 22 acres of land for baseball, soccer and other recreational sports, as well as a playground and band shell. The Richmond Land Trust has conserved parcels totaling approximately 660 acres, many of which are available for hiking, cross-country skiing, swimming, nature study and other recreational pursuits. Hunting and fishing continue to be popular both on public and private lands. The Town of Richmond Recreation Path Committee and the Richmond Land Trust have developed approximately 7 miles of recreation paths along the Winooski River, Old Jericho Road and upland parcels. These trails are used year round and have become an important recreational asset for the Town. Even though the Town and the Land Trust have made significant gains as noted above, there is still a shortage in the amount of land available for more developed facilities and programs, such as those needed for school sports and adult and youth league sports.

DEMOGRAPHICS

A comprehensive summary of Census data is available as a separate appendix to the Town Plan. This data exists in Excel spreadsheets that are two cumbersome to incorporate into this document. Demographic data available in this survey include; Population, Population by Gender, Population by Race, Social Characteristics, Language, Ancestry, Relationships & Households, Housing, Housing Finances, Businesses, Employment, Industry, Income,

Selected Economic Indicators, Poverty, Commuting, Educational Attainment, School Enrollment, Chittenden County Comparison, Historic Population Comparison, County Growth Over Time, and ERP Projections.

A formal, comprehensive census is conducted every, 10 years (1990, 2000, 2010, etc.) by the US Census Bureau. Data available during off-years is based on the American Community Survey (ACS) conducted by the US Census Bureau, but not as rigorous as the census. The most current year of data available, at the drafting of the Town Plan, is from the 2016 ACS. The following information is excerpted from this data, however, it is strongly recommended to review the spreadsheets for a comprehensive understanding of Richmond demographics.

The 2010 census indicated there were 4,090 people, 1,504 households, and 1,100 families residing in the town. As of 2016, ACS estimates indicate there were 4,114 people, and 1,630 households, and 1,089 families. This represents a population increase of 24 (0.2%), a reduction in families by 11 (-1%), but an increase in households of 26 (8.3%). In the same time span, the number of children, 19 and younger, went from 1,258 to 1,061, a decline of 16%. Meanwhile, those 65 or older went from 277 to 466, an increase of 68%.

In 2000, racial makeup of the town was 98% self-identified as White and less than 1% each: African American, Native American, Asian, Pacific Islander, Other. Hispanic or Latino of any race were less than 1 % of the population. The 2010 census indicates there has only been a slight change in these statistics: 97% White, and remaining races still all less than 1%. Total number of people living in poverty changed from 5.1% to 5.2%.

In 2010, there were 1,586 households out of which 35.1% had children under the age of 18 living with them, 59.7% were married couples living together, 9.3% had a female householder with no husband present, and 27.2% were non-families. 4.7% households had someone living alone who was 65 years of age or older. The average household size was 2.56 and the average family size was 2.94.

In the town, the population was spread out with 27.3% up to the age of 19, 3.2% from 20 to 24, 25% from 25 to 44, 34.9% from 45 to 64, and 9.5% who were 65 years of age or older. The median age was 41.7 years. For every 100 females there were 95.7 males. For every 100 females, there were 96.0 males.

As of 2015, the median income for a household in the town was \$57,499. Males had an average income of \$66,270 versus \$48,729 for females. About 10% of the population was below the poverty line.

HISTORY

The first inhabitants of Richmond were indigenous people, who utilized the natural resources and topographic features important for travel, hunting, and food. Paleo-Indians are believed to be the first Vermonters and undoubtedly traveled through and hunted in Richmond. They were hunters and gatherers and lived in the Champlain Lowlands between 12,000 and 9,500 years ago. Archaic Indians lived here from 9,500 to 3,000 years ago. The Winooski River was also a common highway for the Abenaki Indians after 1,000 A.D. between Lake Champlain and the Connecticut River.

An important archaeological site was discovered in 1809 in Jonesville, with arrowheads and stone utensils discovered in an area off Wes White Hill Road. In 1995, a nearby site was excavated as part of the engineering project to replace the bridge over the Huntington River. At that site, new findings showed the site was used on a seasonal basis by Abenaki Indians beginning around 1400 A.D., who developed a small camp or residential base for gathering food and hunting for a wide variety of fur-bearing mammals. Excavation showed that at least 11 different species of mammals were brought back to the site, including bear, deer, beaver, cottontail rabbit, chipmunk, red squirrel, muskrat, porcupine, fisher, mink, and skunk. The seasonal residents hunted within the Winooski River Valley and more upland areas, particularly the Green Mountains and area around Gillett Pond and its surrounding wetlands. Artifacts at the site also showed evidence that the Abenaki Indians had some contact with St. Lawrence Iroquois and perhaps with areas of New York near the Hudson River.

Throughout the 17th and well into the 18th century, Vermont served as a passageway for the French and Indian raiding parties harassing English settlers to the south and east, and also served as a slave corridor where captured whites were driven north to Canada. European settlement of Vermont did not begin until the Treaty of Paris ended the French and Indian War in 1763. In 1793, Governor Wentworth of NH granted a significant area of southern Williston to Solomon Bates. This became part of Richmond when Richmond was granted township status in 1794. The Bates farm remained in the Bates family until 1986. The farmhouse remains today and the barn is now Birds Eye Building Co., which was restored to modern use. In 1775, Amos Brownson and John Chamberlain established homesteads in the area known as "the flats" which was at that time a part of the Williston Township. This early settlement coincided with the advent of the American Revolution when Vermont settlements on the borders of civilization were vulnerable to Indian attack. A man and a child were killed at the Chamberlain homestead before

Richmond's settlers, along with nearly all the other families in Chittenden County, abandoned their new homes and fled to the south for safety.

After the Revolutionary War in 1784, Brownson and Chamberlain returned, other settlers arrived, and settlements were built in areas which were then portions of Huntington, Bolton, Jericho and Williston. Portions of these settlements formed what became Richmond. After petitioning the State, Richmond was granted township status in 1794, and has the distinction of being the first town chartered by the newly formed State of Vermont. By the time the census was taken in 1800, Richmond had grown to a population of 718. Formal community responsibility began with the first Town Meeting in March 1795.

Two forms of commerce were visible in early Richmond: agriculture and trading. The latter was secondary to farming, dependent primarily upon the produce raised by local farmers. Wool and grain, the chief commodities in the early years gave way to milk and dairy products in the mid- 1800's. Cheese and butter were made in local factories and shipped to market. Business activity was enhanced by Richmond's proximity to the Turnpike Road (US Route 2). Travelers on the difficult 60-mile trip between Burlington and Montpelier found Richmond a natural over-night stop.

The farmer, needing the cash to pay for the products and services offered in town, found his woodland could bring him some revenue. Lumber was in demand, and ships sailed daily from Burlington carrying away much of the wealth of Vermont's forests. Hardwood not sold as lumber was burned to make potash. Smoke spiraling upward behind many farm homes told of the stripping of forestland. Within 100 years after the first settlers arrived, the valleys and hillsides were denuded of their ancient cover. The loss of this resource paved the way for the devastating floods of the twentieth century. As the community grew to a population of 1,453 in 1850 transportation and communication became important. The turnpike was improved in 1849, the same year that the railroad was completed. Richmond's business district began to shift to the north of the river to be nearer to the turnpike and the railroad. Telegraph service linked Richmond with the rest of the country also in 1849.

With new and expanded markets available, it became profitable to operate factories and businesses in Richmond. H.C. Gleason opened a creamery in 1885, the Borden Company established a milk processing plant, and a cooperative creamery began to operate. At that time, Richmond was the second largest shipper of butter and cheese in the State of Vermont. The creamery site is now being rehabilitated. Other industries in this thriving community of the 1800's were: a carriage manufacturing steam sawmill, furniture factory, paper mill, spool factory, woolen mill, spoke factory, cider mill, several grist mills, and a steam mechanics shop. Businesses dealing in drugs, furniture, dry goods, groceries, hardware, tin ware, harness making, jewelry, millinery, blacksmithing, confections, boots and shoes, marble and woodenware were available to the Richmond resident.

One of the items of business transacted at Town Meeting on December 6, 1796 was the decision to obtain a site for a meetinghouse. Isaac Gleason and Thomas Whitcomb donated land on which to erect a structure that could serve as a combined meeting house and house of worship. Construction was begun in 1812 on what was to become Richmond's most famous building, the Round Church. Money to pay for the building was raised by selling pews, with no preference given to anyone because of religious creed. Because of the several religious denominations contributing time and money toward building the church, and holding services there, it has been referred to as the first "community church."

The Round Church ceased to be used for religious services in 1879 but continued to serve the town as a meetinghouse until 1973 when State regulations declared the church unsafe for public use. In 1976 the town deeded the church to the Richmond Historical Society for forty years so that restoration could proceed with federal assistance.

Education has deep roots in Richmond. One of the first examples of community responsibility occurring at the June 5, 1795 Town Meeting was the division of Richmond into six school districts. Each of the six schools was then supported by voluntary taxation until 1826 when taxes were levied to cover school expenditures. In 1903, three young women formed the first class to graduate from the newly built Richmond High School.

At the turn of the century, Richmond began to acquire some of the hallmarks of twentieth century living. In the early 1900's R. J. Robinson opened the first electric light plant on Dugway Road at the Huntington Gorge, which was subsequently purchased by Green Mountain Power. Western Telephone and Telegraph offered their service from an office in the old Jonesville Hotel. Later, a movie theater on Bridge Street, advertised "good clean pictures for young and old" on Wednesday and Saturday evenings. This theater building was later converted to a shirt factory, and now stands empty.

Several companies in the early 1900's provided jobs for those seeking employment off the numerous farms in Richmond. The Layfield Underwear Factory employed 150 women in the building, which later became the Cellucord Factory and is now the Goodwin Baker Building. Borden Milk Products Company bought and expanded the Vermont Condensed Milk Company and provided work for 125 men. Other employers were the Richmond Cooperative Creamery and Harrington's smokehouse, and Plant & Griffith Lumber Company and Lane's Woodturning Plant.

A catastrophic fire blazed in the Incorporated Village of Richmond on the night of April 23, 1908. Flames destroyed much of the business section of the town including: two hotels, a drug store, a meat market, fruit store, hardware store, town offices, library, dentist's office and several residences. In just a few hours the whole Masonic block and more was blackened and useless. Showing a true spirit of resiliency, the people soon began rebuilding, but much of what was lost could not be replaced.

Another disaster, a devastating flood, overwhelmed Richmond in November 1927. Damage in Richmond alone was set at \$239,000. Losses included two large bridges and eight small ones (including two covered bridges), long stretches of highway and railroad tracks, Lane's Wood Turning Plant in Jonesville, and many houses, barns and livestock. Many businesses and the school suffered heavy damage, but were able to reopen. In September 2011, tropical storm Irene struck the region causing devastating damage to the Winooski River basin and much of Richmond.

As was the case with many small Vermont towns, Richmond's population began a steady decline during the Great Depression. This trend was reversed in the 1960s as a result of new regional employers coming into Chittenden County. In 1989, voters in the Incorporated Village of Richmond and the Town of Richmond voted to merge the two municipalities. Currently Richmond boasts a number of fine traditions as evidence of its community spirit. Examples include the annual July 4th Parade and the annual Pilgrimage at the Round Church. Additional community activities are centered on Volunteers' Green, home to a very active Little League, a growing youth soccer program, a summer concert series, and Richmond's Farmers Market. In 1999, the Town hosted the first State Veteran's Day Parade. The historic village pattern, essential to the quality of life in Richmond, is threatened by suburbanization and auto dependence.

With a growing population and changes in development patterns, traditions that encourage small town neighborliness and civic involvement are threatened. Although the community benefits from the aesthetic value of historic buildings in Richmond, the expense of maintaining them falls to private landowners. Richmond's residents enjoy the benefits of open lands, farms and forests, but the financial burden to maintain these lands rests almost solely with the individual landowner. Richmond's historic truss bridges add to the aesthetic and historic character of the town and provide traffic calming benefits. It is expensive for the town to maintain these bridges. Richmond's archeological sites are important cultural resources that are threatened by increased development.

GOVERNMENT

Richmond operates under a town manager form of government. Richmond's town administration currently consists of a Selectboard, town clerk, town manager, town manager assistant, financial director, zoning administrator, town planner, highway department, water and wastewater department, police department, and fire department. There is a conservation commission, a planning commission, and a development review board. The elected and appointed officials who serve the Town of Richmond are a dedicated group who are committed to serving the public.

The Selectboard is a panel of 7 Richmond citizens, elected at Town Meeting Day on a rotating schedule so as not to lose all experienced board members at once. The Selectboard serves as the town's chief elected legislative body.

Town Manager is hired by the Selectboard. The town manager acts as the municipality's chief administrative officer. Under this system, the Selectboard sets policy, while the manager implements policy, oversees the day-to-day operations of town government, and has many other statutory duties. Departments under the town manager's responsibility include administration, finance, planning and zoning, fire, highway, police, water and wastewater resources.

Town Clerk is elected at Town Meeting Day. The Town Clerk is responsible for; recording land records, filing and indexing birth, death and marriage certificates, dog licensing and notarial services. There are multiple boards and commissions that are appointed by the Selectboard and aid in Richmond government functions.

Much of the public safety in Richmond relies on the Richmond Police, Fire Department, and Highway Department, with support from the Chittenden County Sheriff, and Vermont State Police. The Richmond Rescue ambulance service is a non-government entity based in Richmond Village and serving the surrounding communities. Crime

rates are low in Richmond compared to other Chittenden County towns, but Chittenden County overall has a higher crime rate than most other counties due to its more urban nature.

EDUCATION

Richmond belongs to the Mount Mansfield Modified Union School District. Over the years, the Richmond Elementary School, Camels Hump Middle School and Mount Mansfield Union High School have gained the reputation for providing a quality education. This is reflected in both State and National Awards. The excellent reputation of our schools continues to be due to the dedication and hard work of the teachers and support staff, the members of the School Boards, the school administrative staffs, the willingness of the residents of the Town to support their efforts, parent volunteers, and the students. Every effort must be made to maintain an excellent educational experience for all students. The mission of the MMMUSD is to provide learning opportunities that are relevant and meet high standards.

The Richmond Elementary School (RES) was constructed in 1987, with an addition in 1995. There are 23 classrooms. The gym holds 144 individuals and the cafeteria 100. There is no auditorium. The Camels Hump Middle School (CHMS) was built in 1972, with an addition in 1994. It is one of two middle schools in the district, along with Brown's River Middle School. There are 25 classrooms, and a gym/auditorium that holds up to 175 individuals. Mount Mansfield Union High School (MMU) was constructed in 1967, with an addition in 1997. There are 56 classrooms, a gym that holds 780 and an auditorium that holds 450. A relatively small number of Richmond Students are in Home Study Programs.

Richmond faces a difficult problem in transporting students to their respective schools. In order to be accomplished efficiently, elementary, middle and high school students all need to share buses from their neighborhoods. This creates a system of bus runs that are planned by numbers of students, length of route and time spent picking up and discharging students guided by a strict schedule. The School District covers a large, elongated area and the logistics of transporting students are challenging. Though it is not mandated by the State, District School Boards always have supported the provision of transportation, especially given the spread-out nature of our District.

Community volunteerism also continues to be a vital part of our school system. This involves the extensive activities of Richmond residents individually and through the PTO, active community involvement in the several fund-raisers that take place annually, and the involvement and support of many local businesses. The community partnership sponsors many school-based and community events in the five towns with business, government, faith, parental and youth involvement, and funding through grants and volunteer efforts.

The Schools provide a number of non-educational services to the Town. These include a location for Town meetings, rooms in which various local government and non-government groups meet, both indoor and outdoor recreation facilities, and emergency evacuation sites (CHMS and RES).

Camels Hump Middle School is typical of many school buildings within the state in terms of resources available during times of emergency, having a generator, an auditorium, parking, bathroom and shower facilities, a kitchen and smaller areas such as classrooms, which can be used for overnight accommodations. Richmond Elementary School has all of these with the exception of showers, auditorium, and generator capacity. A recent inspection of the generator capacity at CHMS, however, indicated that although it provides sufficient power for emergency lighting it does not have sufficient capacity to run a heating system, water supply or lighting for emergency use.

In addition to education for school-aged children, child care is an important element of Richmond's educational infrastructure. Child care is especially important for families in which both parents work and single-parent headed households, particularly during the summer months and after school hours. In addition to their social benefits, childcare facilities provide local employment opportunities and can help to build the Town's grand list.

As required by State law, Small Day Care Homes serving no more than six children are permitted wherever single family homes are permitted, and require no additional permit if occurring within an existing single family home. Larger Day Care Centers are allowed as permitted uses with DRB site plan review in the Village Commercial and Commercial Zoning Districts and as a conditional use in all other zoning districts except the Industrial/Commercial Zoning District. This additional review for larger facilities is necessary to address issues such as screening, parking and traffic that may have an impact on surrounding properties.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES + RECREATION

The Town recognizes that conservation, outdoor recreation and open space lands are increasingly important to the wellbeing of Town residents. In order to facilitate preservation of these lands while respecting the property rights of their owners, the Planning Commission will explore creative development techniques which may include building

envelopes, planned unit and planned residential development, clustering, fixed area and sliding scale zoning, overlay districts, conservation subdivision design, and transfer of development rights.

Recreational activities and facilities within the Town of Richmond are organized Recreation Path Committee and the Recreation Committee. The Recreation Path Committee, as its name implies, focuses its efforts on trails and related amenities within Richmond. These include the trails at Volunteers’ Green, the Rivershore Path, the Safford Preserve Trail, and the Old Jericho Road trail.

In addition to the variety of publicly owned areas, there are many privately owned amenities available to Richmond residents. The Richmond Land Trust (RLT), a nonprofit group, allows for public access to many of its owned parcels including areas along the Winooski River (Warren and Ruth Beeken Rivershore Preserve), the Safford Preserve, and the Rochford-del Bianco Preserve. Other private facilities require fees for their usage or have established easements related to certain uses (e.g. Vermont Association of Snow Travelers. [VAST] trails). Richmond also exhibits an active hunting and fishing community that enjoys the quality of publicly accessible forests and streams, as well as the generosity of private landowners allowing use of their lands. Hunting and fishing are traditions for many residents, and can serve as an integral part of wildlife management. These activities also attract a number of visitors to the town.

Publicly owned sites

Richmond Elementary School	Ballfield, playground, gym
Camels Hump Middle	Ballfield, gym, presentation center, outdoor basketball court
Mt. Mansfield Union High (Jericho)	Ballfield, track, nature trail
Volunteers Green	Ballfields, playground, canoe access, band shell, restrooms
Brown’s Court	Ballfield
Old Round Church Green	Benches
Old Jericho Road Path	Recreation path
Lake Iroquois	Public beach, fishing, bathhouse and concession stand
Robbins Mountain Wildlife Area	Hiking

Privately owned sites

Gillett Pond	Canoeing, skating, picnicking, bird watching, fishing
Safford Preserve, Rochford-del Bianco Preserve, Huntington River Lower Gorge Warren and Ruth Beeken Rivershore Preserve	Canoeing, hiking, nature study, mountain biking, snowshoeing, fishing
Huntington River, Upper Gorge	Swimming, picnicking, photography
Twin Hills Girl Scout Camp	Camping, hiking
Long Trail	Hiking
VAST Trails	Snowmobiling
Trail under power lines to Pinnacle	Hiking
Chittenden County Fish and Game Club range	Fishing, camping, picnicking, archery, snowshoeing, hiking, shooting
Cochran Ski Area	Skiing, Mountain Biking
VYCC Monitor Barn Property	Outdoor Education
Prelco Property	Hiking only

Access and allowed uses vary from property to property. Use of some properties may be restricted based on organizational membership or fees. Inclusion in this table does not necessarily signify public access.

The Richmond Free Library was established in 1888 and is currently housed in the renovated Universalist Church, now owned by the Town. Since 1979, the library has met Vermont Public Library standards. Music rooms on the third floor can be used for music lessons, tutoring, and small group meetings, while the community room on the second floor is available for larger meetings and assemblies. The library continues to need additional floor space for new shelving, computers and multi-media storage.

ECONOMY

In order to develop its economy, protect its environment, and preserve its sense of place, Richmond will continue to develop as dynamic village areas, including the village, an additional village center in Jonesville as well as smaller residential hamlets in other areas of town, and several outlying areas that have been designated “commercial” and/or “industrial” through the planning process, surrounded by a rural landscape. Development will be encouraged in existing village areas to maximize the efficiency of town services, to promote accessibility to existing services and resources, and to minimize the fragmentation of our rural areas. The Richmond village will serve as the social and economic hub of our community and efforts will be made to maintain the historical integrity of our growth center.

Trends in transportation costs and fuel prices could make Richmond’s farms and forests even more valuable, as more people turn to local sources for food, and more homes and businesses switch to burning wood to save on heating costs. However, other trends in our global economy make it more difficult than ever for small farms and forestry operations to make a profit. Reversing these trends will take not only innovative public initiatives but also the conscious effort of residents to buy locally produced foods whenever possible.

Most Richmond businesses continue to thrive and several new businesses have cropped up in the last five years. Local small business is crucial to the success of Richmond as a community and as an economy. Employment within Richmond itself is scarcer than in the surrounding communities. More employment opportunities lie in the greater Burlington and Montpelier areas.

HOUSING

Trends in housing construction and stock in Richmond closely track changes in demographics and the economy. The amount, type and location of housing in Richmond has changed significantly over time, as the population has shifted and the economy has changed. What’s available today primarily reflects the needs during Richmond’s greatest period of growth – the 1960s. Our challenge moving forward is to ensure that Richmond’s housing stock meets the needs of today and tomorrow.

