

Huntington, VT Town Plan



—Adopted September 8, 2014—



—Acknowledgments—

The Huntington Planning Commission would like to thank the many people who contributed to the content of this document and to especially recognize former Planning Commission members Julia Austin, Dana Cummings, Gordon Miller, Ginger Lubkowitz & Heather Pembroke for their work on this Plan.

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—2014—

Revision History—Huntington Town Plan

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| • September 8, 2014 | Selectboard adopted this new Huntington VT Town Plan |
| • May 05, 2014 | Selectboard's Public Hearing on the draft Town Plan |
| • December 05, 2013 | Planning Commission's Public Hearing on the draft of a new Town Plan |
| • June 18, 2012 | Selectboard Re-adopted the June 18, 2007 Town Plan without revisions |

Cover Photo: Owen Rachampbell

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Use of the Town Plan

This Town Plan (Plan) has been prepared for the Huntington Selectboard, Huntington Planning Commission, Development Review Board, Huntington Conservation Commission, Brewster-Pierce School Board, employers and employees of the Town of Huntington (Town), and most of all, the residents of Huntington. In its most basic form, it is a tool and guide for decision-making: a point of reference.

The intent of the Town Plan is to:

- invite people and organizations to think about and set priorities for the future of the Town
- bring people together to discuss and take action on issues of common concern
- be a basis for the development and revision of the Town's Land Use Regulations
- inform the Town's capital budget process
- be a guide and a resource for the development of community programs and other critical community decisions so that they reflect the Town's priorities
- be Huntington's standard for review by the State of Vermont (State) and regional organizations under the provisions of the Regional Plan, the provisions of Act 200 and Act 250, and other legislative considerations
- be a resource for decision making and cooperative projects with neighboring and regional municipalities and the State
- provide a comprehensive and reliable source of information about the Town of Huntington

A Vision for Huntington's Future

The Huntington Town Plan provides a vision and a framework for our residents to use to debate, discuss, and reach consensus about our Town's future. This Plan addresses some of the issues related to continuing our Town's identity as a rural, residential Vermont town with agricultural, historic, and natural resources.

The Town Plan strives to find the best approach to support and safeguard our two invaluable resources: the hardworking residents and the distinctive and beautiful landscape of the Huntington Valley. It also considers the Town's history, physical characteristics, and the current social and economic conditions that impact our lives.

Guiding Principles

The following are the guiding principles of the Huntington Town Plan. All Town policies and regulations should resonate with these guiding principles and further the goals of this plan.

1. Promote the growth of a diverse, viable, and creative local economy that allows residents the opportunity to live and thrive in Huntington.
2. Retain and steward Huntington's historic, scenic, and natural characteristics while ensuring the preservation of its working landscapes for future generations.
3. Encourage historic settlement patterns with new growth focused in Huntington's designated Village Centers.
4. Ensure a sustainable, affordable, and stable tax rate by evaluating all short and long term growth and development strategies in conjunction with the capital plan and operations budget.
5. Restrain rapid, large-scale, or otherwise inappropriate growth that would negatively affect Huntington's fiscal condition, environmental quality, and/or rural character.
6. Promote energy conservation and encourage renewable energy use and development that is consistent with the scale and environmental characteristics of Huntington.
7. Support a safe, well maintained range of transportation options including alternatives to the automobile.
8. Ensure high quality educational opportunities for all Huntington residents.
9. Provide for long-range planning consistent with regional and State guidelines.

1. Land Use

The major challenge facing our Town's land use policy is how best to focus growth potential so that we preserve our rural and village character while balancing growth, the provision of services, and the demand that property taxes place on residents.

Huntington, Vermont, is a narrow river valley town at 44.3 N Latitude, 73.0 W Longitude. The elevation ranges from about 600 feet above sea level in the lower river valley to 4,083 feet at the peak of Camel's Hump.

The woodlands of the Hinesburg and Starksboro hills, the foothills of Camel's Hump, the mountains, and the Huntington River provide most of the Town's natural and topographic identity. The Town's character and identity are formed by the historic village and farm buildings and activities in the river valley, which provide a sharp delineation between developed and natural landscapes.

Planning surveys conducted in 1999 and 2012 have documented the Townspeople's desire to conserve open space. Regulations were enacted to conserve farm and forest lands by encouraging density in the village centers and mandating less density in rural areas. However, in those rural areas, the development pattern has added to roadside sprawl by widely distributing house sites resulting in both physical and visual fragmentation of the rural landscape. Clustering houses in villages and small, hamlet-like areas could help to retain the rural character, agriculture, forestry, environmentally sensitive areas, and scenic views in the Rural Residential Zone.

Many residents of Huntington treasure the views and recreational opportunities that open fields and forestlands provide, but much of this land is privately owned. A delicate balance between development rights and keeping fields and forests open is essential. If our Town can address both needs, the future of our natural and roadside beauty will be more assured. Preserving this balance in our village and rural identity will maintain and increase the value of our lands and resources.

Future zoning changes will be necessary to conserve open land during residential development in both rural and village settings, and to protect groundwater sources and environmentally fragile lands. Minimization of hazards to life and property due to flooding and erosion of the Town's brooks and river is also a priority.

Our task is to develop a template for residential and compatible non-residential growth in keeping with the Town's character as expressed by its open space, historic village centers, usable agricultural land, and environmentally fragile natural resources.

Town of Huntington Zoning Districts & Overlays

Groundwater Protection Overlay

The purpose of the Ground Protection Overlay is to protect public health and safety by

minimizing contamination of vulnerable aquifers and by preserving/protecting existing and potential sources of drinking water. There are four public water supplies in Huntington: Fire District #1 (serving Roberts Park and Huntington Woods), Brewster-Pierce School, Sleepy Hollow Inn, and the Huntington part of Lazy Brook Park; and three Source Protection Areas. The Source Protection Areas are referenced on Maps 2 and 6.

Flood Hazard District

The purpose of the Flood Hazard (overlay) District is to protect public health, safety, and welfare by discouraging building or other incompatible development within flood areas and to ensure that private property owners are eligible for flood insurance under the National Flood Insurance Program. The District is located on Maps 2 and 6.

Fluvial Erosion Hazard

The purpose of the Fluvial Erosion Hazard (overlay) District is to protect public health, safety, and welfare by discouraging building or other incompatible development within erosion prone areas of our brooks and streams. Property owners in this District need to consider the risk that the river may move and damage their property. The District is located on Maps 2, 3, and 6.

Conservation District

The purpose of the Conservation District is to protect the Town's forests, watersheds, wildlife habitat, and environmentally sensitive upland areas and to maintain the scenic beauty of the mountain ridge and skyline. Forestry, agriculture, and related uses are permitted, but there are no conditional uses allowed in the District. The District is located on Map 6: Land Use Districts Map and covers approximately 4,924 acres.