From the founding of Richmond up to the 1950s, most housing consisted of single-family homes and farms. Homes were clustered in village centers (such as Jonesville and Fay’s Corner), and farms were distributed across the rural landscape.

The 1960s-1980s marked a period of rapid growth in Richmond, with the population growing from 1,303 to 3,159 (including an increase of more than 70% in the 1960s alone). Housing stock likewise grew rapidly to accommodate the increase in residents. More than 400 housing units were constructed during the 1970s, and this mid-century housing still forms a large percentage of Richmond’s housing stock today.

Growth slowed in the early 2000s for the first time in 50 years, in conjunction with the economic downturn. Since 2010, the town has experienced very little population growth (an increase of about 50 people from 2000 to 2014), and housing units have only increased 8% in that time.

The majority of the housing stock today consists of low-density single-family homes that were built in the latter half of the 1900s. The majority is located throughout the large geographic area defined as the Agriculture/Residential Zoning District, where the minimum lot size is 1 acre. Richmond is more rural than most of Chittenden County, with housing more spread out across the landscape, but housing density is greater than in adjacent towns like Bolton and Huntington. Most homes in Richmond are owner-occupied housing, and that number increased slightly from 80% in 2000 to 82% in 2010. This is significantly higher than Chittenden County overall at 65%, where many more homes are occupied by renters.

That corresponds with demographics: younger residents (25-34 years of age) are more likely to live in renter-occupied units. Richmond’s vacancy rate is lower than that (4%), meaning that options are limited for people seeking housing.

A “healthy” housing vacancy rate is 5%.

Aside from single-family homes, mobile homes are the most common alternative. Most (75%) are concentrated in the Riverview Commons Mobile Home Park, which has 150 lots.

Richmond's population predictions show a relatively stable population over the next 10-15 years (ranging from a decline of about 180 people to an increase of about 35 people). That means that there will not be a significant demand for new housing based on population alone. Richmond's demographics will change significantly, however, which will create demand for different types of housing. The number of older residents is increasing, while the number of children and young adults is shrinking.

Housing costs are a major component of affordability overall. They generally include mortgage or rent, property taxes and insurance. Additional costs related to housing include heating and cooling, power and electric, and other utilities such as water and sewer. Based upon Vermont State Statute, "affordable housing" means "Housing that is owned by its inhabitants whose gross annual household income does not exceed 80 percent of the county median income." Housing is considered affordable when less than 30% of household income goes toward housing costs. Richmond home values and rental costs are higher than in other Chittenden County towns. "Affordable housing" in Richmond is very limited in part due to the types of housing stock. But even housing that is traditionally considered affordable costs more than average in Richmond. Rental costs for Richmond specific apartments is not available, but in 2015, the average fair market rent for a 2-bedroom apartment in the greater Burlington area was \$1,328 a month. A renter would need to earn \$25.54 per hour to afford that rent, or \$53,120 per year. In Richmond, the median household income for renters is only \$34,444, which is particularly challenging for low-income families, single-earner households, seniors, or young adults entering the workforce.

"Workforce housing" is another way of evaluating affordability. Workforce housing is generally considered to be housing that is affordable for people who fill core community jobs, such as police officers, teachers, cashiers, trades people and highway maintenance workers. The Richmond Annual Report (FY 2014/2015) shows that highway personnel earn \$10 - \$17 an hour and police officers earn \$14 - \$23 an hour, which is far below the income needed to afford most Richmond housing. The median income of renter households in Richmond is \$34,444, which is \$18,676 less than what is needed to afford that average fair market rent. Additionally, based upon census data 49% of Richmond renters do pay 35% or more of monthly income for rent. Mobile homes tend to be an affordable option in Vermont, but Riverview Commons is one of the largest – and most expensive – mobile home parks. The average lot rent at Riverview Commons increased by 8.9% from 2010-2014, and is now \$420 per month – 31% more expensive than the state average (according to data from the Vermont Department of Housing and Community Development). The Vermont Directory of Affordable Rental Housing shows a total of 32 affordable units in Richmond, representing less than 2% of Richmond's housing stock; half are reserved for elderly and/or disabled residents.

Most homeowners have home insurance that covers the structure and the owner's possessions; basic insurance is typically required in order to get a mortgage. Renters may choose to purchase Renters' Insurance, which covers personal property kept within the rented unit. Homeowners living in floodplains and flood-prone areas may choose (or be required to) take out flood insurance as well. Flood insurance costs are typically high, but Richmond is a participating member of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), which means that homeowners can purchase NFIP flood insurance. As of September 30, 2015 there were 56 residential properties that carried flood insurance in Richmond. Richmond is one of the top 10 towns in the State with the highest number of structures in the floodplain. Based upon information from the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), two inches of floodwater in the living area of an average 2,000 square foot home would result in over \$20,000 of damages.

Flood insurance costs are getting even higher due to changes in the NFIP and increasing losses and claims across the country. The long-term rates and costs are still uncertain, but it's clear that living in a floodplain is a costly business. In order to participate in the NFIP, Richmond is required to administer specific floodplain zoning regulations. Currently, the Richmond flood hazard regulations exceed the NFIP's threshold requirements and do not allow for any new housing units to be built in the floodplain. Furthermore if a home has sustained substantial damage or is planning a substantial improvement the home must seek zoning approval and incorporate flood-proofing measures to reduce risk, which also reduces insurance premiums. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) provides funding to NFIP municipalities to purchase and remove structures in the floodplain and provides funding to help elevate houses above the base flood elevation, which eliminates or reduces the potential for future flood damages.

TRANSPORTATION

Most Richmond residents have and rely on standard cars, but demand is increasing for a wide variety of transportation options, from bus and rail service to bikeable and walkable streets and trails and electric vehicles.

Richmond includes some infrastructure or support for a diverse range of transportation modes, but options are limited for anything other than personal vehicles. Most Richmond residents own at least one car, and we have approximately 85 miles of roadway (including state-owned, town-owned and private). We also maintain extensive road infrastructure to support them, including more than 30 bridges and 712 culverts. Richmond also maintains numerous parking spaces and lots; a 2015 study showed that most public lots are sufficient for parking volumes, but the Depot Street Lot is overburdened. While electric vehicle popularity is growing, there are currently no known public charging stations for electric vehicles in Richmond (or anywhere between Montpelier and Williston).

Changing demographics and regional growth do impact traffic patterns and volumes locally. Traffic counts overall are relatively stable, or even decreasing on many roads. At the same time, increased volumes and congestion are causing problems on certain key community routes and choke points— such as the Route 2 and Bridge Street intersection, which also has the worst safety rating in town. The majority of Richmond residents (82%) commute out of town for work, the largest employment centers are Williston/South Burlington/Burlington, and Waterbury/Montpelier.

Richmond has a popular Park N Ride near Interstate 89, which enables carpooling and access to an I-89 commuter bus, but most commuters (88%) still travel in personal vehicles. There is no weekend or evening bus service and no stop or access point in the downtown or villages. A rail line runs through Richmond, carrying freight and the once-daily Amtrak passenger service, but there are no stops in Richmond. The supplemental ride service Neighbor Rides helps fill transportation gaps for seniors or those with disabilities or special needs, but there are no supplemental ride services for most residents.

Active or human-powered transportation (primarily biking and walking) is increasingly popular among many residents, for its many benefits – recreation, health, sustainability, convenience, affordability, energy efficiency and more. Richmond has a sidewalk system in the village area, which helps improve safety and vibrancy downtown, but there is no dedicated infrastructure to support biking or walking outside the village, or to make these options safer. Richmond has long held a goal of improving bikeability and walkability, and it was one of the most common themes during the visioning process. Several studies, including our Bike and Pedestrian Master Plan, detail specific recommendations and locations for bike lanes, signage, sidewalk extensions and other high priority improvements. Richmond conducted a pop-up installation of high priority enhanced crosswalks in the village during this planning process, and found a need for updated and potentially relocated crosswalks in the village.

Road maintenance and construction are among the greatest costs to the town; reducing vehicle use and improving road resilience are critical strategies for controlling municipal costs and tax rates and meeting energy goals. Improvements to transportation infrastructure are also expensive, but can be minimized by integrating them into other planned upgrades (such as paving projects or bridge replacements) and by using pop-up design demonstrations to test and refine designs before final installation.

ENERGY

This section is intended to support Richmond’s “Enhanced Energy Planning,” effort, which is needed to advance the State’s energy goals. The State’s energy goals are:

- To obtain 90% of all energy across all sectors (transportation, heating and electricity) from renewable sources by 2050, with the interim goals of 25% renewable by 2025 and 40% renewable by 2035;
- To reduce total energy consumption per capita by 15% by 2025, and by more than one third by 2050;
- To weatherize 25% of homes by 2020; and
- To reduce greenhouse gases by 50% from 1990 levels by 2028; and 75% by 2050.

The data provides an overview of current energy use and set targets for advancing the State’s 2050 goals for energy use from heating, transportation, electricity, as well as the State’s 2050 goals for renewable energy generation. Intermediate targets for 2025 and 2035 provide each municipality with checkpoints towards meeting these goals. Consistency with the goals above is measured through the Vermont Department of Public Service’s “Energy Planning Standards for Municipal Plans.” For the full standards, visit the Department of Public Service’s website: <http://publicservice.vermont.gov/content/act-174-recommendations-and-determination-standards>. The data in this document meet the *Analysis and Targets* section of the Standards (Standards 4 and 5).

The projections in this guide are consistent with the ECOS Plan’s Metropolitan Transportation Plan scenario.

A. Current Energy Use and Generation

The data below are from various sources and represent actual current consumption and generation, rather than estimates from the Long-Range Energy Alternatives (LEAP) model. Estimates from the LEAP model are shown in Section B.

Table A1. Current Municipal Transportation Energy Use

Fossil Fuel Burning Light Duty Vehicles, 2015	3,103
Electric Light Duty Vehicles, July 2017	20
<i>Sources: DMV, Drive Electric Vermont</i>	

Table A2. Number of Homes Heating with Delivered Fuels, 2015

Number of homes heating with Fuel oil, Kerosene	694 homes (44% of homes)
Number of homes heating with Propane	380 homes (24% of homes)
Percentage of Households Heating with Delivered Fuels	66% of homes
<i>Sources: American Community Survey 2011-2015 5 Year Estimate</i>	

Table A3. Current Thermal Energy Use from Natural Gas, 2015

Total Residential Natural Gas Consumption (MMBtu)	18,889
Percentage of Municipal Natural Gas Consumption	53%
Total Commercial/Industrial Natural Gas Consumption (MMBtu)	16,490
Percentage of Municipal Natural Gas Consumption	47%
Total Municipal Natural Gas Consumption	35,379
<i>Sources: Vermont Gas</i>	

Table A4. Recent Residential Energy Efficiency Projects

	2014	2015	2016
Home Performance with ENERGY STAR® Leads	21	18	20
Home Performance with ENERGY STAR® Projects	10	9	6
Total Residential Projects (includes Home Performance with ENERGY STAR® projects)	39	64	75
<i>Source: Efficiency Vermont, October 2017</i>			

Table A5. Electrical Energy Use, 2015

Residential Electric Energy Use (MWh)	12,571
Commercial and Industrial Electric Energy Use (MWh)	5,755
Total Electric Energy Use (MWh)	18,325
<i>Sources: Efficiency Vermont, October 2017</i>	

Table A6. Existing Renewable Electricity Generation

	Sites	Power (MW)	Energy (MWh)
Solar	123	2.8	4,479
Wind	1	.0025	6
Hydroelectric	0	0	0
Biomass (Wood)	1	N/A	N/A
Other	0	0	0
Total	125	2.8	4,485

Source: Community Energy Dashboard, July 2017

B. Projected Energy Use

Projected future energy use targets are drawn from the Long-range Energy Alternatives Planning (LEAP) analysis for Chittenden County, completed by the Vermont Energy Investment Corporation (VEIC). LEAP is an accounting framework that shows one possible path for Chittenden County and its municipalities to meet the State's energy goals required for enhanced energy plans. LEAP aggregates existing energy use data and forecasts the demand for energy and sources of energy over time, based on a set of anticipated economic and policy changes. For example, demographic projections are one component of projecting future energy use. LEAP is well suited for examining how energy systems might evolve over time to meet certain goals (in this case, Vermont's goal to gain 90% of energy from renewable sources by 2050). These targets show the direction and magnitude of change needed meet local, regional and state energy goals

It is also important to remember that the targets established by LEAP represent only one way to achieve each municipality's energy goals. Other strategies may allow the municipality to meet its goals (for example, switching some wood heating systems to heat pump systems). If desired, CCRPC will provide the spreadsheets and source materials used to calculate these data, and a municipality can revise their targets. Many of these targets are associated with concrete implementation actions. The Department of Public Service's Guidance on implementation actions can be found here:

http://publicservice.vermont.gov/sites/dps/files/documents/Pubs_Plans_Reports/Act_174/Municipal%20Guidance_Final.pdf

For more information on the LEAP model, including its underlying assumptions, please see Draft 2018 ECOS Plan Supplement 6 – Energy Analysis, Targets, & Methodology, available here: <http://www.ecosproject.com/2018-ecos-plan/>

Table B1. Projected Transportation Energy Use, 2025-2050

	2025	2035	2050
Total Light Duty Transportation Energy Use (MMBtu)	182,671	115,710	50,431
Electricity Used for Light Duty Transportation (MMBtu)	2,436	16,791	35,438
Light Duty Electric Vehicles (% of Vehicle Fleet)	6%	41%	89%
Biofuel Blended* Energy Used for Light Duty Transportation (MMBtu)	180,235	98,919	14,993
Biofuel Blend*Light Duty Vehicles (% of Vehicle Fleet)	94%	59%	11%
Heavy-Duty Transportation Energy Use from Biodiesel (Percent of Total)	33%	58%	96%
Heavy-Duty Transportation Energy Use from Fossil Fuel (Percent of Total)	67%	42%	4%

**This measures biofuels blended with fossil fuels. A common example is gasoline with ethanol mixed in.*
Sources: VTrans, LEAP Model

Table B2. Projected Commercial and Industrial Thermal Energy Use, 2025-2050

	2025	2035	2050
Total Commercial and Industrial Thermal Energy Use (MMBtu)	89,005	84,777	74,987
Percent of Commercial and Industrial Establishments Weatherized by Target Year	22%	24%	42%
Energy Saved by Weatherization by Target Year (MMBtu)	4,785	6,634	15,988
Commercial and Industrial Establishments Using Heat Pumps (%)	24%	39%	43%
Commercial and Industrial Thermal Energy Use by Heat Pumps (MMBtu)	7,217	14,267	21,317
Commercial and Industrial Establishments Using Wood Heating (%)	10%	11%	13%
Commercial and Industrial Thermal Energy Use Attributable to Wood Heating (MMBtu)	10,770	14,834	21,717

Sources: LEAP Model, Department of Public Service, Department of Labor

Table B3. Projected Residential Thermal Energy Use, 2025-2050

	2025	2035	2050
Total Residential Thermal Energy Use (MMBtu)	138,246	117,868	83,535
Percent of Residences Weatherized by Target Year	17%	37%	99%
Energy Saved by Weatherization by Target Year (MMBtu)	7,884	18,283	53,248
Percent of Residences Using Heat Pumps	18%	37%	61%
Residential Thermal Energy Use from Heat Pumps (MMBtu)	8,941	18,525	27,812
Residences Using Wood Heating (%)	14%	14%	14%
Residential Thermal Energy Use from Wood Heating (MMBtu)	25,416	25,565	22,996

Sources: LEAP Model, Department of Public Service

Table B4. Projected Electrical Energy Use, 2025-2050

	2025	2035	2050
Without Industrial (MWh)	14,738	18,785	24,345
Industrial Only (MWh)	4,782	6,184	8,301
Total (MWh)	19,521	24,969	32,645
Total Electric Energy Saved (MWh)	2,643	5,335	9,979
Residences that have increased their Electric Efficiency	30%	58%	98%
Commercial and Industrial Establishments that have Increased Their Electric Efficiency	30%	58%	98%

Source: LEAP Model

*Please note that industrial electricity use is recognized as the most difficult element to project in the LEAP model, because of regional discrepancies in data from the commercial and industrial sector. Therefore, projected electricity use and total energy use are reported two ways: with industrial electricity use included and excluded.

Table B5. Projected Total Energy Use Per Capita (Including Industrial Electricity Use*) 2015-2050

	2015	2025	2035	2050
Total Energy Use (MMBtu)	519,043	477,762	403,946	318,684
Population	4,126	4,208	4,259	4,442
Total Energy Use Per Capita (MMBtu)	126	114	95	72
Reduction in Total Energy Use Per Capita since 2015	--	-10%	-25%	-43%

Source: LEAP Model

*Please note that industrial electricity use is recognized as the most difficult element to project in the LEAP model, because of regional discrepancies in data from the commercial and industrial sector. Therefore, projected electricity use and total energy use are reported two ways: with industrial electricity use included and excluded.

Table B6. Projected Total Energy Use Per Capita (Excluding Industrial Electricity Use) 2015-2050

	2015	2025	2035	2050
Total Energy Use (MMBtu)	507,540	461,445	382,846	290,363
Population	4,126	4,208	4,259	4,442
Total Energy Use Per Capita (MMBtu)	123	110	90	65
Reduction in Total Energy Use Per Capita since 2015	--	-11%	-27%	-47%

Source: LEAP Model

*Please note that industrial electricity use is recognized as the most difficult element to project in the LEAP model, because of regional discrepancies in data from the commercial and industrial sector. Therefore, projected electricity use and total energy use are reported two ways: with industrial electricity use included and excluded.

C.

Projected Renewable Energy Generation Potential

This guide also reports how much wind and solar generation potential exists in the municipality, and sets targets for additional renewable energy generation within each municipality. However, the generation targets are technology neutral, meaning a municipality can use any form of renewable generation (wind, solar, biomass, hydroelectric, etc.) to meet its goals. For more information on how these targets were determined, please see Draft 2018 ECOS Plan Supplement 6 – Energy Analysis, Targets, & Methodology, available here: <http://www.ecosproject.com/2018-ecos-plan/>

Prime solar or wind areas are areas where models show the appropriate conditions for electricity generation, and where there are no constraints. Base solar or wind areas are areas where models show the appropriate conditions for electricity generation, but where there are possible constraints, which must be considered during development and may reduce the development potential of a site. The draft 2018 ECOS Plan indicates that “*development should be located to avoid state and local known constraints that have been field verified, and to minimize impacts to state and local possible constraints that have been field verified.*” Please see Table C4 for the list of constraints.

A municipality’s reported land available for wind and solar generation and generation potential are based on models of the elevation, slope, and aspect of land, or the modeled wind speed, in a municipality. These models do not remove existing impervious surfaces. Therefore, land-based generation potential may be over-estimated for municipalities with a high percentage of impervious surface, including Burlington, Winooski and Essex Junction.

Table C1. Land Available for Wind and Solar Generation

	Prime Potential	Base Potential
Solar	331 acres (1.6% of town)	2,011 acres(9.5% of town)
Wind	386(1.8% of town)	4,229 acres(20% of town)

Source: CCRPC and the Department of Public Service, Vermont Center for Geographic Information

Table C2. Projected Renewable Electricity Generation Potential

	Power (MW)	Energy (MWh)
Rooftop Solar*	3	7,148
Ground-Mounted Prime	41	50,742
Ground-Mounted Base	34	41,105
Wind – Prime	15	47,339
Wind – Base	169	518,645
Biomass	7707 acres	
Methane	Unknown	Unknown
Other	Unknown	Unknown

Source: CCRPC and the Department of Public Service

*Rooftop solar potential is calculated by assuming that a certain percentage of rooftops can hold solar systems. Ground-mounted solar potential reports how much land could be developed with solar based on its aspect and elevation, and does not remove space taken up by impervious surfaces like roofs. Therefore, rooftop solar potential cannot be added to ground-mounted solar potential, as this would lead to some generation potential being double counted.

Table C3. New Renewable Electricity Generation Targets

	2025		2035		2050	
	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High
Generation Targets – Any Technology (MWh)	2,560	5,145	5,120	10,289	8,960	18,006

Sources: LEAP Model and CCRPC Modeling

These targets are in addition to what the municipality is already generating.

Table C4. State/Local Known and Possible Constraints

State Known Constraints	State Possible Constraints	Local Known Constraints	Local Possible Constraints
FEMA Floodways	Agricultural Soils + Hydric Soils	Slopes equal to or greater than 35%	Slope 20% or more, Less than 35%
DEC River Corridors	Act 250 Ag. Soil Mitigation Areas		Science to Action
National Wilderness Areas	FEMA Special Flood Hazard Areas		Contiguous Habitat Units, Wildlife Travel Corridors
State-significant Natural Communities and Rare, Threatened, and Endangered Species	VT Conservation Design Highest Priority Forest Blocks (Forest Blocks – Connectivity, Forest Blocks – Interior, Forest Blocks - Physical Land Division)		Ridgelines over 900 ft.
Vernal Pools (confirmed and unconfirmed)	Highest Priority Wildlife Crossings		Conserved Lands
Class 1 and 2 wetlands (VSWI and advisory layers)	Highest Priority Wildlife Crossings		Trails
	Protected Lands (State fee lands and private conservation lands)		
	Deer Wintering Areas		

Section D. Mapping

The maps in this section meet the Act 174 Mapping standards for your municipality. Municipal plans must include the maps contained within this section. These maps identify potential areas for development and siting of solar and wind generation which account for areas that are unsuitable for siting renewable energy generation because of the presence of state/local known and possible constraints, identified in table C4.

These maps should be used in conjunction with complementary policies in the town plan. The map identifying constrained areas is a visual representation of the constraints listed above. A certified Enhanced Energy Plan means that a municipality's "land conservation measures and specific policies" might be given substantial deference during project review under 30 V.S.A. § 248. However, for these measures and policies to be given substantial deference, they must be clearly included in the text, as a map may lack sufficient clarity or granularity regarding the area in which a project is proposed.

UTILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Areas within the former boundaries of Incorporated Village of Richmond are served by municipal water and sewer. The village is served by a municipal water system. It is a treated, gravel-packed well and tanks with a 250,000-gallon storage capacity which serves approximately 300 structures comprising 720 individual units. Waterhouse upgrades were completed in 1999 adding an aeration system to reduce lead and copper levels for improved water quality. Approximately 70,000 gallons are consumed daily, equaling less than 30% of the total capacity.

The village is also served by a municipal wastewater treatment facility located on Esplanade. The wastewater collection system was expanded in 1999 along Cochran road to cover the remainder of the homes in the service area. The plant was upgraded in 2005, when a \$3.9 million project to reduce phosphorous discharged to 0.8 mg/l was completed.

An ordinance governing the water/sewer district of the Incorporated Village of Richmond went into effect in 1972 and is on file in Town Clerk's office. It specifies required uses in the service area, the requirements for hookups, states that all expenses are the responsibility of the users and states the power and authority vested in the inspectors. In 1993 an ordinance was adopted for the allocation of future hookups depending on use, consumption and other criteria.

Transfer of the ownership and management of the Incorporated Village of Richmond sewer/water system to the Town of Richmond accompanied the merger of the Town and Village in 1989. Transfer was subjected to all indebtedness and liabilities and placed the District under control of the Selectboard. The Selectboard has the authority to appoint three to five water and sewer commissioners or to constitute themselves as the board of commissioners. In either case, they have the responsibility of overseeing the operation of the system and of establishing rates and charges.

At present, the Selectboard has chosen to serve as board of commissioners. The 2006 Town Charter change allows up to two customers to serve on the board of commissioners. Day to day operation is the responsibility of the full-time paid superintendent and his two full-time staff. The Selectboard also has the authority to designate areas of the Town as special water and sewer system districts if approved by a majority of all voters residing in the proposed district at a special meeting. The Water and Sewer Commission has the authority to specify an annual service tax to cover all expenses related to the system. These moneys cannot be used for any other purpose. The municipal water and sewer systems are an asset to the village not available in many surrounding communities.

In addition to the municipal water supply, there are five public water supply wells in Richmond, each serving at least fifteen full-time hookups or 25 individuals. These five public water systems are maintained privately by either a homeowners association or by individual owners of wells. The State of Vermont Water Supply Division requires routine inspection of existing community systems. These systems are listed in the Natural Resources Section of the Town Plan under "Groundwater."

All development outside of the municipal sewer system relies on sub-surface waste disposal systems: i.e. septic systems. In 2001, Richmond updated its ordinance, which sets local standards for septic system design, construction and maintenance. A failed septic system is a health hazard, as untreated sewage may flow onto the ground and pollute surface water or wells. Many replacements occur when properties are being sold, as many buyers are more aware of potential problems or are advised by their Realtors to have a septic system inspection prior to purchase. As a rule, a properly designed and installed disposal system generally lasts about 15 to 20 years. However, a properly maintained system in a well-drained soil could last decades.

In 2002, Vermont amended the laws governing the regulation of on-site septic systems. These laws no longer always allow development on a parcel that exceeds 10 acres in area, regardless of the suitability of its soils for a septic system. To offset the elimination of this exception, the State revised the rules related to the construction of septic systems on “marginally suited” soils and instituted rules that would allow property owners to propose innovative approaches for on-site wastewater treatment. The allowance of innovative and alternative approaches and the construction of systems on “marginally suited soils” may allow additional development in certain areas of town. However, new treatment techniques may also allow clustering of units to preserve more sensitive surrounding areas

Richmond is a member of the Chittenden Solid Waste District (CSWD), which operates a drop off site located on Rogers Lane in Richmond. The major issue facing the District at this time involves siting of a new regional landfill. In addition to individual trash removal and recycling by local residents, many of Richmond’s residents employ private haulers to remove household refuse and recyclables.

HEALTHCARE

A majority of healthcare for Richmond residents is found elsewhere, especially with the University of Vermont Health Center hospital in nearby Burlington. Within Richmond, there are general practitioners, dentist, assisted living facility, physical therapy, and Richmond Rescue.

Richmond has a strong desire for a pharmacy to be built or placed somewhere in town, as this need can only be filled by traveling to neighboring towns. Richmond is an overall healthy but aging community. Access to facilities and prescriptions for residents will be a crucial component of Richmond’s progress moving forward.

NATURAL AND WORKING LANDS

The Richmond Conservation Commission developed a revised inventory of Richmond’s Natural and Working Lands in 2105, details of which can be found at the Richmond Town Website. Our natural areas were also comprehensively inventoried in 2013 by the document Science to Action: Four Towns Natural Resources Inventory (see References section of this Plan.)

Richmond’s natural resources include large forest blocks, diverse wildlife habitats, important habitat connectors, working farms and forests, unique shoreline environments and outstanding natural beauty. Part of the 72,000-acre Mt. Mansfield Forest Block, one of the state’s largest, Richmond’s notable landscape features include Bryant Hill, the Chittenden County Uplands, the Huntington River and Gorge, the Snipe Island Cliffs and the Winooski floodplain. Our town is framed on all sides by prominent, largely undeveloped and locally iconic ridgelines that are important to the rural character of our town. They provide recreational and aesthetic enjoyment; educational and research opportunities; protection for immediate and surrounding natural resources; and a foundation for local farming, forestry and tourism businesses. The Winooski River and its wide, fertile floodplain provide many ecological, economic and aesthetic benefits of their own supporting Richmond’s agricultural community and the complementary ecological habitat.

The Land

Richmond lies astride the boundary of two of Vermont's physiographic regions: the Northern Green Mountains and the Champlain Lowlands. Its 22,022 acres (34.41 sq. miles) are dominated by foothills bisected by the Winooski River, which flows through the lowlands into Jericho. Our landscape came into being through erosion of the underlying metamorphic bedrock, consisting of metawackes and schists created some 500 million years ago as a result of plate tectonics. Although the bedrock can be seen outcropping in certain locations, the town is largely mantled by sediments left behind as the Laurentide ice sheet retreated from the landscape 10,000 years ago. Glacial till, a mix of particles ranging in size from clay to boulders, is the dominant surficial material at higher altitudes, with gravels, sands and silts dominating in the valleys where ancient river terraces and deltas are exposed. Clay deposits can also be found in the lowlands, evidence that a precursor to Lake Champlain, Lake Vermont, once inundated the major river valleys with glacial meltwater for a period about 12,000 years ago.

The roughly 74 different types of soil found in Richmond are a manifestation of the underlying geological diversity. The youngest and most fertile of these are found in the Winooski River floodplain, where frequent high-water events deposit fresh alluvial material on a regular basis. These provide prime agricultural soils suited economically to produce sustained high yields in the production of food, feed, fiber, forage and other crops. The soils in the higher elevations formed in glacial till are rocky and of moderate fertility and have been abandoned for agricultural use.

Sand and gravel deposits are important resources for the construction of roads and driveways and other types of construction. Identification of the highest quality of these for use together with appropriate erosion and runoff controls combined with restoration of sites after operations can minimize adverse effects on other resources and adjoining land use.

Waters

The Richmond landscape is contained within the Winooski River Watershed and its contributory Huntington River, except for the extreme southwest corner of the town, which drains into the LaPlatte River. Included are several ponds, streams, brooks, wetlands, unnamed tributaries and vernal pools. Surface waters with a designated shoreline as identified by the State of Vermont include:

- Gillett Pond
- Richmond Pond
- Winooski River
- Huntington River
- The Oxbows
- Lake Iroquois

Other prominent surface waters include Donohue Brook, Johnnie Brook, Snipe Island Brook and Mill Brook. As our rivers and streams eventually drain into Lake Champlain, we are part of that watershed as well.

The quality of these waters is essential as they serve as sources of drinking water and recreation and provide visual amenities that enhance the rural character of the town. Further, they support a wide variety of fish, wildlife and plant species, greatly contributing to the natural diversity in Richmond. Ongoing water quality testing of the Huntington River in Huntington, carried out by the Huntington and Richmond Conservation Commissions, monitors potential threats to the watershed and has undertaken steps to address these threats through public outreach.

Floodplains, such as found in the Winooski River valley, not only protect property and life by reducing the severity of flooding but also provide wildlife habitat and serve as corridors for animal movement among habitats. They also represent some of the richest and most viable agricultural land in Richmond due to alluvial deposits left by periodic inundation.

Riparian areas, strips of land on either side of streams, ponds or wetlands, serve many important functions in maintaining water quality, protecting soils and providing wildlife habitat. Acting as buffers, riparian areas effectively treat silt, fertilizers, pesticides and animal wastes before these pollutants reach surface waters. Roots in the banks bind the soil and reduce erosion and protect human property. Riparian areas also give water from heavy rain and snowmelt room to spread out, slowing down their flow and further reduce erosion and property damage. The quality of Lake Champlain's water ultimately depends upon hundreds of vegetated riparian areas.

Shade provided by a forested canopy keeps stream water temperatures cool during the hot summer months. This is particularly important because as water temperature rises, the oxygen it can hold declines. Leaf litter and insects falling from overhead vegetation are major sources of food and form the base of the food chain in many stream systems. Trees and branches that enter the water are important habitat components for fish and aquatic organisms, as are undercut banks maintained by root systems.

Naturally vegetated riparian areas provide important habitat and travel corridors for a wide variety of birds, mammals, amphibians and other terrestrial flora and fauna. To serve these functions, riparian zones should be vegetated for an adequate width, which varies depending on the physical and biological nature of the surface water and the surrounding land. The Vermont Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) has published recommendations for riparian vegetation zones.

Wetlands are areas that are inundated by surface or ground water with a frequency sufficient to support vegetation or aquatic life that depend on at least seasonally saturated soil conditions. They perform important ecological functions including contributing to protection of surface and ground water, recharging aquifers, controlling erosion by binding and stabilizing soil and providing necessary fish and wildlife habitat. Wetlands occur throughout the Town, particularly in the northern half. Six significant wetland complexes in Richmond are discussed in detail in the STA Report.

Vernal pools are small, open-water wetlands that are filled with rain or snowmelt in the spring or fall and are typically dry during the summer. They are usually contained within a small forested basin with no permanent outlet or inlet and support no fish that prey on other species. Years of filling and drying result in a unique set of conditions

that support a variety of wildlife species specialized to take advantage of these conditions. Vernal pools are known as important breeding habitats for amphibians such as species of salamanders and frogs.

Clean and plentiful groundwater is a critical resource for the health and wellbeing of Richmond's residents. The most significant quantities of groundwater are found in aquifers, geologic formations that have the capability to store, transmit and yield useful quantities of water to a well or spring. Statewide, some two thirds of Vermonters depend on groundwater for their primary water supply. This number is significantly higher in Richmond, as nearly all residents obtain their water from public and private wells and springs. The Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) *Groundwater Protection Handbook* and Groundwater Protection Ordinance provide excellent sources regarding groundwater resources, threats, and tools local governments can use to protect. In 1996, the Town adopted its own Water Supply Source Protection Ordinance setting forth protective regulations for the municipal water supply.

Ecology

Richmond offers some of the richest wildlife habitat diversity in Vermont, due to the largely intact Mt. Mansfield Forest Block of which much of our landscape is part. Locally, forest cover some 80% of the local landscape and patterns of human use. Richmond's landscape supports a rich diversity of natural communities and wildlife habitat. Critical in their own right, these contribute to Richmond's sense of place, also providing opportunities for outdoor recreation, research and education.

Natural communities are composed of combinations of native plants and animals that associate in supportive ecological niches. The 2013 Science to Action (STA) Report identified and mapped number of locations in Richmond of State and local significance. Key wetland natural communities include Gillett Pond, Gillett Pond Seeps, Richmond Pond, the Richmond Riparian Corridor along the Winooski River, Snipe Island Alder, and Swamp Road Wetland Complex.

Key upland natural communities include Chamberlin Hill, Cochran Block (Bryant Hill), Gillett Pond Hemlock, Huckleberry Hill South, Huntington River Hemlock, and Lake Iroquois Northeast. Northern hardwoods, with major components of sugar maple, red oak, white pine, and hemlock, dominate the uplands. The lowland areas that are not developed or in active agriculture are composed primarily of silver maple-dominated floodplain forests. Along with riparian corridors, ridgelines and their steep slopes serve as additional links, providing wildlife with habitats, refuge from human activities below.

Within this landscape are some rare or uncommon plant species, among them the 200-year-old hemlocks near Gillett Pond, locally rare pitch pines on Chamberlain Hill, the rare broad beech fern by the Snipe Island Cliffs, and the slender cliff brake, growing along the East Cliffs near Dugway Road. Of particular note and State-wide significance is the silver maple / ostrich fern floodplain forest along the Winooski River close by Richmond. The State has also mapped known habitat for certain rare, threatened, and endangered animal species, the protection of which is required by state law. Richmond is home to at least one rare insect and one rare reptile.

Essential to the integrity of these wildlife habitats in Richmond is the integrity and survival of Contiguous Habitat Units (CHUs), defined and mapped in Richmond's Science to Action Report and described in the Natural Resources section of this Plan.

CHUs provide critical food, refuge and breeding areas for a variety of animal species, including black bear, bobcat, gray fox, northern river otter and others identified in the State of Vermont's 2015 Wildlife Action Plan as "species of greatest conservation need." CHUs also provide many benefits to Richmond's human residents, such as pest control, seed dispersal, pollination and nutrient cycling – all critical for proper ecosystem functioning and sustainable delivery of ecosystem services from our forests and other natural areas. High-priority examples include Camels Hump, Cochran, Huckleberry Hill, Mayo Mountain, Preston Pond, Sherman Hollow, Snipe Ireland and Yantz Hill.

Certain "critical habitats" have been identified in Richmond as required for the continued presence of several important, iconic species, including some of the "greatest conservation need" species. Deer wintering habitat consists of areas with pure softwood or mixed softwood and hardwood cover at low or middle elevations with south or west facing slopes and lacking human disturbance. These areas are critical to deer during the winter months because they provide relief from harsh winter conditions and receive State protection accordingly. Black bear production and seasonal habitat consists of extensive, remote forestland with special areas, such as mast production areas, wetlands and travel corridors. Certain Richmond streams support populations of native trout, which are excellent indicators of a healthy aquatic environment. Native trout are extremely sensitive to increases in sedimentation and temperature that may result from incompatible land use activities, as they require cool water

with high oxygen content. Some local streams are also home to stocked fish.

Richmond also provides vital links between rugged upland habitats of the Green Mountains and the rich lowlands of the Winooski River Valley. These allow flora and fauna to exist, interact and move among forest blocks and CHUs. The Science to Action Report and other sources identify and map numerous habitat connectors in Richmond. Protecting these is critical to enabling the wildlife we value to feed, breed, and find safe, specialized shelters across the landscape, and mitigate the effects of forest fragmentation, climate change and other pressures.

Working lands

Agriculture

The Winooski River Valley provides the prime agricultural soils that historically have made agriculture an important industry and contributor to Richmond's sense of place, supporting dairy, beef, vegetable and fruit production. Unfortunately, continuing trends in transportation costs, tax burden and milk-pricing has led to significant decline in small family dairy farms, causing farmers to sell off parts of their land to development. Even so, 14 parcels remain classified as "Farm" in the 2017 Grand List, down from 21 in 2005. Fortunately, opportunities are being provided and must be supported to support alternative agricultural enterprises such as Richmond's growing local food industry. Success there will take not only innovative public initiatives but also the conscious effort of residents to buy locally produced foods whenever possible. Every effort must be made to support a viable agricultural community.

Forestry

Other agricultural operations include timber harvest either to provide building materials or to support use of wood products for heating. Intelligent harvesting that preserves the integrity of our Natural Resource community remains an important goal. Our forested lands also support our maple sugaring industry, as well as the year-round tourism and outdoor recreation industries.

Scenic Views

Much of Richmond's rural character and appeal results from the scenic vistas that can be observed in many parts of the town and that include an interplay of villages, mountains, forested hills, unbroken ridgelines, farms, fields, rivers, streams, ponds and woodlands. Representative viewsheds include the Exit 11- Route 2 Gateway, Bryant Hill and Gillett Pond.

Environment

Climate

Our climate is changing, bringing many challenges. These include the increasing frequency and severity of weather events, resulting in not only the movement but also the creation of new ecological systems. Consequences have been demonstrated to economic development, food security, and human health, culture and livelihood, and will require upgraded resiliency. A local threat of note is the future of our maple industry, and our vulnerability to the spread of invasive species that favor warmer climates.

Related to climate, there are several significant sources of air pollution in Vermont, the largest being the automobile; another is trash burning. The US Environmental Protection Agency has required each state to measure its ambient air for six "criteria" pollutants since 1970. Vermont Air Pollution Control Division monitors the ambient air for several hundred pollutants, but the six "criteria" pollutants are considered the most common.

FROM VISION TO ACTION



Through the planning process, 11 specific visions for the future emerged. The primary vision being: Ensure **transparent and inclusive decision-making**, with a representative and open government, civil discourse, and an active and informed community. The Town of Richmond considers this to be the top priority, and the plan shall be implemented with this vision at the forefront. The 10 remaining visions are listed below in alphabetical order.

In order to fulfill our vision, we will:

- Promote **affordability and a reasonable cost of living**, so that people with a mix of ages, backgrounds, and income levels can afford housing, food, goods, and services in Richmond
- Be a healthy and accessible **community for all ages**, where youth are nurtured and included; teens have opportunities and support; adults can live and raise families; and seniors can comfortably live and actively contribute
- Foster **economic opportunity** by supporting local businesses, developing good jobs, nurturing a diverse local economy, and promoting renewable energy
- Enhance our **history and traditions**, celebrating our agricultural heritage, treasured community events, and unique historic sites and architecture
- Support safe, sustainable, and convenient **mobility and transportation options**, so that people can bike, walk, ride, and drive in Richmond and beyond
- Wisely steward our **natural and working lands**, ensuring the beauty and health of our landscapes, waterways, open spaces, wildlife, and agricultural resources
- Nurture a **safe and resilient community** with strong volunteerism, public services, caring and self-reliant neighbors, and a proactive approach to preparing for challenges
- Foster and enhance our **small-town character**, including our quiet pace and rural way of life, friendly and involved community, and scenic beauty
- Support a wide range of **social, cultural and recreational offerings**, including open space and recreation facilities, arts and cultural activities, and community gathering places
- Have a **vibrant and appealing downtown**, with attractive streets and buildings, convenient services, and diverse businesses, where people can connect and meet their daily needs

TRANSPARENT + INCLUSIVE DECISION-MAKING

*We will ensure **transparent and inclusive** decision-making, with a representative and open government, civil discourse, and an active and informed community.*

WHAT RICHMOND WANTED

- Increase civic participation in government, community meetings and organizations
- Build a culture of civil, thoughtful and balanced planning and decision-making
- Strengthen online and offline communication channels
- Ensure that local government is accessible, trustworthy and representative

Vermont has a strong and valued history of local control and participatory democracy. Richmond was granted township status in 1794, and has the distinction of being the first town chartered by the newly formed State of Vermont. From the first Town Meeting in March 1795, Richmond has continued the long tradition of civic involvement and local democracy.

Like most Vermont towns, Richmond is governed by a Selectboard and other municipal boards and commissions. Selectboard members are voted in at Town Meeting, and its members make most decisions about town operations, spending, and policies. Members of most other boards are appointed by the Selectboard and serve in an advisory capacity, with the exception of the quasi-judicial development review board. Additional public officers are voted or appointed, and town staff members are hired by the Selectboard. All residents over the age of 18 are eligible to serve.

A Municipal Planning Grant allowed Richmond to experiment with a variety of non-traditional engagement techniques during the Our Town, Our Future process, and showed that the most successful activities allowed people to engage in a variety of ways and locations. People are more likely to engage in fun and informal settings, in places they already frequent, and when they have options including online input. People also receive information in new ways, so true inclusion hinges on sharing announcements and information on new channels (such as social media) and increasing education about local democracy and opportunities to engage.

AFFORDABILITY + A REASONABLE COST OF LIVING

*We will promote **affordability and a reasonable cost of living**, so that people from a mix of ages, backgrounds and income levels can afford housing, food, goods and services in Richmond.*

WHAT RICHMOND WANTED

- Diverse, affordable housing options for all ages and income levels
- Affordable transportation options
- Lower utility and public service rates
- Affordable goods and services available in town
- Manageable municipal tax rates and town spending
- Social services and resources to assist people in need

Affordability is a factor of the **cost of living** (paying for housing, food, transportation, clothing, healthcare), and the **income or resources** available to pay for it.

Across the nation, critical shifts are happening in both of these areas. Since 1979, wage growth has stagnated for Americans overall, while the cost of living is rapidly increasing. According to a 2014 Pew Research Center study, more than half of Americans said their family income is falling behind cost of living. That's true in Vermont too, where high energy, housing and food costs make the cost of living 16% higher than the national average.

Richmond has little control over some costs like health insurance premiums or gas prices, or even the regional housing market. We can provide options that help people **reduce consumption and spending**, we can **control municipal costs**, and we can provide **affordable goods and services** that meet people's needs.