Woodland District

The purpose of the Woodland District is to protect environmentally fragile high elevation areas, unfragmented forestland, and wildlife habitat from incompatible use. Most of the land is forested with generally steep slopes and shallow soils or bedrock. The Town's goal is to limit road maintenance, school busing, and other services in outlying areas. Permitted uses are forestry, agriculture, and accessory structures. Conditional uses include recreational and cultural activities and seasonal dwellings. The District, which includes all land from 1,500 to 2,000 feet above sea level in the eastern portion of Huntington, is delineated on Map 6: Land Use Districts Map and covers approximately 3,892 acres.

Rural Residential District

The purpose of the Rural Residential District is to allow rural development while limiting its impact on the rural character of the District, usable agricultural land, unfragmented forests,

environmentally significant areas, aquifer protection areas, wetlands, and scenic views. Protection of rural resources by efficient and limited development of land and PUDs is a high priority in this District. The District is mostly made up of the land by the Huntington River and its tributaries, up to 1,500 feet elevation.

The maximum permitted density in the District is one unit per five acres. Property owners and developers will be required to plan for (and demonstrate in the review process) the management of the rural resources of the entire parcel of land on which a subdivision is proposed. Permitted uses in the District include agriculture, forestry, single family dwellings, accessory structures, and home occupations. Conditional uses are recreational and cultural uses, RPUDs, multi-family dwellings, light commercial and industrial uses, power generation, utilities, and health care facilities.

This District includes all land in Huntington up to 1,500 feet elevation, but not including the Village Districts or Neighborhood Districts, is delineated on Map 6: Land Use Districts Map and covers approximately 14,371 acres.

Neighborhood District

The purpose of the Neighborhood District is to protect agricultural and open space areas that define village boundaries by allowing dense residential, commercial, and civic development compatible with traditional patterns. The District is comprised of three areas: one in Hanksville and one immediately surrounding each of the Designated Village Centers: Huntington Center and Lower Village.

The Town's goals in this District are to provide residential opportunities and community services efficiently, protect open space and prime agricultural soils, promote safe and efficient pedestrian and other transportation capability, and encourage the social and cultural aspects of neighborhood community life. Pedestrian and bicycle uses are prioritized without sacrificing automobile accessibility. Allowed density is one unit per acre. Permitted uses include forestry, agriculture, single-family residential, two-family residential, accessory dwellings, child care, senior housing, and home occupations. Conditional uses include PUDs, multi-family homes, group homes, commercial uses, recreational facilities, utilities, and government uses.

The District is delineated on Map 6: Land Use Districts Map and is approximately 1,286 acres.

Village Center District

The purpose of the Village Center District is to have the greatest density development in the villages—thereby enriching village life and relieving development pressure on the rural areas of the Town. The District is comprised of two areas: the Designated Village Centers of Huntington Lower Village and Huntington Center.

The Town's goal in this District is to allow higher density residential and commercial development, in a traditional village settlement pattern, which will provide efficient community services, promote agricultural usage where appropriate, and encourage the social, cultural, and

historic aspects of village community life. A traditional village settlement pattern is defined as a cohesive group of residential, civic, religious, commercial, and mixed use buildings arranged along a main street and intersecting streets that are within walking distance for residents who live within and surrounding the core. [Source: Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development, Vermont Downtown Program Community Planning and Revitalization, June 2013.]

Pedestrian and bicycle uses are prioritized without sacrificing automobile accessibility. Permitted uses include forestry, agriculture, single-family residential, two-family residential, accessory dwellings, senior housing, child care, and home occupations.

Conditional uses include PUDs, multi-family or group homes, commercial uses, recreational facilities, utilities, and government uses. Presently, the allowed usage is one unit per acre, although increasing that density would be congruent with Town goals for the District. The District is delineated on Map 6: Future Land Use Map and is approximately 42 acres.

Goals

1. Allow rural property owners to use their land within a framework that identifies and protects significant natural resources, including agricultural lands to be left as open space.
2. Allow traditional village settlement patterns to expand from village centers.

Objectives

1. Review regulations with an eye toward allowing an increase in village center development and promote solutions for septic leachfield and water well sharing.
2. Outside of the villages, consider density bonus as an alternative to five-acre lot development in the Rural Residential Zoning District. Evaluate and implement, as appropriate, mechanisms for encouraging unobtrusive clustered development such as open space planning, conservation development, density bonuses, and/ or transfer of development rights.
3. Allow flexibility of use through changes to the Zoning Regulations with performance standards that protect fragile natural resources and maintain the character of neighborhoods.
4. Encourage cluster development to preserve open space.
5. Update zoning regulations, as needed, to be in compliance with Vermont State Statutes.
6. Discourage development within flood hazard area and along river corridors by educating citizens and establishing zoning regulations that follow guidelines in the FEMA All-Hazard Mitigation Plan. If new development is to be built in such areas, it must not worsen flooding, fluvial erosion, or

wildlife access to water.

Implementation

1. Amend regulations to reduce the number of nonconforming lots in the Village Zoning Districts and to allow traditional village settlement.
2. The Planning Commission should research and propose solutions to the water and wastewater issues in the Village Zoning Districts and for family systems outside the villages.
3. Identify the most appropriate locations for shared water and wastewater systems and explore ways to acquire options to buy and/or lease the land by the Town or by an interested party.
4. In consultation with planning professionals, develop performance standards which allow property owners uses of their land while protecting natural resources and the historic, livable, and working character of their neighborhoods.
5. Pursue grants to enable the Town to develop a relationship with a rural planning professional to help guide the Town through rural and village development planning.
6. Write planning grants in consultation with the Conservation Commission and appropriate planning professionals to create a specific prioritized ranking for open and space which would lead to mapping overlays. These overlays will define appropriate locations for development, thereby guiding developers, property owners, and the Planning Commission and/or Development Review Board in the location and design of PUDs which can be economically viable, environmentally sustainable, and visually unobtrusive.
7. Propose changes in zoning and subdivision regulations to adequately protect private property, public safety, and Town infrastructure in Fluvial Erosion Hazard Zones.
8. Create RPUD language for cluster development in the Rural Residential Zoning District.

2. Transportation

Maintaining and replacing bridges, culverts, and roads, creating safe traffic speeds, reducing single-driver trips, and providing safe non-motorized road use (walking and bicycling) are the major transportation issues for Huntington.

Most of Huntington's transportation infrastructure is adjacent to rivers and streams and often descends parallel down steep slopes. In the last five years several storms have resulted in major damage to our roads including the Main Road slide south of the Lower Village, the May and August (Irene) 2011 storms that destroyed parts of Economou and Camel's Hump Roads, and the July 3, 2013 storm which damaged numerous roads in Town. In addition to the major impacts of these storms on our roadways, culverts, and bridges, we are faced with the pressing problem of the financial costs of repair and maintenance.