COMMUNITY FOR ALL AGES

*We will be a healthy and accessible **community for all ages**, where youth are nurtured and included; teens have opportunities and support; young adults can live and raise families; and seniors can comfortably live and actively contribute.*

WHAT RICHMOND WANTED

- Affordable, attractive housing options for all ages
- Quality nutrition, health care and active lifestyles for all
- Vibrant social opportunities for all ages
- High quality, affordable childcare and early childhood education
- Strong schools and educational opportunities
- Support for seniors to remain independent
- Opportunities for youth and seniors to meaningfully contribute to the community
- Accessible public facilities and public spaces

Many communities specifically plan improvements “for 7-year-olds and 70-year olds.” When we create a community that works for our youngest residents and oldest residents, it is typically a strong and supportive community for all the ages in between.

Creating a community for all ages requires far more than strong schools and senior centers. It means thoughtful investments and policies in a wide range of areas – from safe streets and alternative transportation modes to affordable housing and employment opportunities, strong education systems to vibrant social offerings. Many elements like school funding and healthcare costs are beyond Richmond’s control, but Richmond can ensure that plans and investments throughout the community work to support all ages.

It also means specifically targeting programs or policies that do support critical age groups and address demographic trends. Like much of rural America, Vermont is facing shifting demographics. Richmond and other rural areas are aging rapidly, while many younger residents are leaving small towns for urban environments.

ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

*We will foster **economic opportunity** by supporting local businesses, developing good jobs, nurturing a diverse local economy, and promoting renewable energy.*

WHAT RICHMOND WANTED

- Quality jobs and employment opportunities
- Job and workforce training
- Strong agriculture and forest economy
- Recreation and tourism opportunities
- Vibrant downtown and village centers
- Business-friendly climate and policies
- Support and infrastructure for entrepreneurs and small businesses

Economic opportunity is shifting across the nation, as traditional models of local employment are impacted by rapid changes in technology and telecommunications, changing demographics, globalization and outsourcing. Creating economic opportunity involves strengthening and diversifying business and employment opportunities in Richmond, as well as access to jobs and resources beyond town borders.

As manufacturing and economic centers are increasingly centered in urban areas (such as Burlington), Vermont’s small towns must support and shift their economies to different types of businesses and jobs. The market for local foods and locally made, handcrafted products is increasing, which supports traditional agricultural operations as well as new farms and food processors.

Employees are also increasingly telecommuting and working remotely, working out of homes and shared office spaces, combining multiple part-time or contract jobs as part of the “gig economy,” and developing experimental small side businesses. Richmond can support these flexible and shifting new economic models by ensuring that town policies and zoning regulations allow for flexible uses and rapid permitting, by helping to highlight and market local entrepreneurs and small businesses, and by developing incentives that encourage people to experiment with new business ideas — particularly when they enhance or support other community values.

HISTORY + TRADITIONS

*We will enhance our **history and traditions**, celebrating our agricultural heritage, treasured community events, and unique historic sites and architecture.*

WHAT RICHMOND WANTED

- Growth and continuation of community celebrations and events
- Preservation of historic buildings and architecture
- Strong public awareness and support of historic resources and Richmond history
- Preservation of oral history and historic records or artifacts
- Protection of agricultural character and support for working lands

Richmond is indeed rich — in history and community traditions, all of which contribute to our community identity and sense of place. A wide array of historic sites and buildings have been carefully protected and restored — particularly agricultural sites and historic buildings from the past 200 years. Historic barns and iconic structures like the Round Church help preserve stories and lessons from the past, but they are also critical components of Richmond’s small town character and physical beauty. Other aspects of history, such as pre-colonial Native American settlements or significant land use changes, are not as visible or as well known. As buildings age and memories fade away, Richmond must proactively work to protect, restore and capture our treasured elements of history and to shine a light on lesser known sites and events.

State assistance and designation programs can assist with costly maintenance and tax credits for historic buildings, and local land use regulations or incentives can further safeguard these resources. Private organizations like the Richmond Historical Society play a critical role in funding and caring for public sites, while many community members contribute time and resources to support private buildings and historic assets. Finding opportunities to showcase and share Richmond’s history — through stories or events, building tours or museum exhibits — can help current generations learn from the past and develop a historic preservation ethic.

MOBILITY + TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS

*We will support safe, sustainable, and convenient **mobility and transportation options**, so that people can bike, walk, ride and drive in Richmond and beyond.*

WHAT RICHMOND WANTED

- Build “Complete Streets” that are safe and accessible for all users
- Encourage “active transportation” including biking and walking
- Improve traffic safety and road conditions on town roads
- Reduce traffic congestion and alleviate parking problems
- Implement stormwater management and hazard mitigation steps to reduce runoff and protect road condition
- Increase access to, and use of, mass transit options
- Support sustainable transportation options and methods

Transportation is a challenge in most rural communities, and Richmond is no exception. Richmond is naturally an auto-oriented community, given its relatively low and dispersed population. But providing adequate transportation and mobility options means far more than maintaining roads for cars – especially given changing demographics, economic pressures, and a need to reduce our use of fossil fuels.

Richmond residents can access several alternative transportation modes, but all require a car or other transportation options to reach the stops. The most popular is the commuter bus, which offers convenient

access to Burlington, Waterbury and Montpelier from the Richmond Park N Ride. Passenger rail and long distance bus services are available in Waterbury and Essex Junction. Two local non-profits fill critical gaps by offering rides or specialized transportation to elders, those with disabilities, or others in need of rides.

Several studies and plans already address many of these needs, from regional transportation plans to local studies of village parking and bike/pedestrian feasibility. Most emphasize “Complete Streets” – streets built to accommodate all users, while making it safer and more convenient to get around. Our strategies must align with these plans and with guidance and regulations from the Vermont Agency of Transportation on road standards and maintenance.

NATURAL + WORKING LANDS

*Richmond’s Vision is to wisely steward our **natural and working lands**, ensuring the beauty and health of our landscapes, waterways, open spaces, wildlife and agricultural resources.*

WHAT RICHMOND WANTED

- Protect and restore surface water bodies and groundwater
- Protect and restore forests, wildlife and critical habitat
- Enhance access to, and stewardship of, open spaces
- Protect and enhance working lands and soils
- Protect and enhance important vistas and scenic landscapes

Beginning with the region’s first Native American inhabitants – and continuing after Richmond’s colonial settlement - Richmond residents have benefited and relied upon our natural and working lands. Around the time of Richmond’s founding, agriculture dominated the Town’s economy and character, with many settlers producing wool and grain, milk and lumber. In the mid-1800s, Richmond’s hills were primarily cleared and converted to pasture and the landscape would have looked starkly different. Today the pattern is reversed and Richmond’s land is heavily forested – but natural and working lands are no less important to our identity.

Richmond residents identified agriculture as an essential component of our Small Town Character – both scenic agricultural landscapes and viable working lands enterprises. A growing regional appetite for local foods and value-added products is giving new life to small farms and producers.

SAFE + RESILIENT COMMUNITY

*Richmond’s Vision is to nurture a **safe and resilient community** with strong volunteerism, and public services, caring and self-reliant neighbors, and a proactive approach to preparing for challenges.*

WHAT RICHMOND WANTED

- Foster volunteerism and social capital
- Support preparedness, self-sufficiency and basic needs
- Prepare for and mitigate natural and man-made hazards and other emerging threats
- Provide strong public services and public safety infrastructure
- Proactively reduce ongoing public safety threats

Community resilience is the ability of a community to prepare for, withstand, and respond to adverse situations. Richmond has faced a variety of challenges in the past, from natural disasters and fires to economic downturns and the opioid epidemic. We can’t prevent future events from happening, but we can build a safe and resilient community that is prepared for these and other stressors. Doing so will also improve ongoing quality of life and many community values.

Richmond provides adequate daily services and public safety services, but most would be taxed in a major disaster. Vulnerable populations including the elderly and those with disabilities are most at risk, with limited access to Richmond’s one emergency shelter and no pharmacy in town. Richmond has a strong police force, fire department and rescue service, with both paid staff and volunteers and mutual aid agreements with other towns.

Richmond participates in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and has strong flood hazard development regulations, but the State and municipalities increasingly understand the importance of preventing fluvial erosion,

and Richmond is actively studying river dynamics and erosion prevention measures. Strong social capital, community connections and volunteerism are one of the most important ways to build resilience overall.

SMALL TOWN CHARACTER

Richmond's Vision is to foster and enhance our small town character, including our quiet pace and rural way of life, friendly and involved community, and scenic beauty.

WHAT RICHMOND WANTED

- Protect working lands, farms and agricultural heritage
- Protect and enhance Richmond's scenic and architectural beauty
- Build community connections, spirit and involvement
- Maintain Richmond's quiet pace and peaceful lifestyle
- Support a vibrant downtown where residents can meet daily needs

Several participants in the Our Town, Our Future process captured this character in saying that Richmond feels like the last slice of "real Vermont" in Chittenden County. Richmond's location is critical for jobs and access to resources and opportunities, but community members want Richmond to remain an authentic small town. Richmond residents value traditional Vermont architectural styles including compact downtown blocks with multi-story brick buildings, residential areas featuring clapboard homes, and historic barns and farms; many also appreciate the lack of box stores or "cookie cutter" development in town.

Richmond boasts a traditional Vermont development pattern, with a dense, mixed-use Village Center, compact residential neighborhoods, and surrounding rural landscapes. Residents feel strongly about encouraging business growth that fits with this development pattern and prevents sprawl.

SOCIAL, CULTURAL + RECREATIONAL OFFERINGS

*We will support a wide range of **social, cultural and recreational offerings**, including open space and recreation facilities, arts and cultural activities, and community gathering places.*

WHAT RICHMOND WANTED

- Provide parks, public spaces and recreation facilities for people of all ages and interests
- Maintain a wide variety of accessible trails and open spaces
- Support arts and cultural programming for all ages
- Attract diverse and quality restaurants or cafes, gathering places, and recreation businesses

Venues and spaces for events and gatherings – both indoor and outdoor – are likewise owned, maintained and coordinated by a wide variety of organizations. Municipal parks including Volunteers' Green offer important spaces for recreation and sports, including fields, a winter ice rink, and cross-country skiing. Residents take advantage of numerous trails are available on both public and private land, several access points to the Winooski River, and many informal sledding hills, biking routes and walking paths. Community members also value many private recreation facilities, such as Cochran's Ski Area, where many generations of residents have learned to ski.

VIBRANT + APPEALING DOWNTOWN

*Richmond's Vision is to have **a vibrant and appealing downtown**, with attractive streets and buildings, convenient services and diverse businesses, where people can connect and meet their daily needs.*

WHAT RICHMOND WANTED

- Improve traffic calming, safety and access to downtown and other important locations
- Encourage suitable growth in downtown and village center locations
- Beautify and maintain an attractive and enjoyable downtown
- Attract a variety of high-quality businesses, restaurants and local attractions

The Our Town, Our Future process revealed that a vibrant downtown is a core value and element of Richmond's character, with many residents expressing gratitude for the compact, historic downtown and strong businesses. Today, downtowns are widely appreciated for providing a variety of services in a small, walkable area close to

housing; as a hub for social activity and connections; for their aesthetic and historic value; and as economic engines of the community.

A changing economy means that new business types and models are springing up, and Richmond can ensure that it's zoning and policies allow for new economic models and opportunities. Richmond can also support downtown businesses and vibrancy by improving the streetscape. That includes aesthetic improvements like signage, plantings or street trees; amenities like seating and small parks; providing convenient and sufficient parking; and implementing street improvements that calm traffic, increase walkability and pedestrian safety, and ensure accessibility.

Finally, Richmond can look at ways to revitalize past village centers, or to create new centers. Many residents today want to be able to bike and walk to stores and services, and to access a community or social center near their homes. Richmond can also encourage new growth in past village centers like Jonesville of Fay's Corner, which can build new areas of vibrancy while limited environmental impacts in less developed parts of town.

Outreach and engagement by the numbers:

- 2,200 postcards mailed
- 394 surveys completed
- 387 action ideas identified
- 370 chalkboard comments
- 300 responses to youth survey
- 250 pencils and lollipops distributed with project info attached
- 180 subscribers to email newsletter
- 65 people attended September Community Vision Forum
- 58 goals generated
- 53 vision cards written
- 50 posters displayed to advertise events
- 55 unique attendees attended series of Rapid Fire Planning Nights
- 45 people participated in Mapping Workshop
- 32 one-on-one interviews conducted
- 25 people attended fall Resilience Fair
- 18 email newsletters developed
- 5 Rapid Fire Planning Nights hosted
- 2 articles in the Times Ink
- 1 mention on Vermont Public Radio's *Public Post*

Please find survey results on the following pages...

TOWN OF RICHMOND, VERMONT

Community Vision Survey Results

The Richmond Town Plan Steering Committee offered a community vision survey during the summer of 2015 to find out what community members love about Richmond, what they want to see enhanced and protected in the future, and what they would like to change.

We asked questions like this:

What do you love about Richmond? What makes it unique?

What would make Richmond an even better place to live, work and play?

If you had a magic wand and could change one thing about Richmond, what would it be?

And heard answers like this:



Main Survey Conclusions

You love:

The Richmond community, small town character, village businesses and services, the people, and rural landscape

You wish:

For more businesses, more activities and community gathering places, and safe bike & walking paths

You are:

Different and the same. Youth and seniors, newcomers and longtime residents have similar values but different needs and priorities.

That's just the start. People love this community, and have hundreds of ideas about what can make it even more vibrant and livable for all.

Scroll through to find out who responded and what they said. Learn more about the Our Town, Our Future process at richmondvtfuture.weebly.com.

Who Responded

 **392**

Total survey respondents

 **346**

Full-time Richmond residents responding

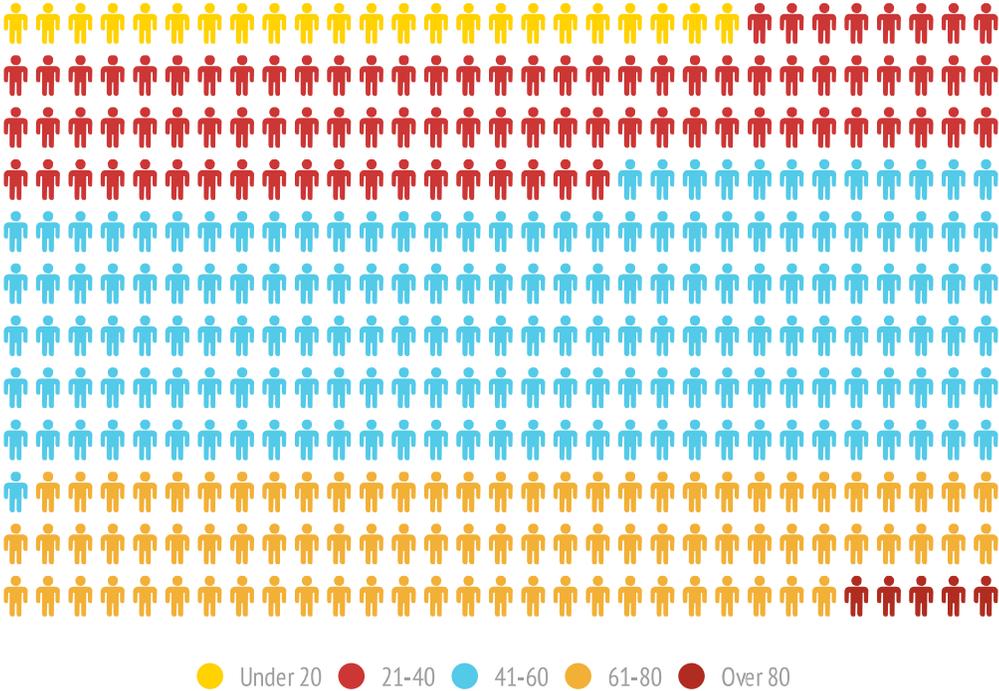
 **11**

Part-time/seasonal residents responding

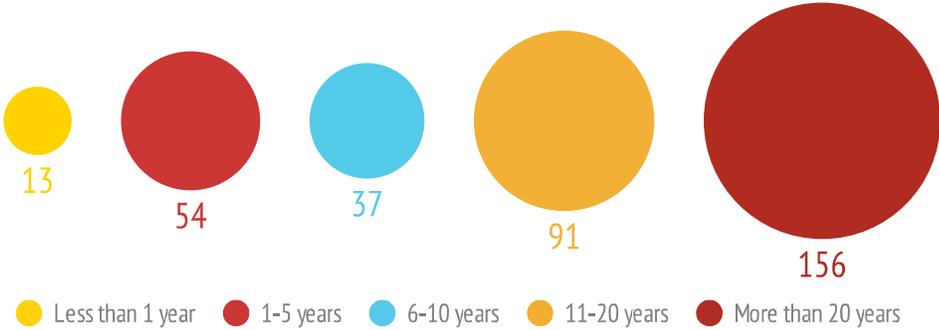
 **28**

Non-residents responding

Age of Respondents

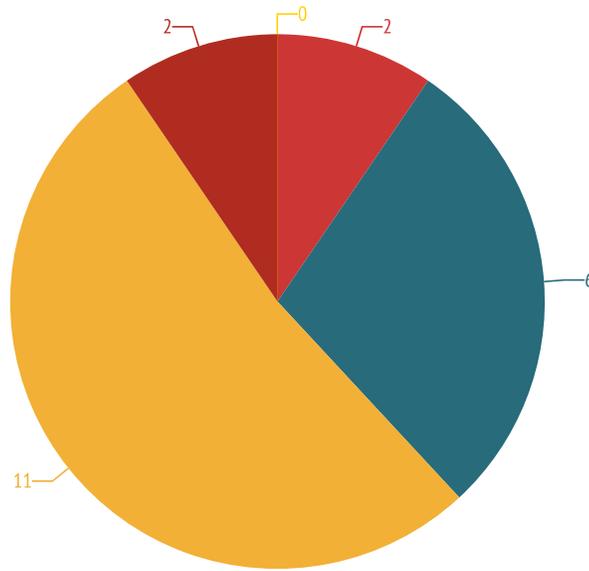


How Long You've Lived in Richmond



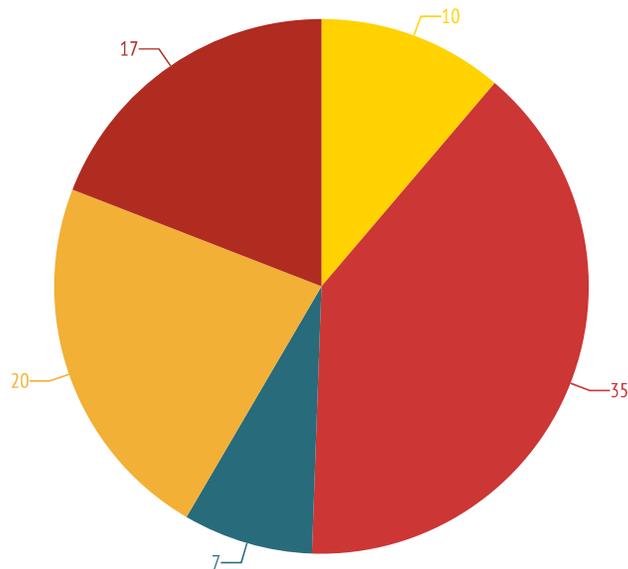
How Long You've Lived in Richmond, vs. Age

Under 20



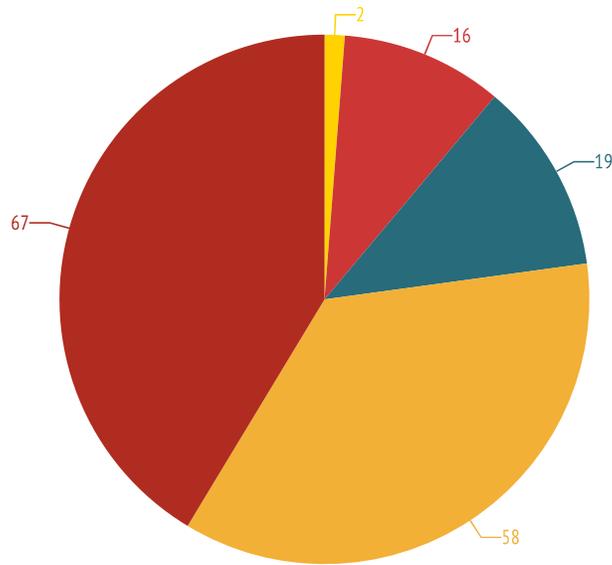
● Less than 1 year ● 1-5 years ● 6-10 years ● 11-20 years ● More than 20 years

21-40



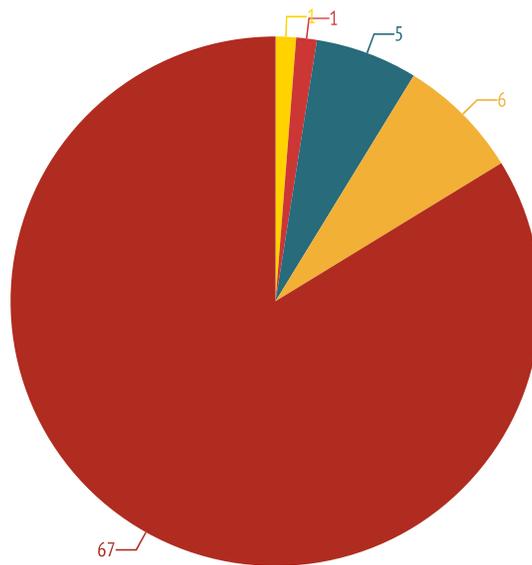
How Long You've Lived in Richmond, vs. Age