The topography, geography, and geology of Huntington provide unique opportunities and challenges for transporting our residents and visitors. We have roads that climb up mountains and roll down to the river valley; we have roads of pavement, dirt, stone, and sometimes, mud. We have roads that service farms, sugaring operations, hiking and recreation trails, woodshops, a grocery store, and conservation lands. We have roads that go to new developments and others that were carved out of the forests before the Civil War. Our roads and trails bring us to work, school, and allow us to play.

The existing transportation infrastructure in Huntington is comprised of 43.96 miles of roads and 21 bridges over 20' span and 9 larger culverts, which act as bridges. There are over 300 culverts when you include driveway and small culverts, which have a huge impact on our road maintenance/costs.

These are shown on the Transportation Map 3. The Main Road (running from Richmond to Buels Gore) and the Hinesburg Hollow Road (linking Huntington to Route 116 in Hinesburg) are located in the river valleys and are major routes through Huntington. They make up nearly all of Huntington's 11.18 miles of Class 2 roads. There are 32.78 miles of Class 3 roads of varying non-paved surfaces—with stretches of steep slopes, sharp turns, and narrow roadbeds. Extensive maintenance is necessary to keep these Class 3 roads passable throughout the year. Class 4 roads are not maintained by the Town.

The Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission's Metropolitan Transportation Plan, found in section 4.3.5 of the 2013 ECOS (Environment Community Opportunity Sustainability) planning document) is in agreement with many of Huntington's transportation priorities.

Progress

Huntington's roadways have been maintained in good condition due to an aggressive and consistent road policy. The paved Class 2 roads have been well-maintained, although the Town now faces the extensive expense of repairing the Main Road. Most of Huntington's Class 3 roads have improved through replacement of appropriate sized ditches and culverts, though some

locations remain in poor condition. Road bed reconstruction using fabric has been implemented on East Street, Texas Hill Circle, Gillett Pond Road, and Taft Road. Reflecting the Town's interest in attracting tourism and providing adequate facilities, the Camel's Hump Road bridges, along with Bridge 8 on the Main Road (near the Moody Road intersection), are the top priorities for replacement or repair.

Progress toward addressing these major transportation issues includes the physical rehabilitation or replacement of bridges, culverts, and roads and the research and planning steps taken to prioritize future transportation efforts.

Improvements to transportation infrastructure that have been accomplished include:

- Replacement of the Carse Road and Moody Road bridges; repair of the Main Road slide, Economou Road, Texas Hill Road and Camel's Hump Road; repair work on Bridge 10 on Main Road (at the Beane Road intersection); rebuilding Happy Hollow Road; and the re-decking of Bridge 32 on Camel's Hump Road
- Development of a public park-and-ride lot in the Lower Village
- Construction of a salt and sand shed for Town Highway Department
- Lowered speed limits on the Main Road in two areas: from Texas Hill Road to Maplewood Cemetery, and from Ridge Road to Spence Road

Addressing the major issues related to transportation requires planning and information. The following data has been gathered to inform our future efforts:

- The Town hired the firm of McFarland and Johnson to produce the *2002 Huntington Bridge Improvement Plan*. This plan provides recommendations for the maintenance and replacement of the Town's bridges. These recommendations have helped the Town pursue an aggressive bridge maintenance and replacement action plan, such as the current planning for Bridge 30 on Camel's Hump Road.
- December 2008: *Town of Huntington Pavement Management Study*—a pavement condition study completed for the Town of Huntington covering the year 2008.
- December 2009: *Main Road Speed Limit Study ~ Huntington, Vermont*—a study that evaluated existing and potential speed transition zones buffering the Town's village areas along Main Road.
- November 2011: *An Inventory of Road Drainage Problems on Class 3 Roads and a Capital Improvement Plan*. The Selectboard and Highway Department use this study as a basis for developing highway work plans.
- February 2012: *Huntington Main Road Pavement Evaluation Study* which assessed the costs for Town maintenance in the short (5 year) and long term (20 year) time frames.

Maintenance Costs

Designing our transportation infrastructure to be more resilient from storm damage will reduce costs from future storms and protect our waterways.

The Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans) has been our partner in maintaining the Town's central artery, the Main Road. VTrans and the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC) are our partners in maintaining our highway infrastructure's eligibility for Federal funding for bridge repair, maintenance, and/or replacement. The Town continues to be an active participant in CCRPC and regularly communicates with legislators and VTrans in an effort to maintain and improve our roadways. Bridge replacement/rehabilitation is primarily the responsibility of the Town. The Town works hard to take advantage of grant opportunities that provide matching funds from state and federal agencies for road, bridge, and culvert projects. While there are times it is necessary to address immediate repairs before knowing if disaster relief assistance will be made available, the Town addresses highway maintenance and long-range capital planning, including working with CCRPC and VTrans, in order to identify opportunities for transportation infrastructure financial assistance.

Culverts

Huntington's culverts have been mapped, and that information was integrated into a November 2011 Roads Capital Plan (An Inventory of Road Drainage Problems on Class 3 Roads and a Capital Improvement Plan). Improperly constructed road accesses, including culverts, cause the second highest source of damage to roads. Approving and limiting culverts and property access points to ensure that they are properly installed will reduce long term costs for the Town. The Town currently accepts responsibility for new culverts that are built adjacent to a Town road after the property owner/developer has maintained the culvert for one year.

This one-year delay in acceptance of responsibility decreases the Town's cost of maintenance required as a result of damage caused by improper driveway culvert installation. There is a continued need for property owners to maintain the drainage of their access beyond the Town right-of-way and the culverts in the right-of-way.

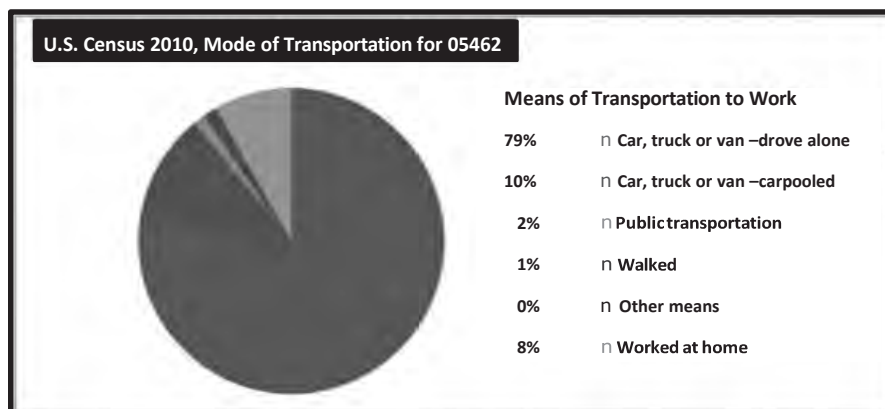


Present & Future

Many residents of Huntington commute to work, spending 20-60 minutes alone in a car and

paying more each year in vehicular operating costs. In a 2005 report looking at the impact of driving on global warming, Huntington was listed among Vermont's top five communities in terms of pounds of pollution per year. The Town must continue to explore ways to decrease the number of single occupancy commuting vehicles through Transportation Demand Management strategies. Strategies may include increasing the use of car and vanpools, increasing use of the existing public transit system, creating links from Huntington to transit hubs, and promoting working in Huntington.