41-60



● Less than 1 year ● 1-5 years ● 6-10 years ● 11-20 years ● More than 20 years

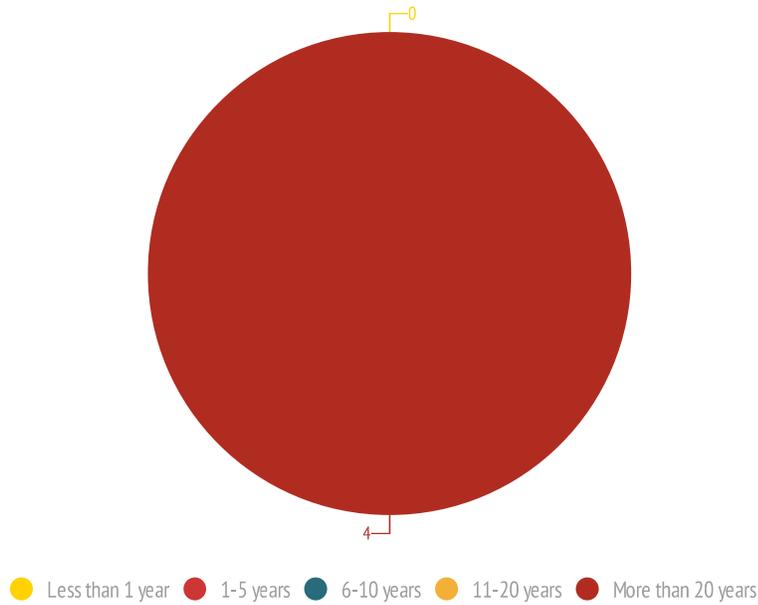
61-80



● Less than 1 year ● 1-5 years ● 6-10 years ● 11-20 years ● More than 20 years

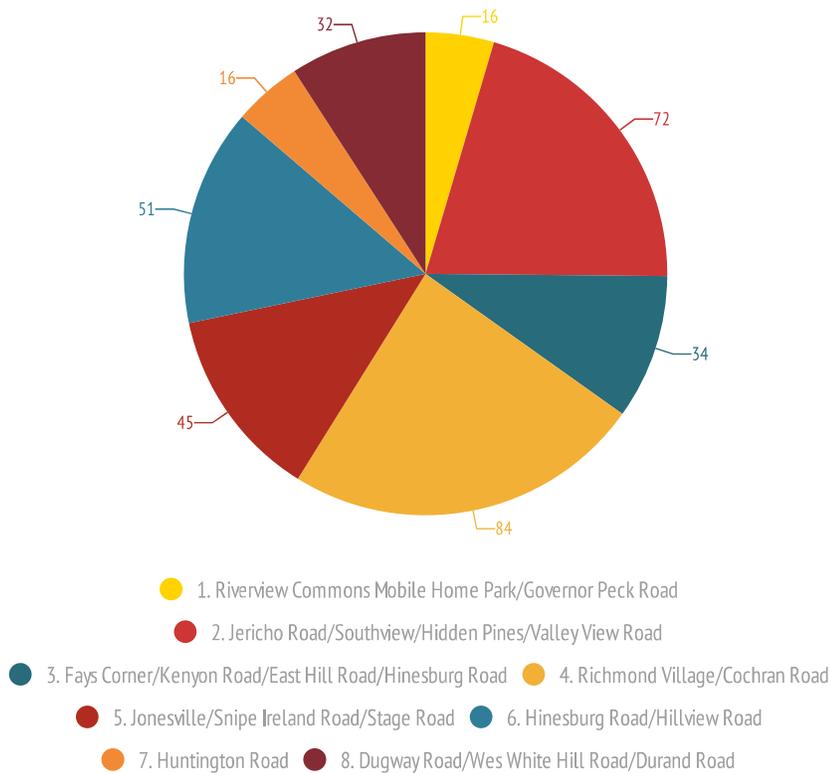
How Long You've Lived in Richmond, vs. Age

Over 80



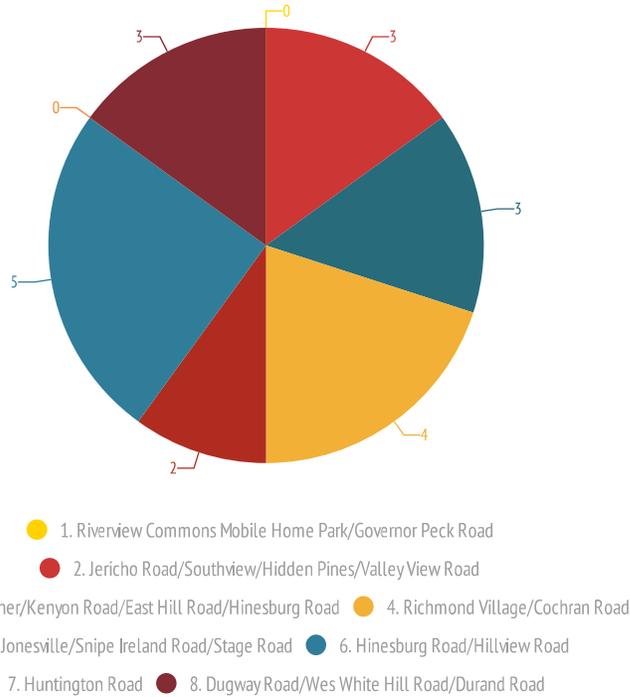
Where You Live

All

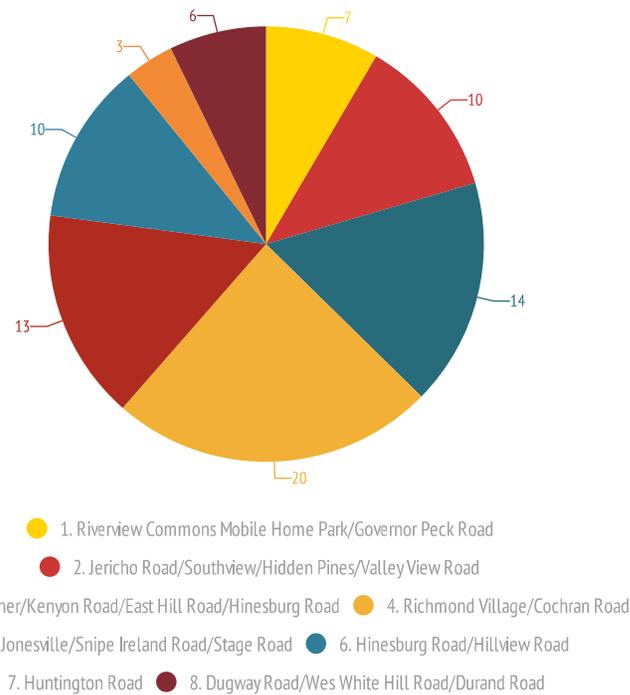


Where You Live

Under 20

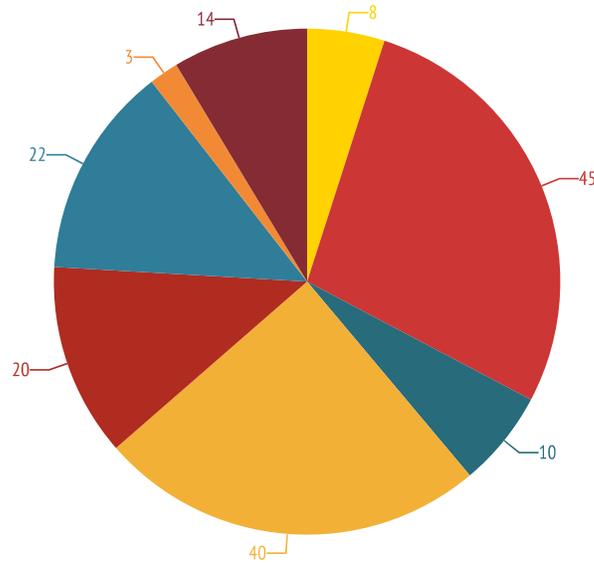


21-40



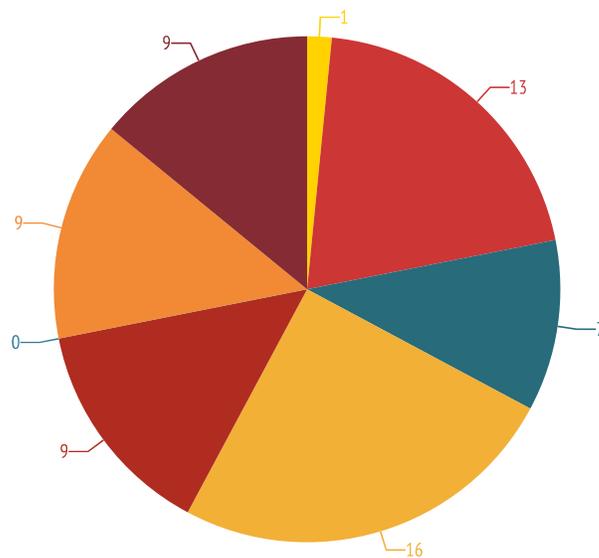
Where You Live

41-60



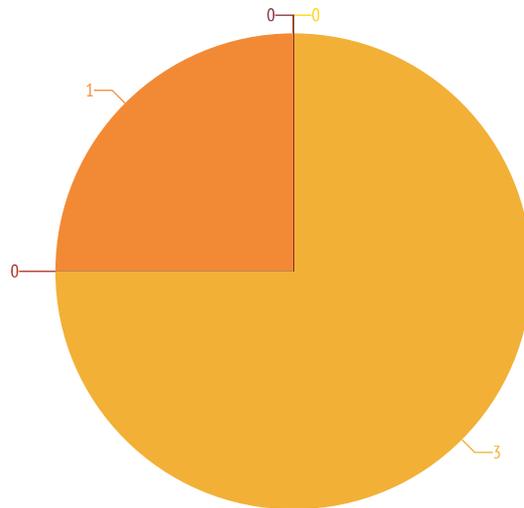
- 1. Riverview Commons Mobile Home Park/Governor Peck Road
- 2. Jericho Road/Southview/Hidden Pines/Valley View Road
- 3. Fays Corner/Kenyon Road/East Hill Road/Hinesburg Road
- 4. Richmond Village/Cochran Road
- 5. Jonesville/Snipe Ireland Road/Stage Road
- 6. Hinesburg Road/Hillview Road
- 7. Huntington Road
- 8. Dugway Road/Wes White Hill Road/Durand Road

61-80



Where You Live

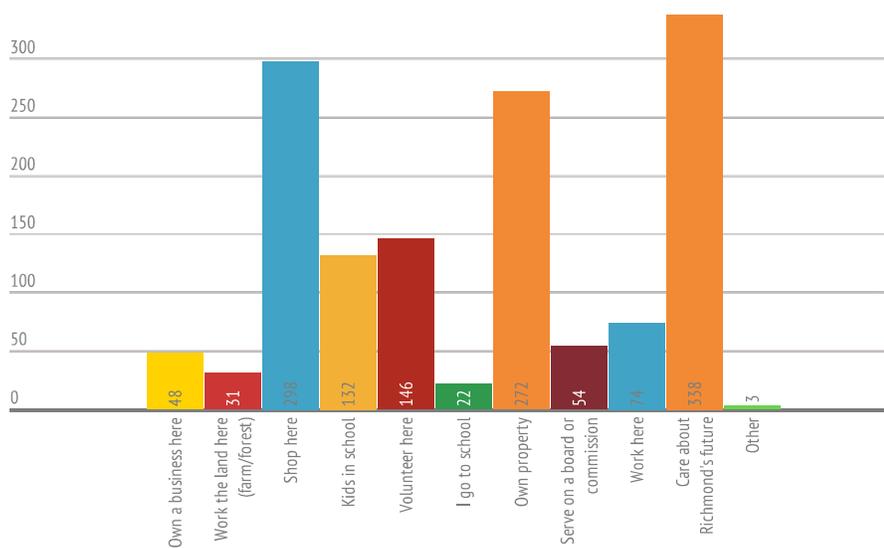
Over 80



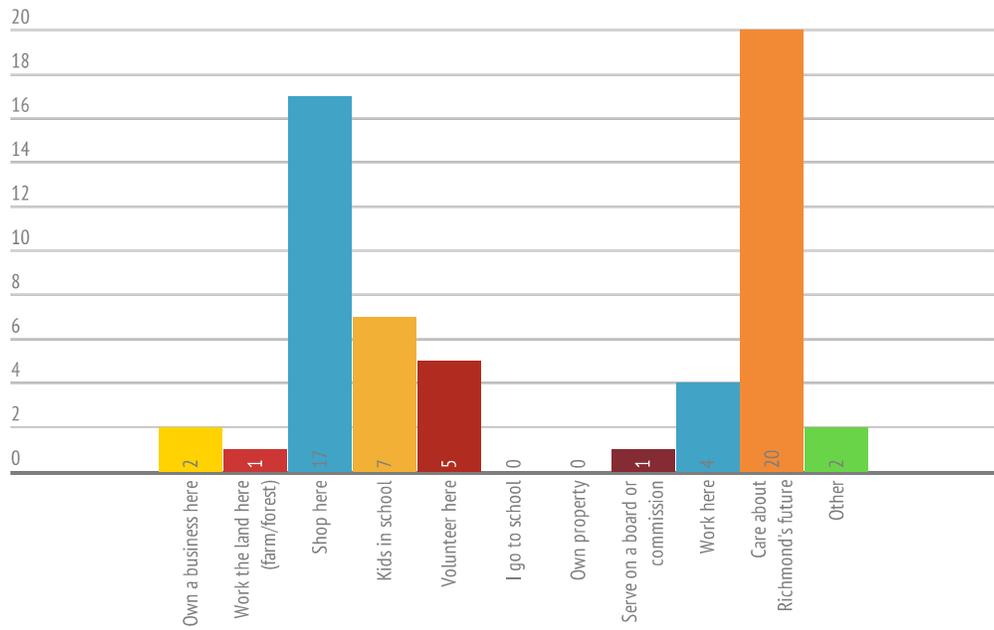
- 1. Riverview Commons Mobile Home Park/Governor Peck Road
- 2. Jericho Road/Southview/Hidden Pines/Valley View Road
- 3. Fays Corner/Kenyon Road/East Hill Road/Hinesburg Road
- 4. Richmond Village/Cochran Road
- 5. Jonesville/Snipe Ireland Road/Stage Road
- 6. Hinesburg Road/Hillview Road
- 7. Huntington Road
- 8. Dugway Road/Wes White Hill Road/Durand Road