Residents of Huntington now have more options for linking to public transportation in neighboring communities than ever before. A park-and-ride lot was built behind the Library in the summer of 2007 and since then it has seen regular use. With rising gas prices, Vermonters are increasingly using public transportation. The new CCTA (Chittenden County Transportation Authority) Route 116 commuter bus was added in 2012, in addition to the buses running north and south along I-89 from the Exit 11 Richmond Park-and-Ride. The transportation improvement project for the Richmond Park-and-Ride expansion is crucial in order to link commuters and recreational traffic to and from Huntington. In a 2012 Town survey, 79% of respondents thought the Town should promote public transit access, such as bus and van service, to link Huntington residents to the mass transit arteries in Richmond and Hinesburg.



In addition to the increase of vehicular traffic, there has been an increase in recreational use of our roads. Our rural countryside attracts bicyclists of all ages, interests, and abilities. There have been, however, inevitable safety concerns that flow from having both more cars and more bikes sharing the road, as well as overall traffic speed concerns. Efforts to establish a bike/pedestrian pathway need to be renewed to allow everyone to enjoy the Town safely.

The development of a bike/pedestrian path has been recommended for many years. Willing landowners in each of the village areas should be contacted to develop sections of the trail. This may not initially connect the villages, but would provide a safer route for in-town bicycling and walking. Next steps could be to connect the two village areas and Hanksville, and then connect to the Audubon Center at the northern border of the Town. In coordination with surrounding communities, connections could be provided to Richmond, Hinesburg, and Starksboro.

Designing our transportation infrastructure to be more resilient from storm damage will reduce costs from future storms and protect our waterways. Comments submitted by respondents of

the 2012 Planning Commission survey supported bringing more public or shared transportation options to Town which could reduce residents' automotive costs. Seeking solutions for increased safety of non-motorized traffic will reduce the chance of serious or fatal incidents for residents and visitors alike and increase the potential of health-supporting exercise for residents.



Photo: Heidi Racht

Goals

1. Preserve and continue to improve the physical condition, resiliency, and operational performance of the existing transportation system.
2. Provide adequate funding for transportation infrastructure.
3. Evaluate and accommodate the transportation needs of all system users, including pedestrians and bicyclists.
4. Provide a safe transportation system.
5. Incorporate environmental stewardship into the maintenance, rehabilitation, and construction of Town highways.

Objectives

1. Continue to update and enhance inventories and condition assessments of all Town bridges, culverts, and roadways.
2. Identify bridges, culverts, and road segments that are vulnerable to floods. Implement strategies, including repair or replacement at high risk locations, in order to mitigate the consequences of failure.
3. Protect municipal investments in transportation equipment (trucks, graders, mowers, etc.).
4. Continue to maximize the use of state and federal funding for bridge, culvert, and roadway rehabilitation and replacement projects through collaboration with the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC) and the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans).
5. Explore the use of financing mechanisms such as bonds to mitigate the impact of higher cost projects on a single year's budget, and limit the use of financing mechanisms to projects that

have life cycles that are equal to or greater than the period of the loan.

6. Consider the safety and accommodation of all transportation system users including motorists, bicyclists, public transportation users, and pedestrians of all ages and abilities in the implementation of maintenance and construction activities. (This is required by Vermont's 2011 Complete Streets legislation, which all Towns are required to follow. It does not apply to gravel roads.)
7. Establish and enforce roadway speed limits, with consideration given to adjacent land use types and roadway engineering and design characteristics.
8. Create and maintain safe roadway conditions.
9. Preserve water quality by adopting and implementing the January 23, 2013 VT Agency of Transportation and Agency of Natural Resources *Town Road and Bridge Standards* to reduce pollution and erosion through proper management of stormwater runoff from roadways.
10. Integrate invasive species management practices into road maintenance projects.
11. Protect the scenic quality and rural character of the Town's gravel roads.
12. Work towards the development of bike/pedestrian paths including the potential use of existing Town road rights-of-way.

Implementation

Bridges & Culverts

1. Implement an annual bridge maintenance program (bridge washing, painting, patching, maintaining drainage, protecting decks, etc.) to extend the useful life of new and existing infrastructure.
2. Review, revise and/or adopt a Town culvert policy for private roads that provides for Town oversight and control, and that keeps the cost burden with property owners who own access roads.
3. Provide ongoing training for Town highway personnel, municipal staff, and the Selectboard on best practices.
4. Maintain the various inventories and assessments so that the data remains up-to-date. This should be incorporated into highway work plans and reporting.
5. Work with landowners to develop recreation paths between villages and connect key roads with bike and walking trails.

Roads

1. Following the existing gravel road plan, utilize best management techniques on gravel roads

(Vermont Better Backroads Program standards) in order to provide adequate drainage, structural stability, consistent riding surface, dust control, and right-of way maintenance.

2. Review the Highway Access Policy to ensure it provides the Town with adequate oversight and control. Limit property access to one point and prevent accesses that cause damage to Town roads.
3. Maintain the existing sections of fabric and installation of new fabric for the trouble sections of roads.
4. Continue to seek free consultation from VTrans, Vermont Local Roads, the Better Backroads program and other resources for road rebuilding projects.

Resiliency

1. Ensure all roadway, bridge, and culvert repair and replacement projects are upgraded as appropriate and are designed to increase resiliency to floods and major storm events.

Management

1. Provide year round cover for highway equipment through the capital investment plan.
2. Adopt a schedule for the implementation of recommendations from the November 2011 study titled, *An Inventory of Road Drainage Problems on Class 3 Roads and a Capital Improvement Plan, Town of Huntington, VT.*
3. Improve the prioritization rating system for road maintenance projects to include the importance of the road to the community at large and available budget dollars. Consider less expensive options for lower priority roads that serve a small segment of the population.
4. Consult Vermont Forest, Parks, and Recreation and the Green Mountain Club regarding current and predicted traffic to Camel's Hump trails in order to address State funding for maintenance of trail access roads.