Community Involvement

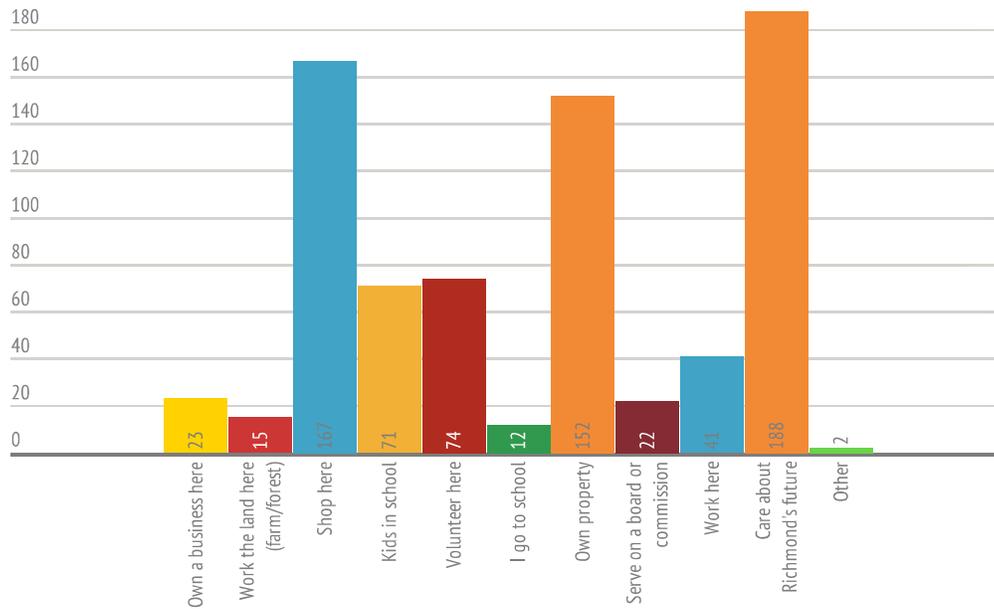
All



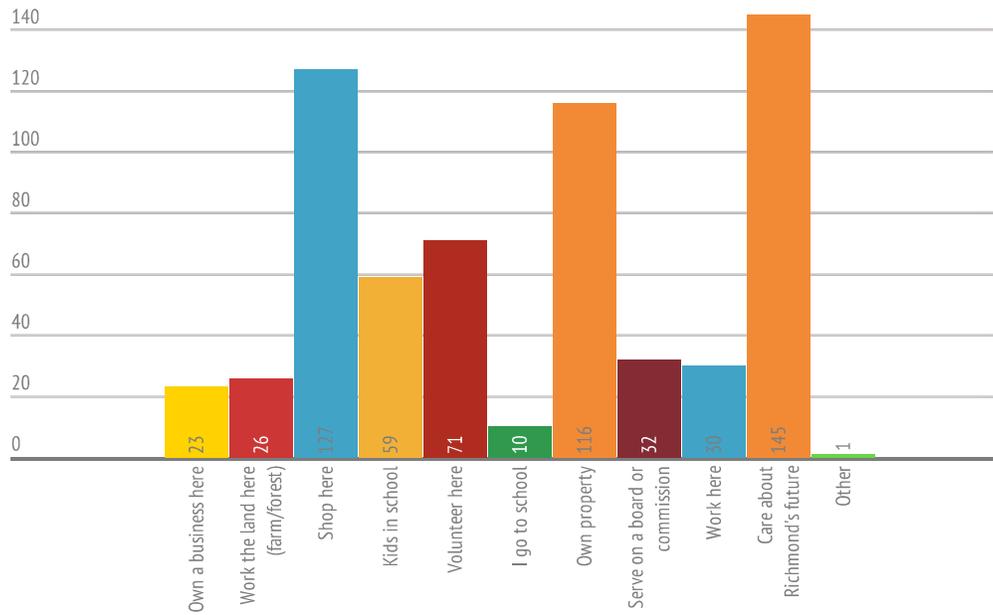
Non-Residents



Female

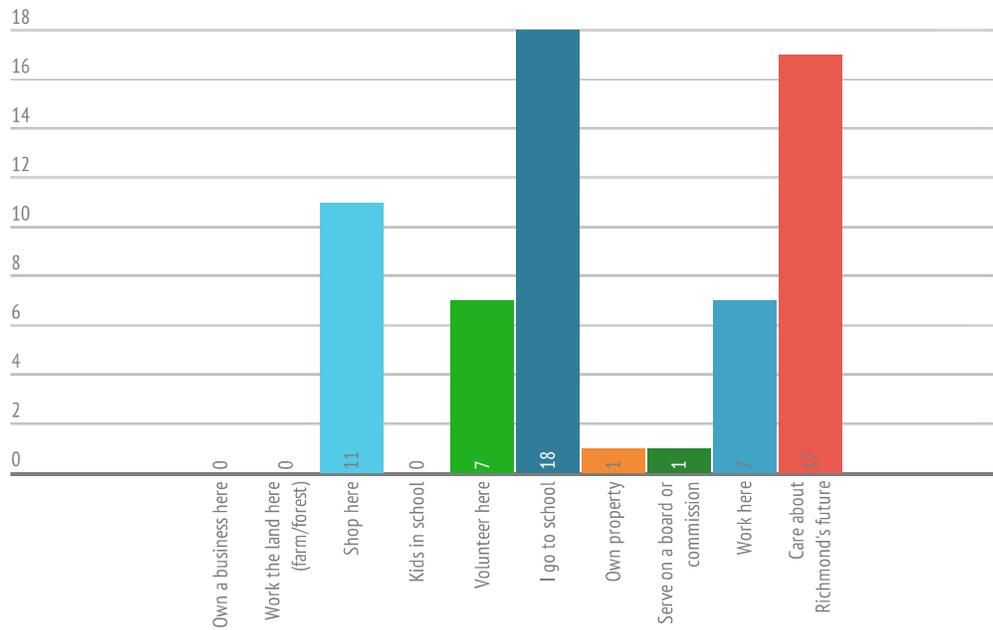


Male

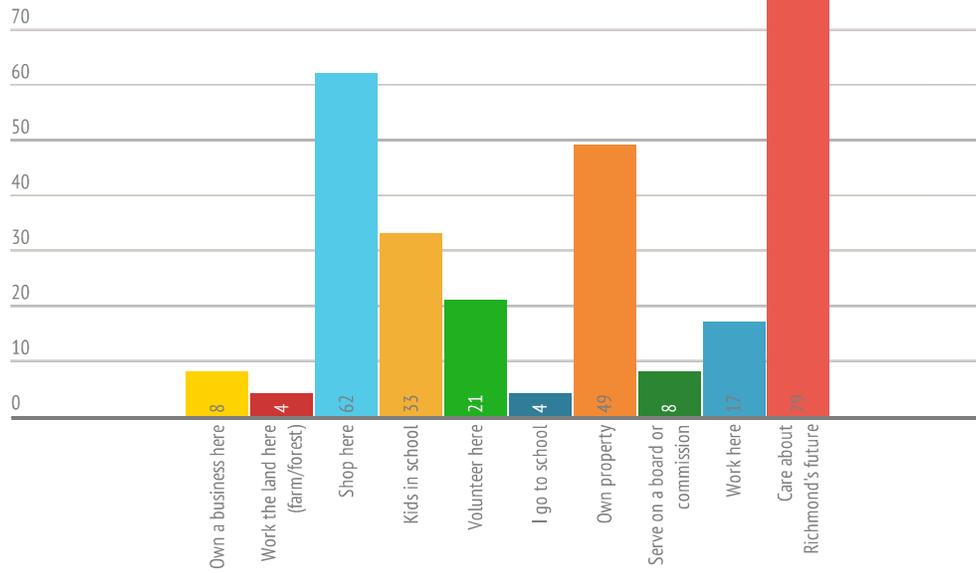


Involvement by Age Group

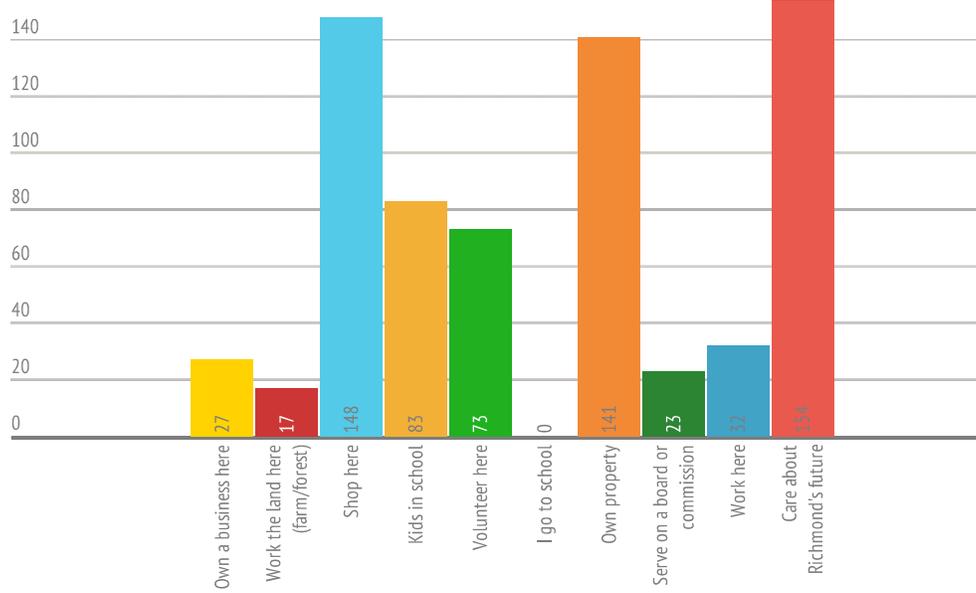
Under 20



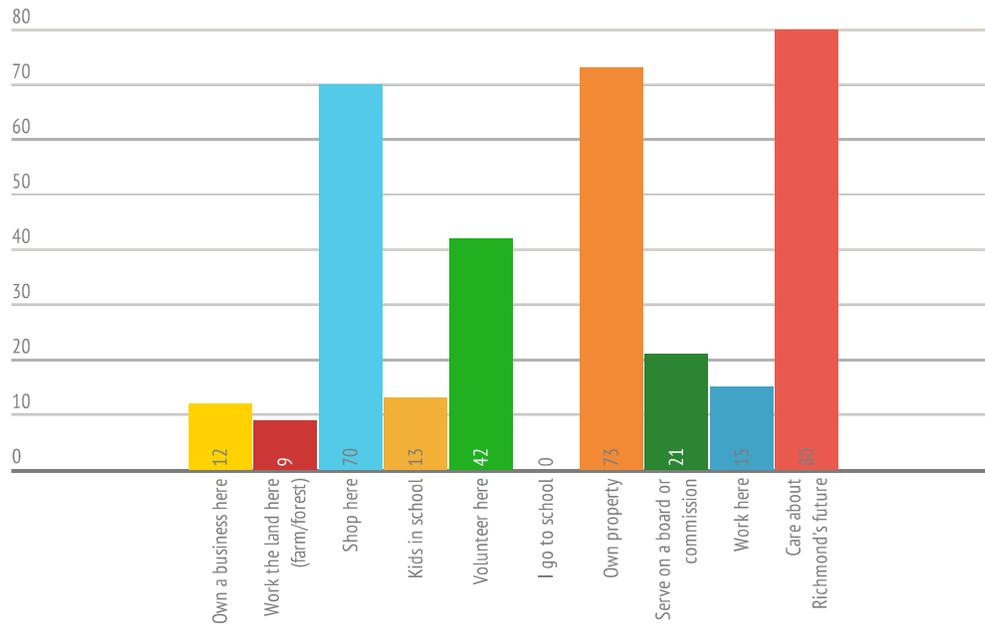
21-40



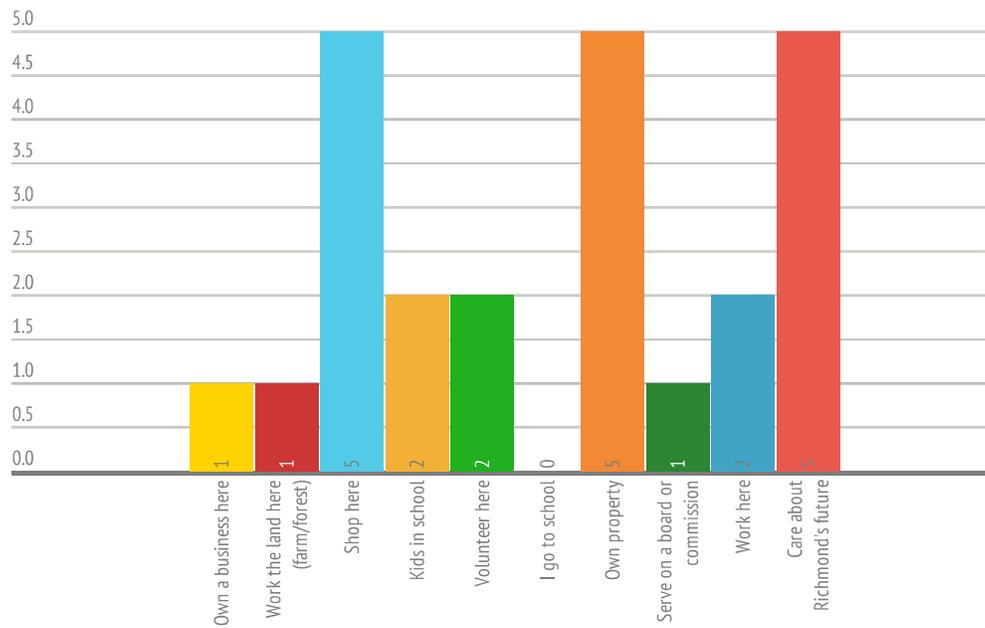
41-60



61-80

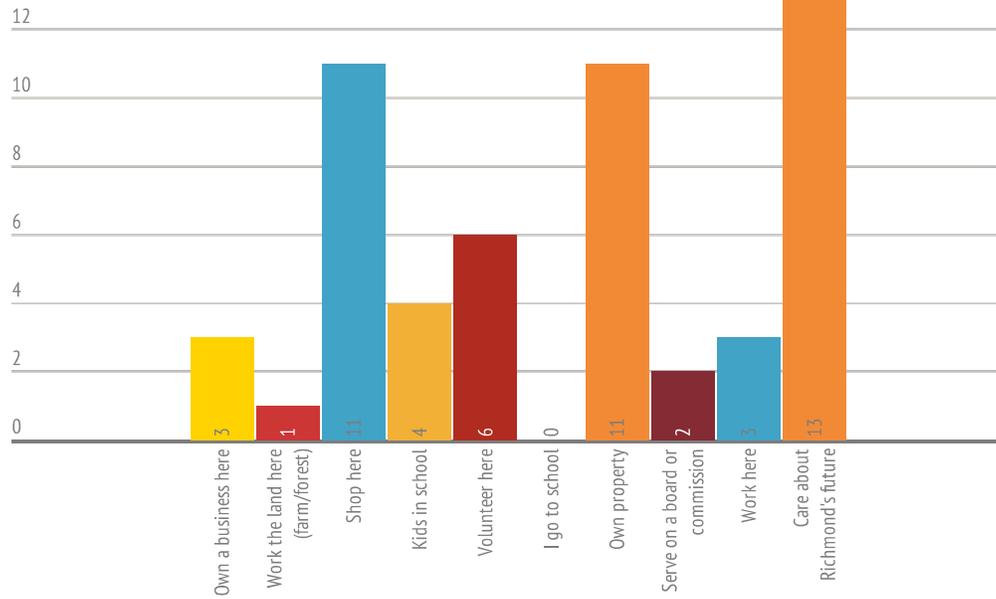


Over 80

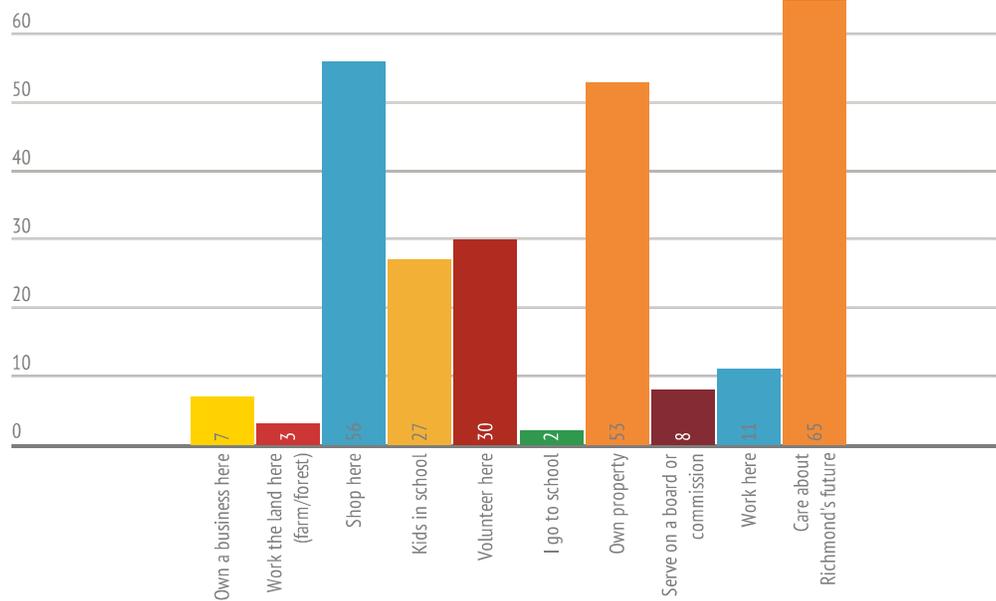


Involvement by Neighborhood

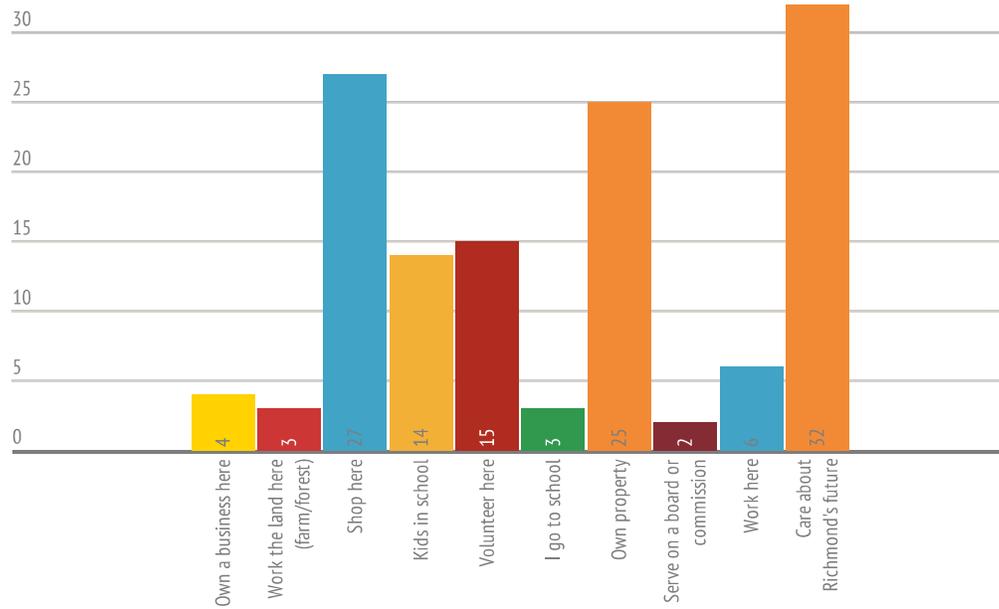
Riverview Commons/Gov Peck



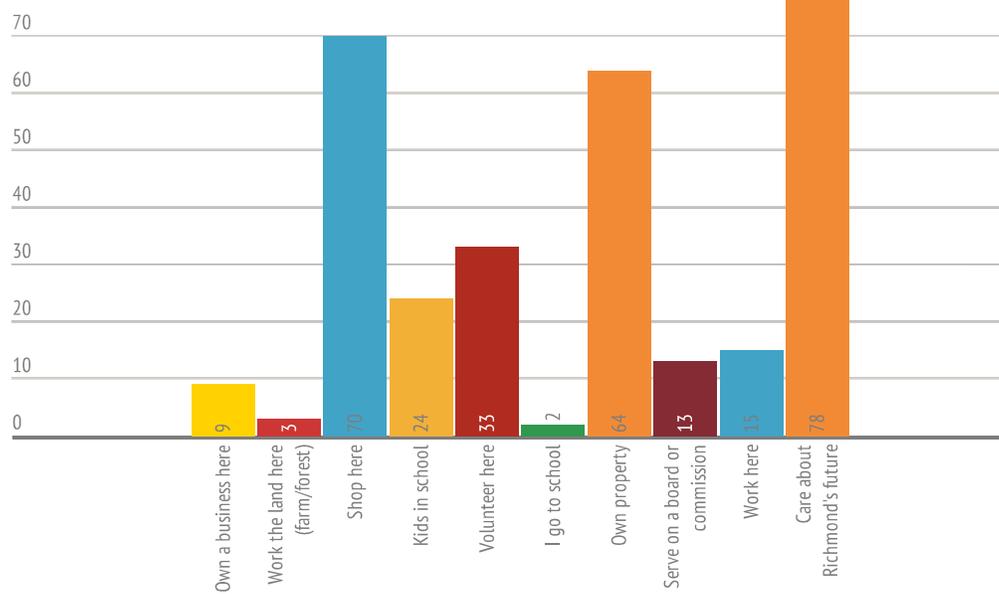
Jericho/Southview/Hidden Pines



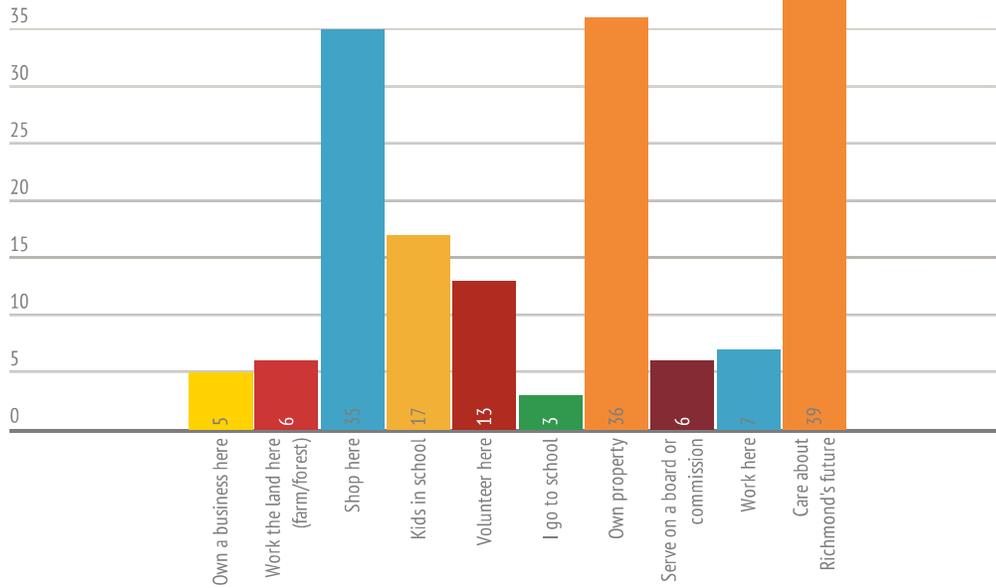
Fays Corner/Kenyon/East Hill



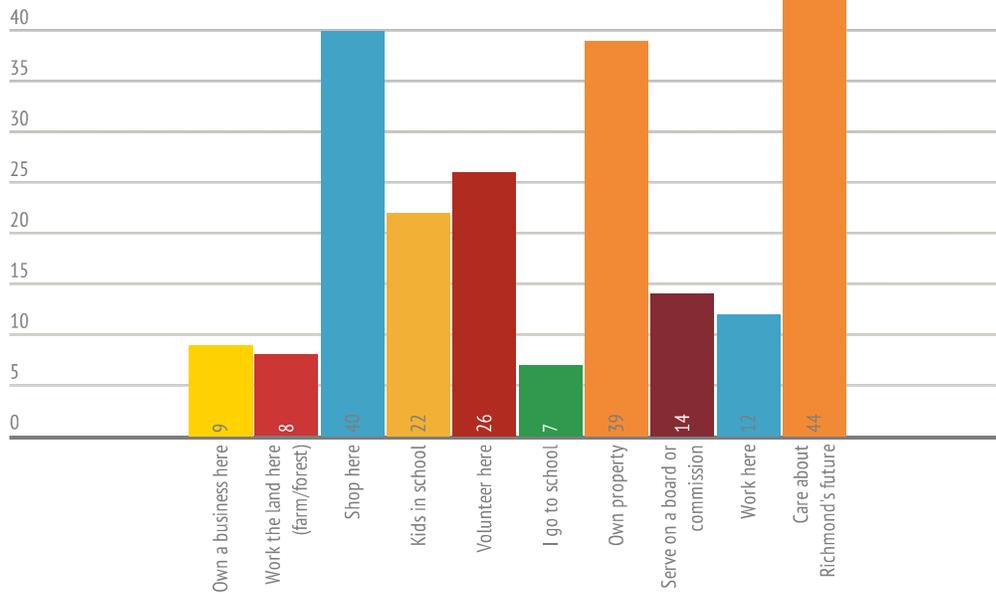
Village/Cochran Rd



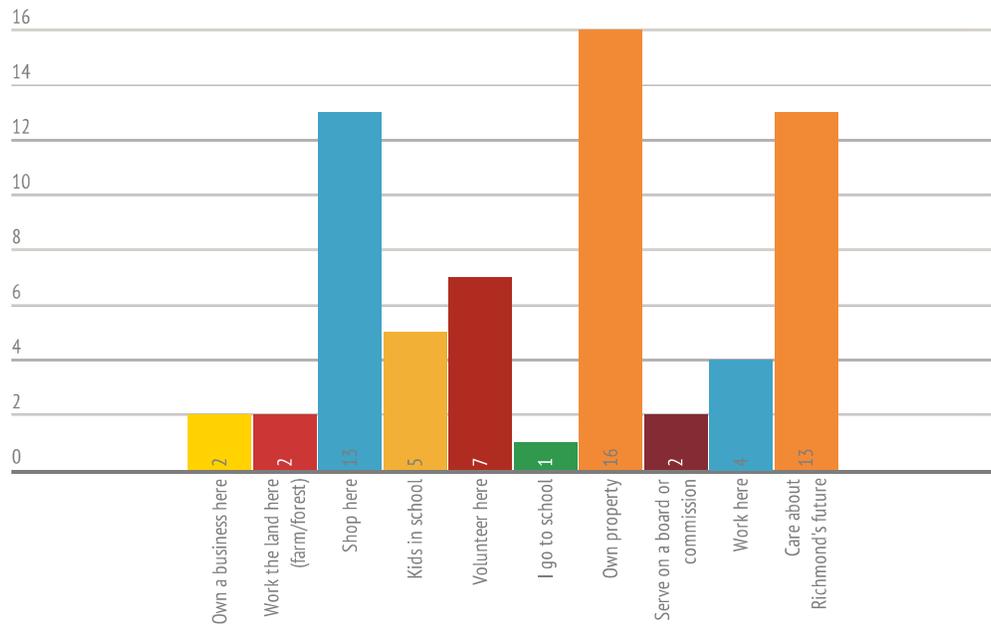
Jonesville/Snipe Ireland/Stage Rd



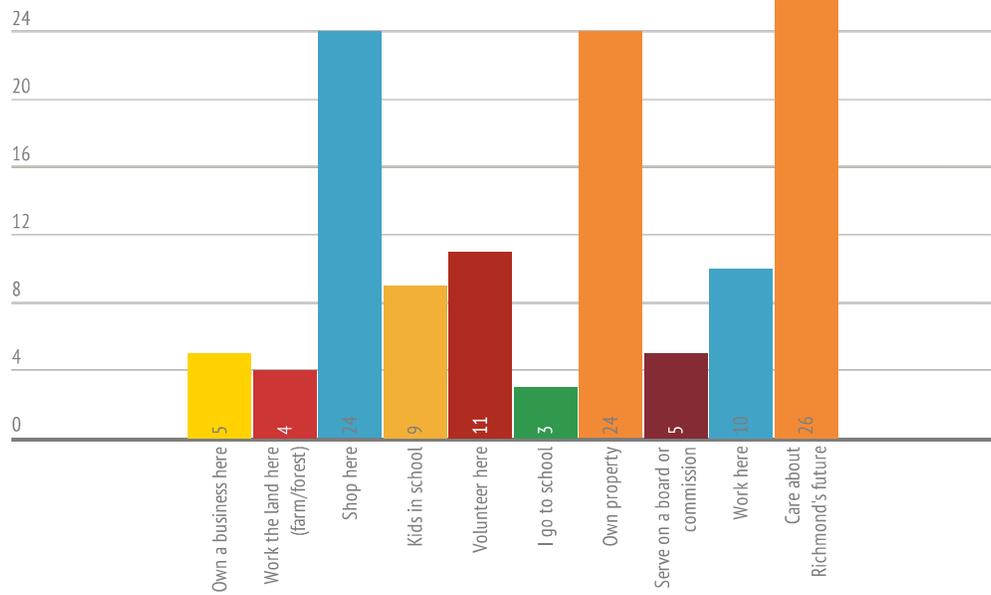
Hinesburg/Hillview Rd



Huntington Rd

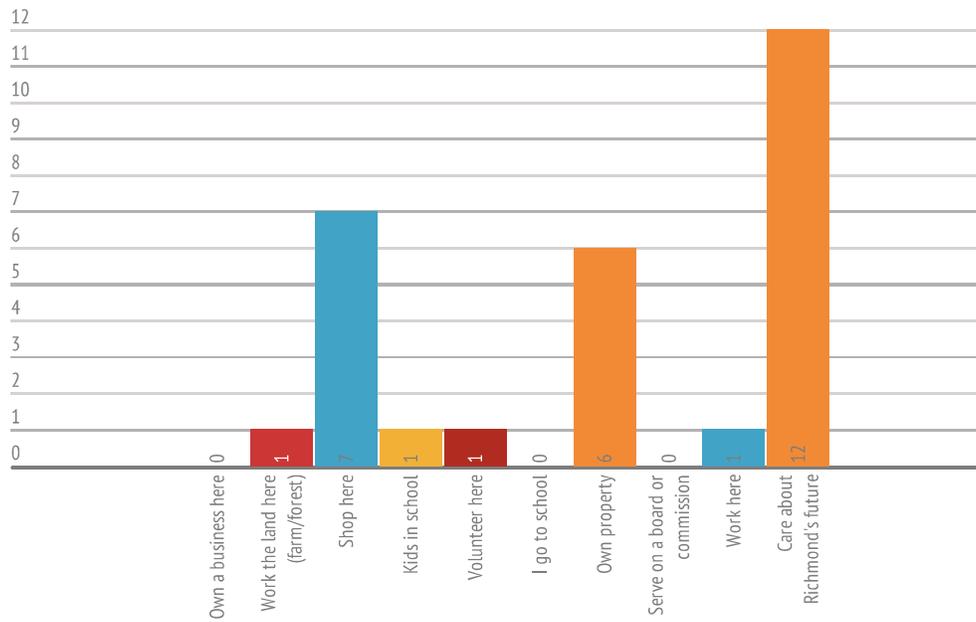


Dugway/Wes White Hill/Gov Peck Rd

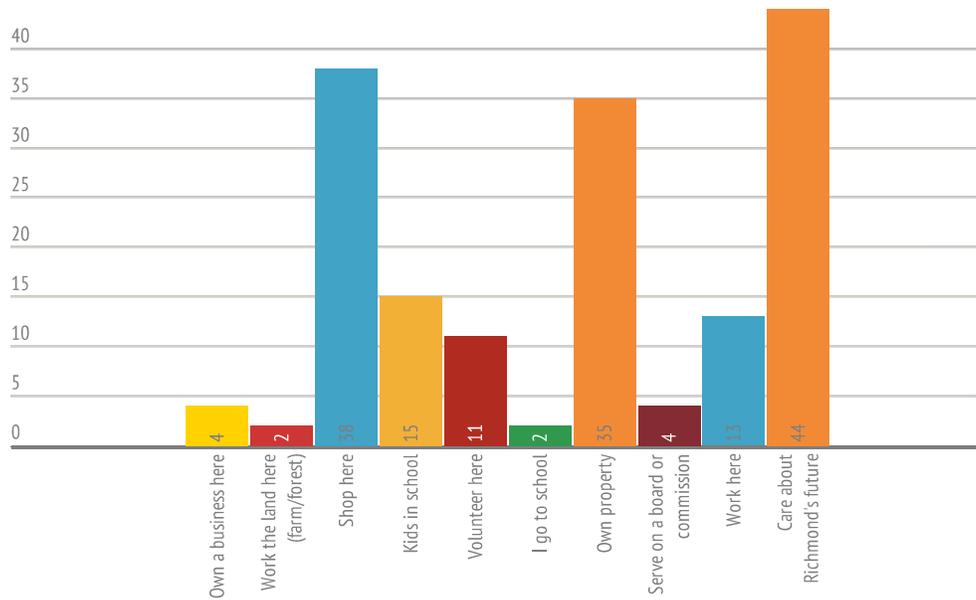


Involvement by Length of Residency

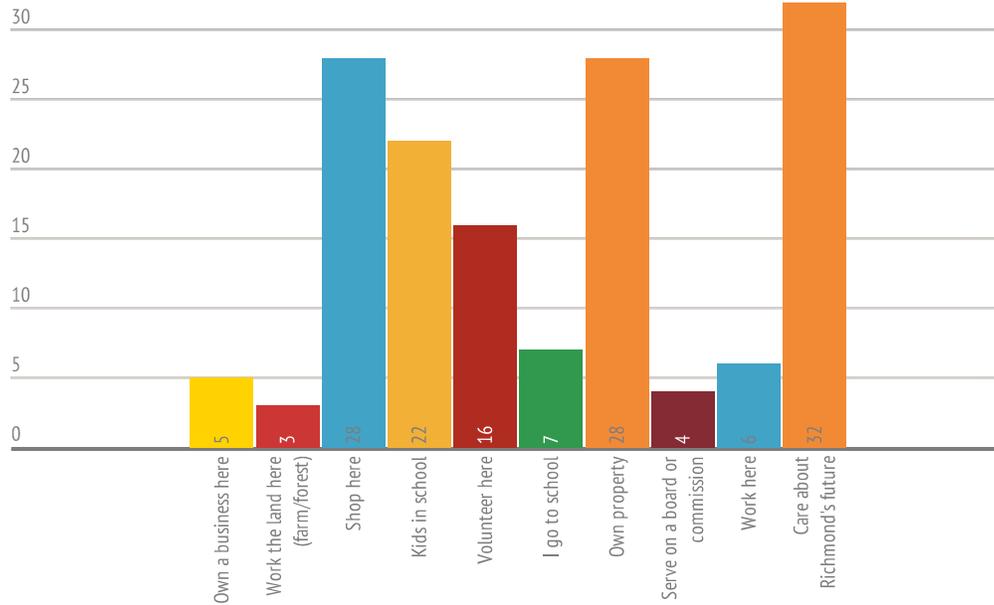
Less Than 1 Year



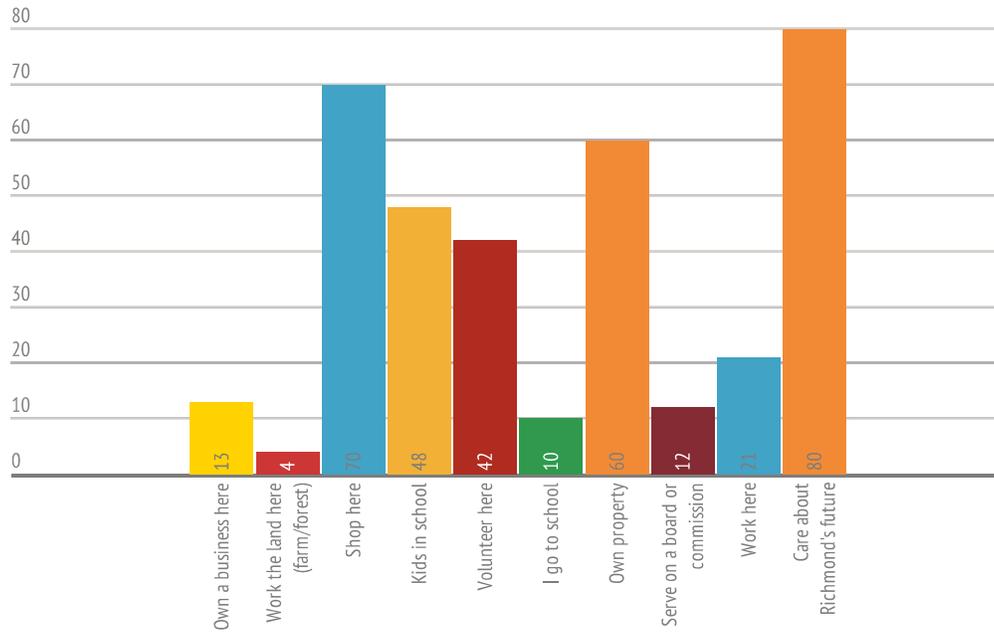
1-5 Years



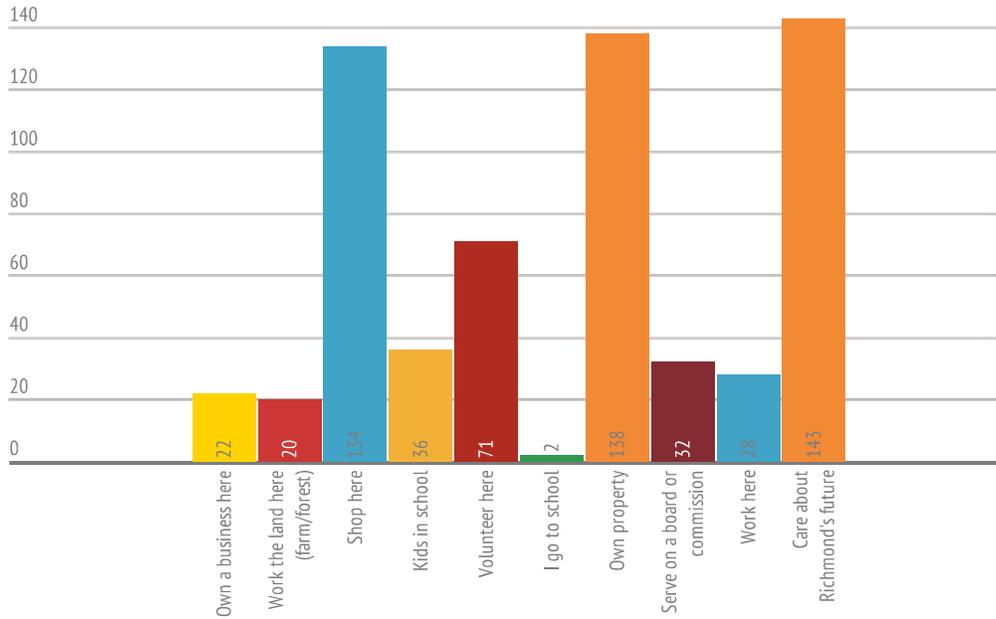
6-10 Years



11-20 Years

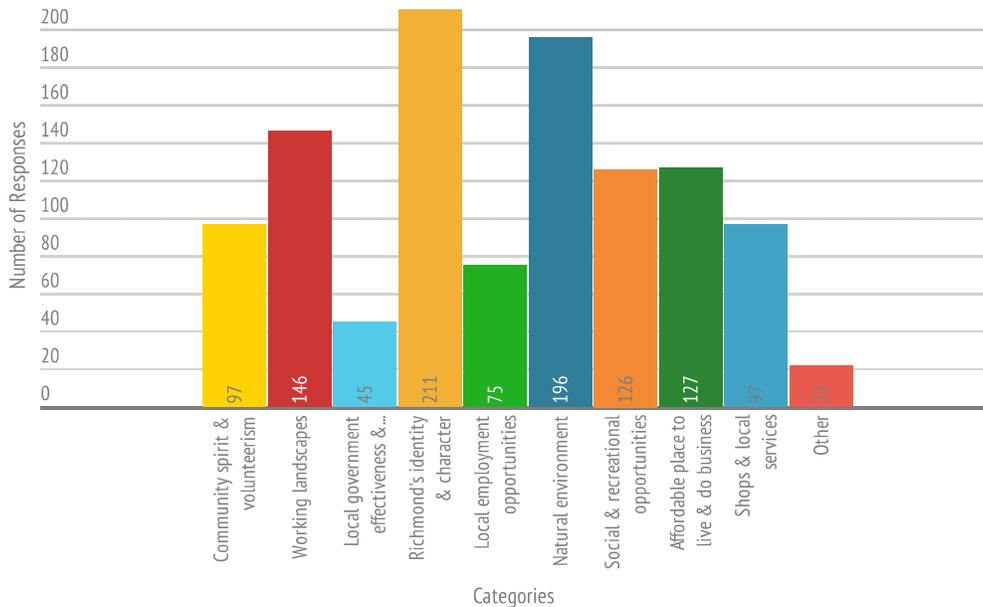


More than 20 Years



Richmond Priorities

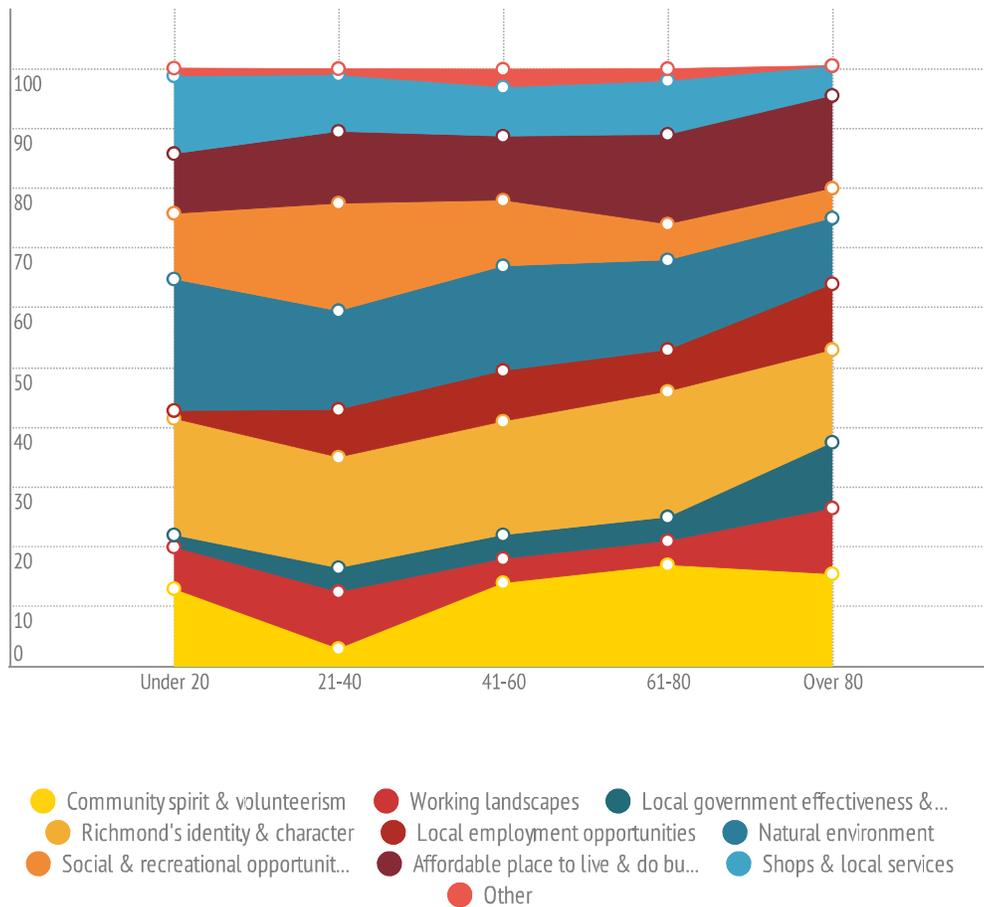
We shared nine big categories that we know are important in Richmond and asked people to choose the three that they thought were most important for Richmond's future. This is how they voted.



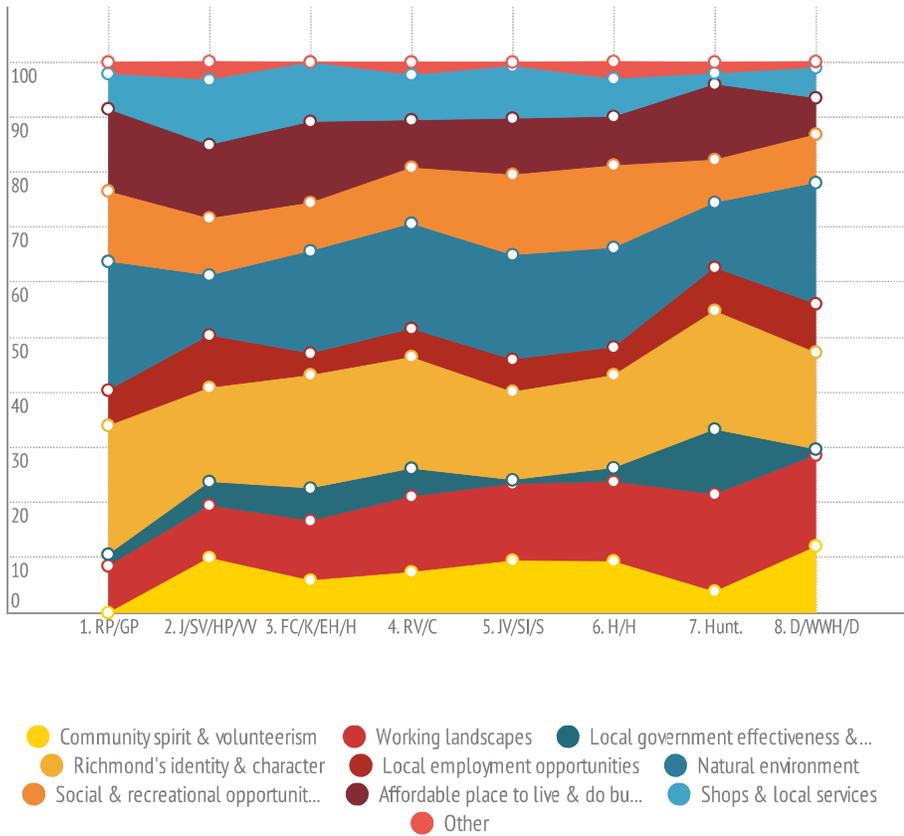
Priorities by Age Group

The three top priorities were important to all age groups, but some small differences are clear. Identity & Character was most important to all age groups except those under 20, who felt most strongly about Natural Environment, and also prioritized Shops & Local Services. Social & Recreational Opportunities were the second highest priority for 21-40 year olds. Working Landscapes and Affordability were equally important to those over 80.

There are also several clear trends with age: Affordability and Working Landscapes are more important as generations get older; Shops & Services and Social & Recreational Opportunities become less important.

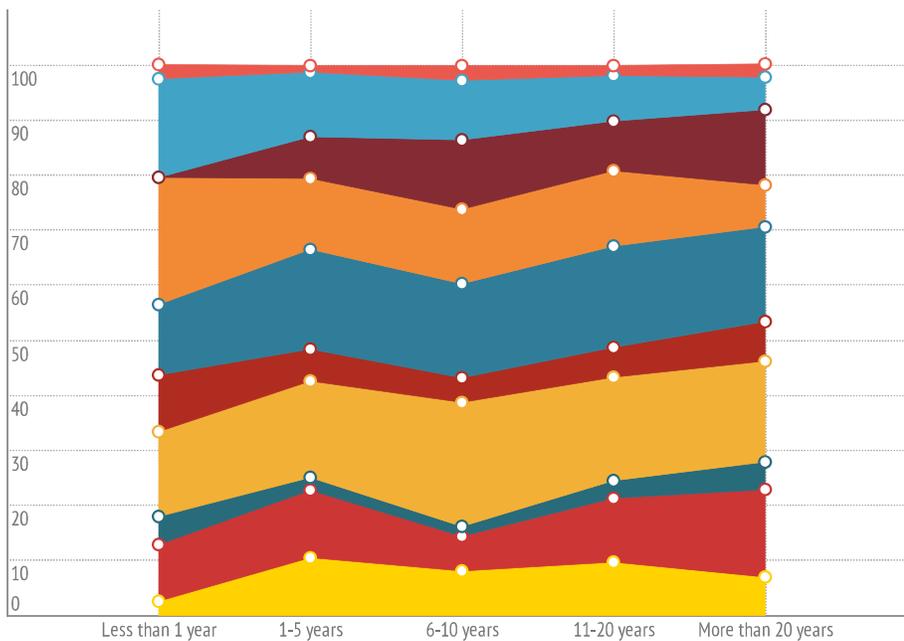


Priorities by Neighborhood



Priorities by Length of Residency

Priorities here mirror trends with age groups. The importance of Community Spirit & Volunteerism and Affordability increase with the length of time people have been in Richmond. Shops & Services and Social & Recreational Opportunities are most important to new residents.



What You Love About Richmond...

We asked people what they loved about Richmond, and gave them a blank space to reply. The answers ranged from one word to short novels, and covered just about every aspect of the community.

To analyze the responses, we first "coded" them - identifying common categories of responses, and recording whether or not each response mentioned that category. Turns out the top five categories are important across the board, for nearly all age groups. Location is also in the running for 21-60 year olds.

1 (tie!): Strong Community

Close community connections, cohesiveness, and support

1 (tie!): Services & Amenities

Everything you need, right in Richmond!