Funding

1. Prepare and annually update a capital improvement plan to ensure adequate funding for the timely implementation of transportation infrastructure projects (bridges, culverts, roadways, guardrails, signs, etc.).
2. Continue to provide funding for road and bridge reserve funds to minimize the impact on a single year's budget for higher cost roadway and bridge projects.
3. Continue to strengthen relationships with partners at CCRPC and VTrans to advocate for inclusion of small town issues in transportation prioritization.
4. Continue to apply for grants.

Pedestrian & Bicycle Usage

1. Evaluate installing sidewalks in the Lower Village and other areas that have a mix of higher levels of pedestrian activity and vehicular traffic. As appropriate, develop and implement a funding plan for creating and maintaining sidewalks.
2. Develop a plan to increase bicyclist and pedestrian safety and awareness.
3. Provide adequate paved shoulders for on-road bicycle and pedestrian use where appropriate and physically feasible.
4. Review results of the *2008 Huntington Traffic Calming Plan* and determine the feasibility of the options presented.
5. Identify and evaluate options for a multiuse pathway within and between Huntington Center and the Lower Village (e.g. bike and pedestrian path), including the potential use of the existing Town right-of-way.
6. Evaluate the adequacy and safety of pedestrian access to Brewster-Pierce Memorial Elementary School (BPMS) and between BPMS and the grounds located at the Town Office Complex, including the recreation field and the alternate emergency site located at the Community Church of Huntington.

Shared Transportation

1. Evaluate the need for and feasibility of providing public transportation to Huntington including hours, routes, volume of demand, financing, and allowing public transport on school buses. If the need and feasibility are adequate, pursue the options available to make it so.
2. Encourage car-pooling through continued maintenance of the municipal park-and-ride lot and making residents aware of State and regional rideshare programs.
3. Support H.E.R.O. (Huntington Everybody Resource Organization) programs such as volunteer drivers, and continue funding to enhance the Special Services Transportation Agency (SSTA) to help service the needs of isolated residents.
4. Encourage the grouping SSTA trips to encourage efficiency with more riders per trip.

Speed Limits

1. Determine the minimum road-width necessary for safe transportation and, where possible, limit widths in order to reduce speeding.
2. Increase compliance with the speed limits in all parts of Town especially the village and school zone areas through enforcement, education, and roadway design that reinforces slower speeds.
3. Review the Traffic Calming Committee's report and determine the feasibility of the various options presented.

4. Maintain the Town's relationship with the Vermont State Police (or other contractor) for traffic enforcement.
5. Periodically re-evaluate speed limits throughout Town.

Road Conditions

1. Update the Huntington All-Hazards Mitigation Plan Huntington adopted in April 2011.
2. Where appropriate, install culverts that are designed to accommodate fish and aquatic organism passage.
3. Reduce road salt applications in the vicinity of waterways, when possible.
4. Develop and implement a road vegetation management plan (including the timing and frequency of mowing) in order to address invasive species such as wild parsnip, working with the Selectboard, Highway Department, Conservation Commission, the Nature Conservancy's *'Wise on Weeds'* program, and VTrans.
5. Revise, if necessary, the gravel road management plan which addresses the scenic quality and rural character of the roads in addition to safety, maintenance, and how to best protect the adjacent natural resources.



Photo: Knox Cummin

3. Facilities, Services, & Utilities

Community buildings and services are an integral part of the fabric of a small town. Huntington's buildings provide community space for Town government, art, cultural opportunities, educational opportunities, recreation, and theater. It is our buildings, parks, forests, and cemeteries that make us unique. The maintenance of these resources is our legacy to those who will follow us.



Huntington Town Office — Photo: Knox Cummin

Buildings

Public buildings owned by the Town include the Brewster-Pierce Memorial School—BPMS—(kindergarten through grade 4), the Town Office, the Town Garage, the Old Fire Station, a new Fire Station, the Huntington Town Hall, and the Union Meeting House (which serves as the Town library and community center). The historic Old Fire Station is used for storage of equipment for the Town's popular youth soccer program. The new Fire Station was built in 1992-1993. The latest expansion to the school occurred in 1993, with major renovations completed in 2005. The Town Office, originally converted from a one-room schoolhouse in 1982, was renovated in 1993 and a lower level office was added. A new front porch and handicap accessible ramp were added in 2012.

Library/Union Meeting House

Huntington moved its library to the Union Meeting House in the Lower Village in September 2005. The Library is a full-service, automated, public library and community center. The Library has two staff members who oversee the operation of the services, and the purchase and loan of books and other materials. With the help of volunteers, the Library has continued to extend regular operating hours and provide a larger book collection. Library usage has steadily increased, and the Library continues to strive to find more ways to serve townspeople. The Chittenden County Home Card program, which allows residents of participating towns to use their library card to check out books in other participating town libraries, is administered through the Huntington Public Library.



Library/Union Meeting House — Photo: Harvey Schugar

Community Meeting Sites

Regularly scheduled municipal meetings are usually held in the Town Office building. The Union Meeting House fills a need for space for larger group gatherings, in addition to serving as the Town Library. Meetings for larger groups are also held in the training room of the Fire Station and the Annex of the Community Church of Huntington. The annual Town Meeting and Special Town Meetings are held at Brewster-Pierce Memorial School (BPMS).

Town Hall

Following a water leak in 1999 that caused the Library to move out of the Huntington Town Hall, the Town Hall Committee has worked to make the building usable for meetings, classes, workshops, and community events during the warm months. The Town Hall Committee is actively seeking grants for building renovations and repair. Currently the priority is to make the entire building fully handicapped-accessible as the Town Hall is now American Disabilities Act (ADA) accessible only on the first floor. In a 2010 survey of Town residents, the top suggested uses for the Town Hall included community classes and events, Town public hearings and meetings, performance events, art/gallery space, and senior activities and services. It has also been suggested that in the future the Town Hall could provide additional Town administration space if additional space is needed. Parking at the current site is limited. Participants can use the existing parking space at the Town Office and Recreation Field.

Re-Packaging Shed

South of the Fire Station, at the rear of the firehouse parking lot, a small shed is available for residents to exchange and reuse packaging materials.

Grounds

Other town facilities include a playground at the school and a large soccer field, baseball field, horseshoe pits, and picnic shelter located at the Town's Recreation Field. The volunteer Recreation Committee worked with Town officials to develop this well-used recreation area in Huntington Center.

A small Town Green is located in the Lower Village. Recent improvements include a gazebo built as an Eagle Scout project with Troop 645 and some planted trees.

Huntington has a 100-acre Town Forest off Stagecoach Road that has limited public access. There are plans under consideration to construct a cross-country ski trail through the Town Forest connecting to Camel's Hump Nordic Ski Area trails.

Cemeteries

The Town owns 3 public cemeteries. Two of the cemeteries, located in Huntington Center and Hanksville, have long since reached capacity. Until 1997, the Maplewood Cemetery in the Lower Village was maintained and assumed to be owned by an association. When the association looked to purchase property to enlarge the cemetery, it was discovered that the cemetery, in fact, was owned by the Town. The Town, in 1998, voted to purchase 7.51 acres from the estate of Bertha Hanson for cemetery expansion. Maplewood Cemetery was expanded in 2000 and another expansion is planned for 2014, which would provide burial lots on the hill overlooking the original cemetery. The Town's Cemetery Trustees developed rules of operation. They continue to work on the expansion and details involved with roads and plot layout for the new area, developing rules and maintenance plans for the grounds, assigning space, and collecting fees.



Photo: Heidi Racht

Public Safety & Crime Investigation

Fire protection and emergency rescue services are provided by volunteers. Huntington addresses issues of public safety in a number of ways—from General Fund support of the Huntington Volunteer Fire Department, First Response Team, emergency rescue services from Richmond Rescue, contracted services for traffic enforcement, and providing funding for Chittenden Unit for Special Investigations (CUSI), to the maintenance of an up-to-date E911 (Enhanced 911) numbering system for all public and private roads in Town so that emergency response personnel can expeditiously respond to emergency calls.

The Town's fire equipment and first response vehicles are housed in a building constructed in 1992. Equipment upgrades are made on a regular basis at the recommendation of the Fire Chief and as voted on at Town Meeting. The Town contributes to the cost of maintaining emergency rescue services for its residents through an assessment in the Town budget for Richmond Rescue, Inc. as well as through fundraising, insurance payments, and contributions from residents.



Photo: Huntington Fire Department

Dialing 911 in an emergency (to report life threatening situations, fires, accidents, crimes, etc.) will connect the caller with an emergency dispatcher who will verify the address and contact emergency responders. Since the Town's Fire Department and First Response Team are staffed by volunteers, dispatchers may also contact the Vermont State Police, Richmond Rescue, Inc. or other emergency providers.

The Town currently purchases traffic enforcement services through the Vermont State Police. The cost is partially offset by a reimbursement to the Town through traffic fines. An increased police presence in the Town, especially for speed control in the villages, has been favorably received by a majority of the residents. The Town has a part-time Animal Control Officer.

The Town has a documented Basic Emergency Operations Plan and collaboratively sponsors the local Emergency Shelter in conjunction with the Community Church of Huntington. Huntington Center serves as the Town's 'hub' of emergency response with the Fire Department, Highway Department and Town Office Administration connected through a network of radios, beepers and cell phones. The Fire Department, Town Office, and Community Church of Huntington buildings are connected to an emergency generator, and Town staff, officials, and volunteers serve on a community Emergency Management Committee.

Huntington's All-Hazard Mitigation Plan is part of the Chittenden County Plan, put together by CCRPC, and is available online at <http://www.ccrpcvt.org/em/hazard-mitigation>.

Miscellaneous Contributions

Contributions from the Town also go to a number of private and non-profit organizations to support early education programs, home nursing and services for senior citizens, assistance for handicapped or abused persons, and other services. Contribution requests for support from the Town's General Fund budget are made annually by these groups.

Public Water & Wastewater Systems

Huntington does not have a municipal water system. However, several publicly regulated water systems exist in Huntington serving Huntington Woods/Roberts Park and Brewster-Pierce Memorial School. No public sewage disposal systems, flood control facilities, solid waste disposal units, or other public utilities are located within the Town. In 2011, the Town received a planning advance grant from the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation to assess water and wastewater capacity. The study was conducted due to concerns about the limited options available for residents and businesses for onsite wastewater treatment, about the listing of the Huntington River as impaired due to E. coli bacteria in the Lower Village, and as a result of drinking water shortages during droughts. Approximately 15% to 30% of homes in Huntington's village and neighborhood areas have

low-yield wells or water quality issues.

The final 2012 report prepared by Stone Environmental, Water and Wastewater Capacity Evaluation for Huntington's Villages, presents the advantages and disadvantages of maintaining the status quo or moving toward public water and wastewater systems in the Lower Village and Huntington Center. Approximately one-third to one-half of the residences and businesses are limited in their ability to replace an existing system or for expanding capacity (for example, for adding a bedroom). The study presented 3 options: do nothing, minimally fix problems, and act in order to promote village vitality. Doing nothing means that future development will likely occur on the edges of our villages or in rural areas instead of being concentrated in the village centers. Fixing individual problems will cost individual landowners. To support village vitality, wastewater treatment sites could be needed in order to accommodate development in the village centers. In order to attain the Land Use goals of focusing development in village centers, protecting water quality, and supporting business development, water and wastewater issues will need to be addressed. The full water and wastewater report is available on the Town Website.

Three recent severe droughts in Huntington (1995, 1999, and 2003) required the placement of a "water buffalo" from the Vermont National Guard for residents' use and highlighted water source issues—making it prudent for Town Officials to have a plan in place for meeting the possibility of a long-term water crisis.

Solid Waste Management

In 1987, Huntington joined with nine other towns to form the Chittenden Solid Waste District (CSWD), which now includes all communities in the county except Underhill and Buels Gore. CSWD operates several facilities which serve Huntington residents. In April 1993, CSWD established a mandatory recycling program. Curbside trash and recycling collection is offered by private haulers. Residents can also utilize any of the Drop-Off Centers which accept recyclable materials, compost, scrap metal, and yard waste at no charge. Fees for non-recyclable waste are paid by the individual. The closest drop-off centers are located in Richmond and Hinesburg. Household hazardous wastes can be disposed of at the CSWD facility in South Burlington which operates year-round or at a mobile facility (the "Rover") which makes an annual visit to Huntington.