3: Small Town Character

Beautiful, quiet, and convenient village & countryside

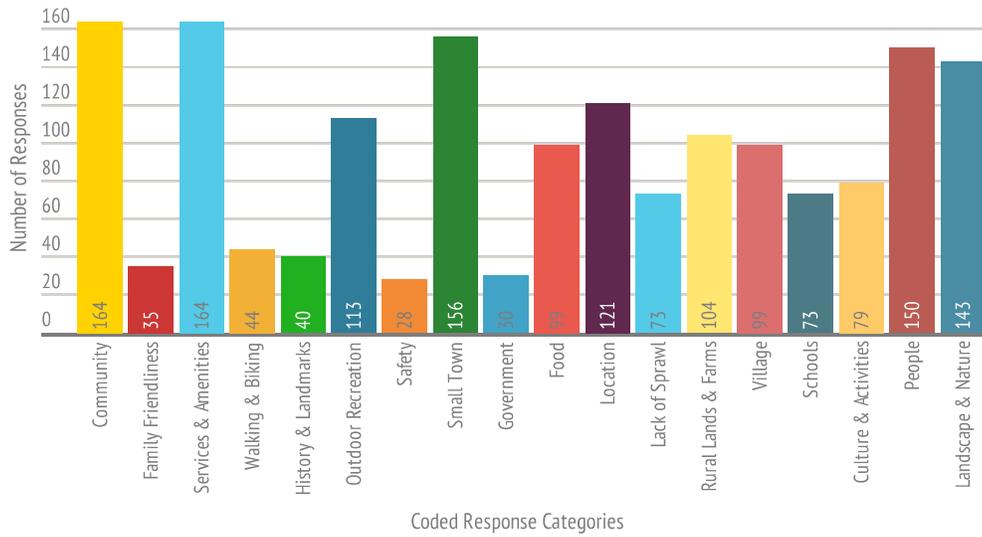
4: People

Great neighbors and friendly, diverse folks

5: Landscape & Environment

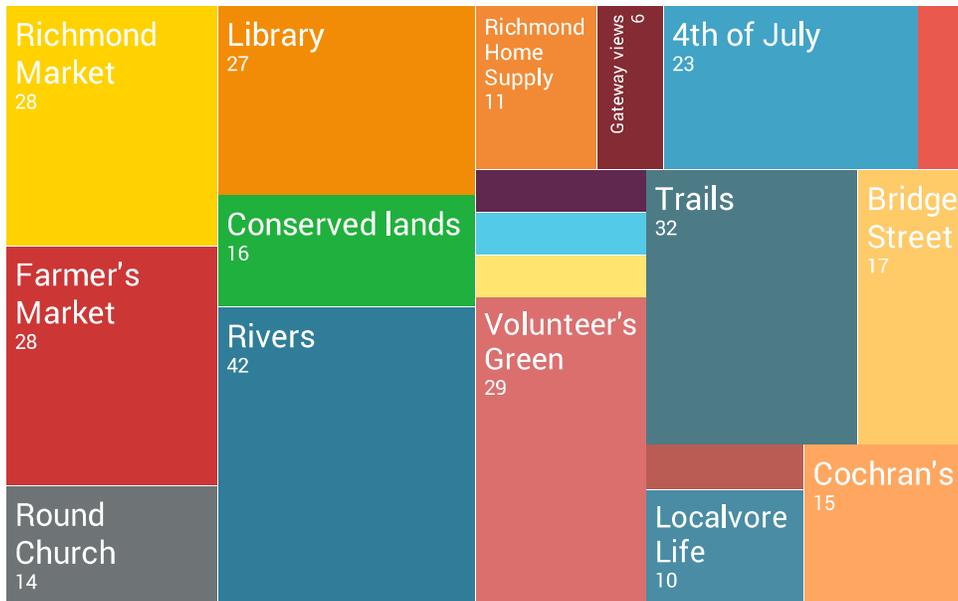
Beautiful views, rural landscape & healthy environment

More of What You Love...



Love... in Detail

Some of you are generalists - you love "food" or "businesses." But many of you go for the details - the unique places, traditions and characteristics that truly set Richmond apart. You shared dozens of things to love, but here are the most common ones.



What Makes Richmond Unique...

We also asked what sets Richmond apart from the crowd. You agreed that Richmond has a few key characteristics that make it different from many other towns nearby... and they are not always the same as what you love most about Richmond.

1 (tie!): Landscape & Environment

Open & green spaces; healthy environment; wildlife, rivers, mountains and fields

1 (tie!): Small Town Character

Friendly and unique small town feel; unique buildings; quiet, rural way of life

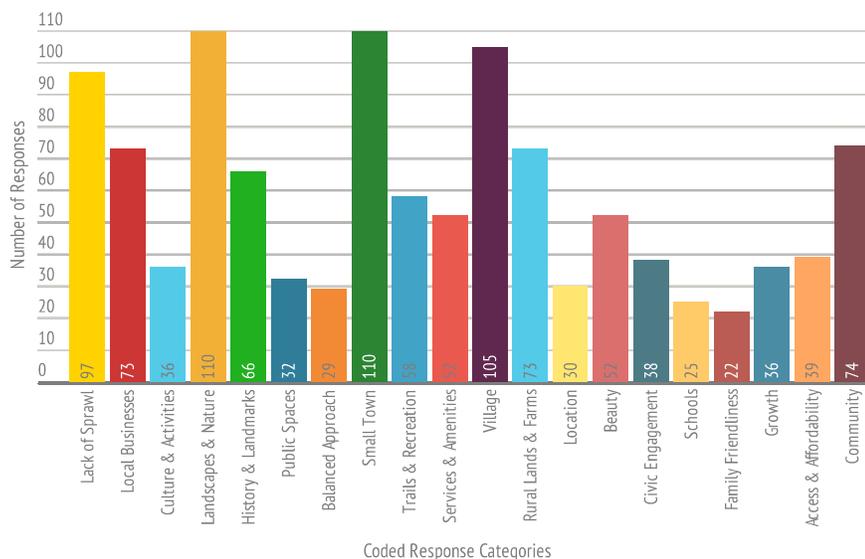
3: Village

Vibrant, compact & walkable village center with diverse services

4: Lack of Sprawl

Rural landscapes and low density development outside of village; no chain stores or cookie-cutter development; little congestion

More of What's Unique...



What Would Make Richmond Better...

Then we asked people what would make Richmond even better. Some folks felt Richmond is already perfect, but most people had an idea or two.

1: New (and improved!) businesses

New businesses and services (restaurants, pharmacy, coffee shop), increased business variety and quality

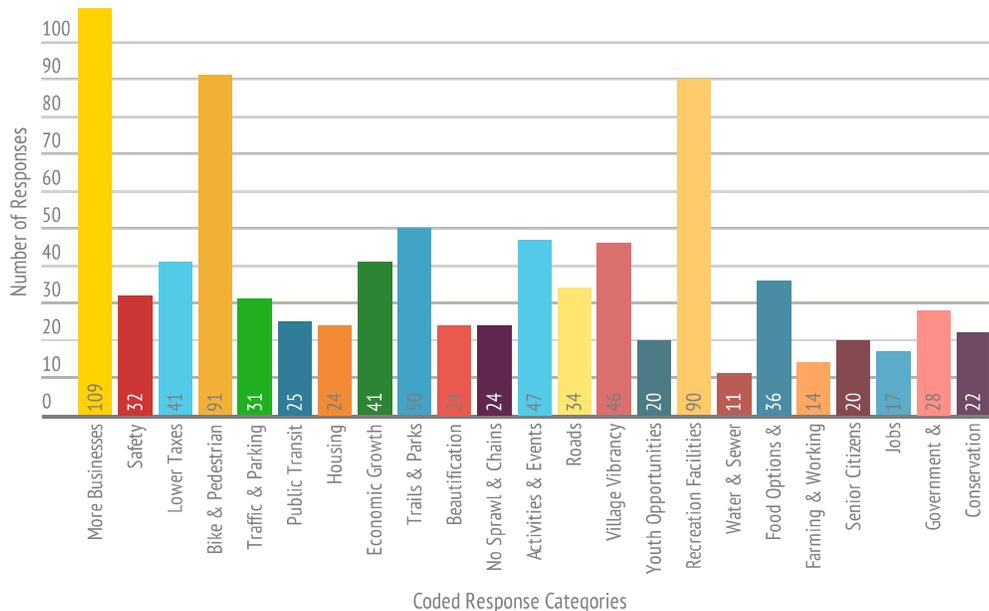
2: Safe Bike & Walking Routes

Sidewalks, bike paths, walking paths, trails and bike/pedestrian safety improvements

3: Recreation Offerings

Recreation facilities (pool, tennis courts, senior center, arts venues) and programs for all ages

More of What Would Make Richmond Better...



Top Improvements by Age Group

We took the top three ideas from each age group, and compared them across all age groups. The size of each square represents its importance to that age group. Look for important differences for youth & seniors.

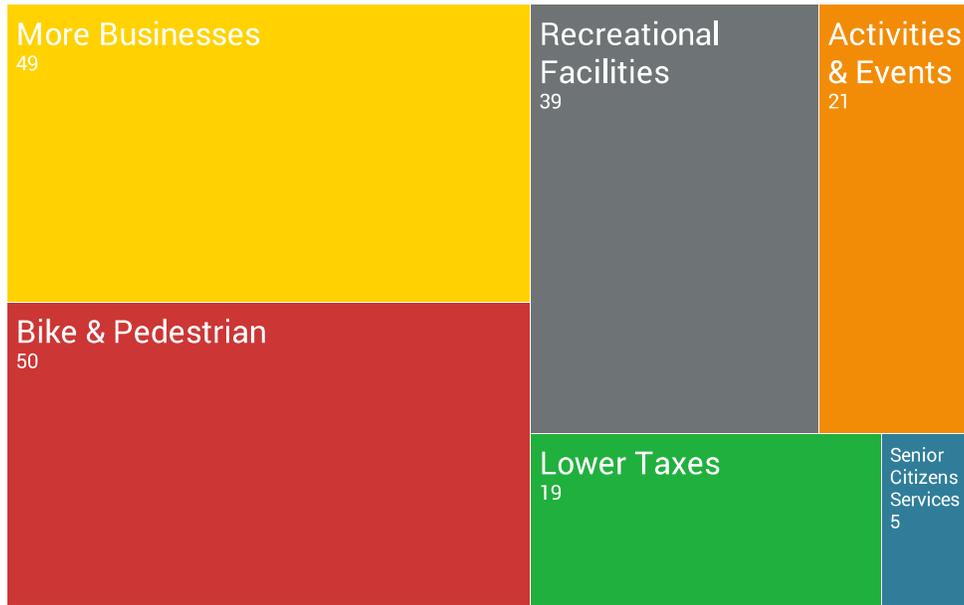
Under 20



21-40



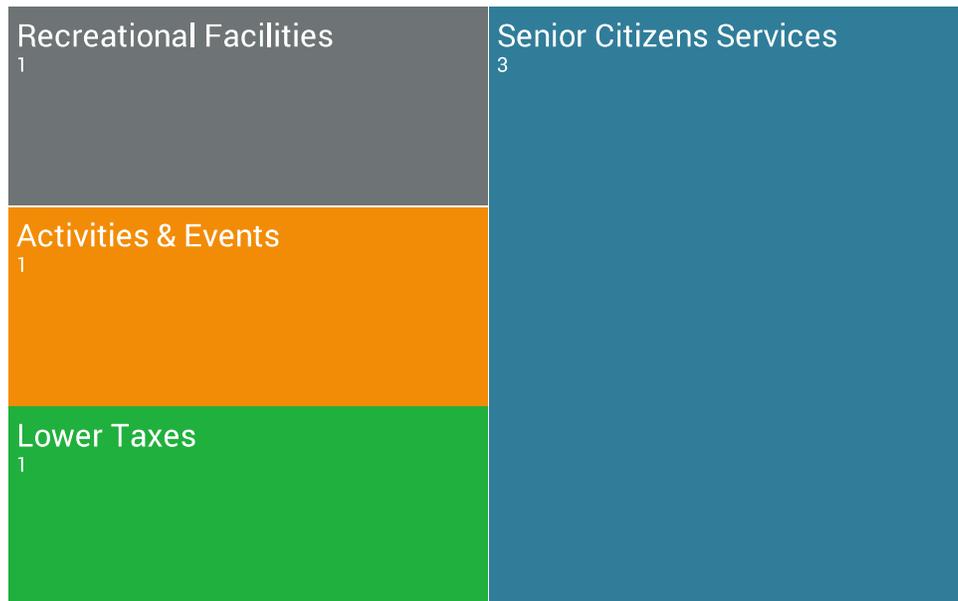
41-60



61-80

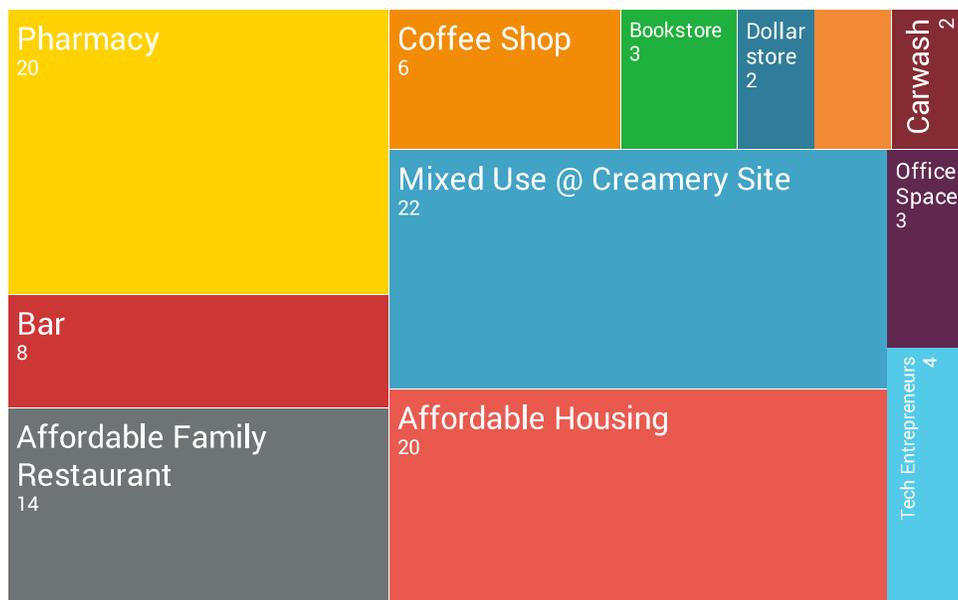


Over 80



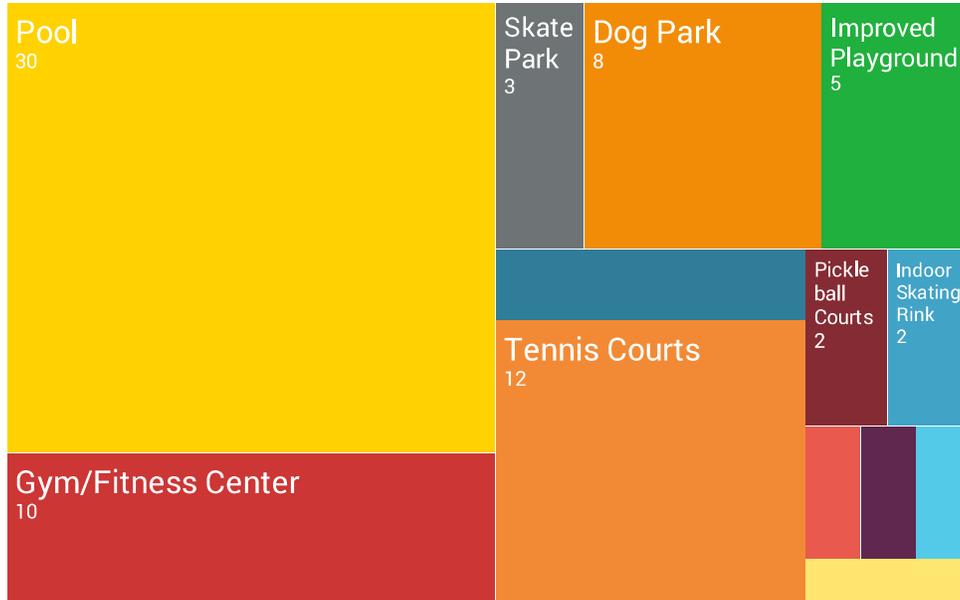
Desired Businesses & Development

We heard nearly 30 distinct ideas for types of businesses that people would like to see in Richmond. Here are the most common suggestions.



Desired Recreation Facilities

You shared more than a dozen ideas for recreation facilities that would help you get out, be active and healthy in Richmond. Here are the most popular ideas.



Desired Community Events & Facilities

You shared more than a dozen ideas for recreation facilities that would help you get out, be active and healthy in Richmond. Here are the most popular ideas.



If You Had a Magic Wand and Could Change One Thing...



What happens with all of this information? It becomes Richmond's community vision. Richmond's Town Plan Steering Committee took all of these responses, grouped them together, and condensed them into a set of 11 core values and an overarching statement about our vision for the future. That vision will then be used to guide town decision-making, policies, priorities, and our new Town Plan. Learn more at www.richmondvtfuture.weebly.com.

**Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC)
Resolution**

Richmond's 2018 Comprehensive Plan, Planning Process and Enhanced Energy Plan

WHEREAS, Title 24, V.S.A. §4350 in part requires that CCRPC shall review the municipal planning process of our member municipalities including review of plans; that each review shall include a public hearing which is noticed as provided in 24 V.S.A. § 4350(b); and that before approving a plan the Commission shall find that it:

1. is consistent with the goals established in Section 4302 of this title;
2. is compatible with its Regional Plan;
3. is compatible with approved plans of other municipalities in the region;
4. contains all the elements included in § 4382(a)(1)-(12) of this Title;

WHEREAS, Title 24, V.S.A. §4352 in part states that a municipality that wishes to seek a Determination of Energy Compliance may submit its plan to the Regional Planning Commission, if the regional plan has an affirmative determination of energy compliance; that each review shall include a public hearing; and that the Commission shall issue an affirmative determination of energy compliance if the plan:

1. is consistent with the regional plan;
2. includes an energy element;
3. is consistent with Vermont's energy goals and policies; and
4. meets the standards for issuing a determination of energy compliance included in the State energy plans, as described by the Vermont Department of Public Service in their Energy Planning Standards for Municipal Plans;

WHEREAS, the CCRPC's 2018 *Chittenden County Regional Plan, entitled the ECOS Plan*, adopted June 20, 2018, received an affirmative determination of energy compliance on August 2, 2018;

WHEREAS, the CCRPC at its September 19, 2018 meeting approved the *CCRPC Guidelines and Standards for Confirmation of Municipal Planning Processes, Approval of Municipal Plans and Granting Determination of Energy Compliance* dealing with local plans and CCRPC action;

WHEREAS, The Town of Richmond, Vermont is a member municipality of this Commission;

WHEREAS, The Town of Richmond formally requested CCRPC to approve its 2018 Town Plan and confirm its planning process on May 21, 2018 and formally requested CCRPC to grant a determination of energy compliance on November 19, 2018;

WHEREAS, the Planning Advisory Committee warned a public hearing on November 15, 2017 and held a public hearing on December 6, 2017 to review the 2018 Town Plan for approval and confirmation of the planning process; and the Planning Advisory Committee warned a public hearing on November 26, 2018 and held a public hearing on December 12, 2018 for granting a determination of energy compliance, at the CCRPC offices, located at 110 W. Canal Street, Suite 202, Winooski, Vermont;

WHEREAS, the Planning Advisory Committee reviewed the records and recommended that the Commission approve Richmond's 2018 Town Plan as meeting the requirements of 24 V.S.A. § 4350 and the *Guidelines and Standards for Confirmation of Municipal Planning Processes, Approval of Municipal Plans and Granting Determinations of Energy Compliance* and confirm the community's planning process as consistent with Title 24, Chapter 117, as described in CCRPC's staff review, dated June 5, 2018 and the minutes of the Planning Advisory Committee from June 13, 2018;

WHEREAS, the Planning Advisory Committee reviewed the records and recommended that the Commission grant an affirmative determination of energy compliance to Richmond's 2018 Town Plan as meeting the requirements of Title 24, V.S.A. §4352 and the *Guidelines and Standards for Confirmation of Municipal Planning Processes, Approval of Municipal Plans and Granting Determinations of Energy Compliance*, as described in CCRPC's staff review, dated November 30, 2018 and the minutes of the Planning Advisory Committee from December 12, 2018; and

WHEREAS, the voters of the Town of Richmond adopted the 2018 Richmond Town Plan on Election Day, November 6, 2018.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CHITTENDEN COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION, that, in compliance with 24 V.S.A. § 4350 and the *Guidelines and Standards for Confirmation of Municipal Planning Processes, Approval of Municipal Plans and Granting Determinations of Energy Compliance*, CCRPC approves the 2018 Richmond Comprehensive Plan and the Commission finds that said Plan:

1. is consistent with the goals established in Section 4302 of Title 24;
2. is compatible with the 2018 *Chittenden County Regional Plan, entitled the ECOS Plan*, adopted June 20, 2018;

3. is compatible with the approved plans from other adjacent Chittenden County municipalities; and
4. contains all the elements included in § 4382(a)(1)-(12) and/or is making substantial progress toward attainment of the elements of this subsection;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED BY THE CHITTENDEN COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION, that, in compliance with 24 V.S.A. § 4350 and the *Guidelines and Standards for Confirmation of Municipal Planning Processes and Approval of Municipal Plans*, CCRPC confirms the Town of Richmond's municipal planning process.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED BY THE CHITTENDEN COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION, that, in compliance with Title 24, V.S.A. §4352 and the *Guidelines and Standards for Confirmation of Municipal Planning Processes, Approval of Municipal Plans and Granting Determinations of Energy Compliance*, CCRPC grants an affirmative determination of energy compliance to the 2018 Richmond Town Plan.

Dated at Winooski, this 16th day of January, 2019.

CHITTENDEN COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION



Christopher D. Roy, Chair