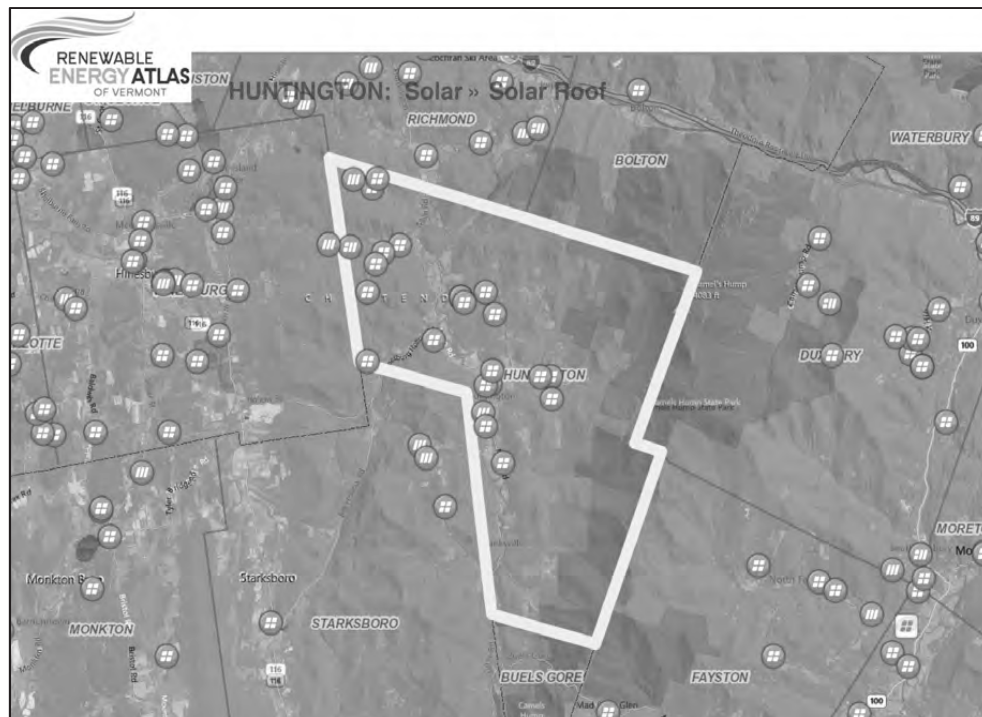
Utilities

At present Huntington has two local electric companies serving the Town: Green Mountain Power and Vermont Electric Cooperative. No transmission lines are located in Huntington. Champlain Valley Telecom and Comcast provide telephone services in Huntington. Cable TV lines were installed in some parts of the Town in the summer of 1994. High speed internet is

available in Huntington.

Cellular phone towers, if they come to Huntington, will be addressed in the Town's Zoning Regulations and/or by the State. Efforts to improve cellular phone service through installation of small cell sites and other technology are ongoing through the efforts of the Vermont Telecommunications Authority.

Wind and solar power continue to gain momentum in Huntington, with two wind turbines installed on different properties in the southern end of the Town and a growing number of rooftop and ground-based photovoltaic systems.



Roof mounted solar thermal and PV in Huntington as of 10/15/2013, 87.76 kW; 19 sites, map courtesy of www.vtenergyatlas.com

Goals

1. Develop a common vision for the long-term use of Town facilities:
 - a) Manage the repair and maintenance of the Town's municipal buildings and real estate.
 - b) Ensure access to schools, adult educational opportunities, library services, parks, fire protection, rescue services, solid waste disposal, animal control, and crime prevention for Huntington residents.
 - c) Support recruitment and training programs for Town commissions, boards, committees, and organizations.

Implementation

Town Facilities

1. Develop a Facilities Management Plan for Town Buildings. This should include investigation into the solar thermal and photovoltaic potential for Town buildings in addition to maintenance schedules, evaluation of what buildings to keep, what to sell, etc.
2. Utilize the capital budget planning process for oversight of the purchase, management, and repair of Town facilities.
3. Encourage the Huntington Selectboard to manage the repair and maintenance of the Town's buildings. Facilitate communication between various committees regarding long-term use of and a fiscal plan for Town facilities.
4. Encourage the Cemetery Trustees to continue to develop adequate cemetery space in the Maplewood Cemetery in order to meet the desired needs of the Town's residents and those with ancestral ties to Huntington.
5. Support public recreation facilities, including adequate parking.
6. Continue renovations to the Town Hall and explore options for the building's future use.
7. Where appropriate, apply for grants and other monies to enhance Town facilities.

Services

1. Continue to support Town funding for crime prevention, animal control, and services for the elderly.
2. Promote the Union Meeting House/Library as a community meeting and educational facility.
3. In keeping with the goals of the Huntington Library Board of Trustees, the Library should continue to strive to meet the standards in existence for compliance with the Vermont Department of Libraries, and continue to participate in the county's Home Card Program.
4. Continue participation in the Chittenden Solid Waste District (CSWD).

Water & Waste Water

1. Discuss the options for, and implications of, potential community water supply sources and wastewater treatment sites for parcels identified in the Water and Wastewater Capacity Evaluation for Huntington's Villages report.
2. If a decision is made to move forward with one or more options for municipal or group water or wastewater systems, negotiate with property owners to complete preliminary field testing on preferred sites.

3. Explore Town and user cost scenarios for water and wastewater infrastructure.
4. Consult landowners of potential sites regarding their opinions, interests, concerns, etc.

Utilities

1. Apply, where appropriate, for available grants to address more consistent cellular coverage in Huntington. Continue liaison efforts between the Vermont Telecommunications Authority and the Selectboard.
2. Continue to require buried utilities for any new development or redevelopment projects
3. Improve cellular coverage, increase usage of renewable energy, improve cable and high speed internet coverage, and chart potential paths to achieve them.

4. Housing – General

Historically the Town of Huntington has contained a fairly diverse range of housing types and sizes to meet the needs of the residents. Nonetheless, as noted in the report of the Chittenden County Housing Target Task Force (2006), there is a substantial regional need for additional housing in general, and affordable housing in particular. The Town's efforts to encourage more modestly priced housing have been: to explore increasing village density through modifications to the Zoning Ordinance; to study the possibility of a distributed water and wastewater system in the Town's villages; to provide a density bonus to developers of planned unit housing projects; to support the creation of accessory housing units; and to consider partnership with non-profit organizations to create affordable housing for the elderly and families. Continuing these efforts should enable Huntington to support efforts to meet the local and regional housing challenge.



Two neighboring residences show the diversity of housing types that are located throughout the town.
Photos: Knox Cummin

Goal

1. Provide an adequate supply of housing to accommodate the diverse array of the community's residents, while preserving the Town's scenic and natural resources and the Town's ability to provide public services or facilities.

Objectives

1. Consistent with regional guidelines as stated in the ECOS Plan, the Town should develop and pursue policies that should result in new housing units that are constructed being affordable to households, and where the financial burden should not be more than 30% of annual income. Where appropriate, perpetual affordability should be assured through binding legal mechanisms.
2. Consistent with regional guidelines, the Town should develop and pursue policies that are projected to result in, on average, ten percent of new housing units constructed being affordable to households with incomes no more than 80% of the county median income for the appropriate household size. Where appropriate, perpetual affordability should be assured through binding legal mechanisms.
3. The rate of new housing construction should be consistent with the rate of population growth and with the planned rate of expansion of community facilities and services. The Town should consider a rate of growth that is manageable and of reasonable cost to the Town, while preserving the character and natural resources of the Town.
4. The construction of housing and associated infrastructure, utility corridors, out-buildings, etc. should not have adverse impacts on the Town's scenic and natural features and resources. The rate of construction of new housing shall not exceed the ability of the Town to provide the needed public facilities and services.
5. Affordable housing, in particular, should be located close to public services and facilities so residents can benefit from these and other public resources.
6. Encourage the development of a variety of appropriately scaled housing options for elderly residents including congregate housing, continuing care, assisted living, home care, nursing care, etc., and for families including rental apartments, small condominiums or townhouses, and attached or detached accessory dwellings.
7. The rehabilitation, adaptive reuse, or restoration of existing housing and structures shall be encouraged. Federal and state funding, loans, and grants, if available, shall be used to augment private funding for the rehabilitation of substandard housing and to improve energy efficiency.
8. Promote use of innovative, creative development layouts and construction techniques, and encourage the use of renewable energy sources, so that new residential buildings fit their landscape and settings and minimize energy consumption in accordance with the Land Use and Energy provisions of this Town Plan.

Implementation

- 1.** Amend the Town's Zoning Ordinance to encourage, within areas designated for higher levels of density and growth, the development of a variety of affordable housing options: duplexes, small condominiums or Town houses, rental apartments, and accessory dwelling units.
- 2.** Consider density bonuses and/or inclusionary zoning provisions to stimulate construction of new affordable and workforce housing in the Town's village districts and designated growth areas. An inclusionary zoning provision may contain provision for payment of a fee in lieu of actually constructing affordable dwellings, which would be designated for the development of housing for elderly. Legal mechanisms shall be used to ensure that housing constructed under this provision shall be perpetually affordable.
- 3.** Encourage and support the continued work of local groups to facilitate the provision of creating more housing opportunities for elderly and for family households of modest means by working with non-profit housing groups.
- 4.** Consider increasing the size limits on accessory apartments, on a district by district basis, as a method of providing additional housing opportunities and as a source of revenue for existing home owners.
- 5.** Continue to participate in regional housing discussions with particular emphasis on creating affordable housing opportunities with consideration for energy efficient designs to meet the Town's needs and its commitment to the goals of the region.

5. Housing for the Elderly

Based on information provided from the 2010 census, Huntington has seen a steady increase in the number of seniors. These data are supported by the Huntington Housing Needs Assessment of 2012, which shows that there has been an increase in Huntington residents age 55 and over between 2000 and 2010 (129 to 258). This figure also includes an increase in Huntington residents age 65 and over between 2000 and 2010, from 67 residents to 82 residents.

A survey to determine the need for elder housing was conducted in 2012; 72 of 76 respondents stated that there is a need for senior housing in Huntington. Of the 72 respondents who stated there is a need, 51 indicated they or their relative would be interested in living in senior housing if it is available in the future.

It is apparent that as the population ages, the need for appropriate housing will become more urgent.

Background: Over the past 20 years, there have been recurrent efforts to address the issue of elder housing in Huntington. A committee formed in 2000 sought available land to purchase for the purpose of building senior housing. The committee was dissolved after exhausting all available options of land parcels suitable for such a project at that time.

In 2011, a group of Huntington volunteers convened a new committee (called Huntington Green) to pursue the feasibility of developing independent senior housing apartments in three existing houses in Huntington's Lower Village. The three houses, close to basic services, became available for sale in the Lower Village. This effort was in line with the Town Plan, which stated that the Huntington community must make a commitment for more services, including housing, for Huntington's elder population.

Huntington Green, working under the umbrella of an existing non-profit, Huntington Historical and Community Trust, was awarded a grant from Vermont Housing and Conservation Trust in early 2012. The purpose of this grant was to assess the cost and feasibility of converting these homes to senior housing, to solicit citizen input through a survey, and to further examine the housing need for seniors in Huntington.

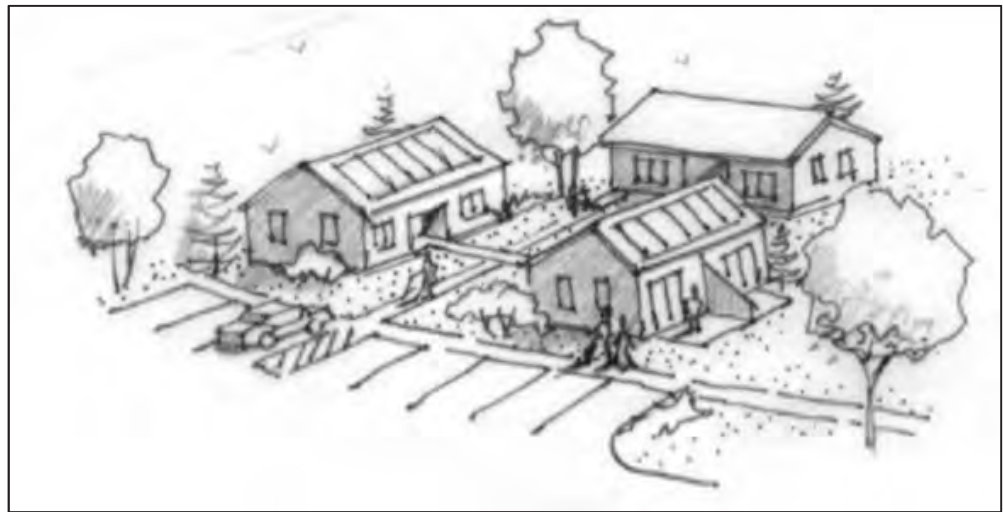
The feasibility of renovating and purchasing the three identified properties was determined to be unaffordable at this time due to the estimated cost of retrofitting older buildings.

A Huntington Senior Housing survey was completed in 2011-2012. The results were used in a marketing-planning brochure as well as the Housing Needs Assessment report.

In May 2012, Huntington Green hired consultant Meg Pond of Stepping Stones Associates to develop and write a report that addressed the housing needs in Huntington. The report, entitled Housing Needs Assessment, brought together information from multiple sources on needs, finances, and future projections. Huntington Green completed this aspect of the feasibility study in September 2012.

Huntington Green compiled the key elements of this feasibility work and the survey results into a brochure to communicate to the public and Town officials the need for senior housing and a timeline to accomplish that goal. This marketing plan/brochure was used at the 2013 Town Meeting, along with an information board, to inform the public about the history and goals of Huntington Green. The brochure is available at the Town Office and on the Town Website.

Huntington Green has also held numerous meetings with key organizations within the senior and housing community in Vermont including Cathedral Square and Champlain Housing Trust. Several Huntington Green committee members attended the 2012 Vermont Housing Conference.



Conceptual sketch by Terry Boyle

Other Services

Huntington's residents have access to a variety of services including Meals on Wheels, Lifeline telephone, medical and transportation services including the VNA (Visiting Nurse Association) and SSTA (Special Services Transportation Agency), and recreational opportunities such as the monthly Huntington Senior Lunch at the Community Church of Huntington.

Huntington senior residents will have access to the Richmond Area Senior Center which is being planned to serve the Richmond, Huntington, and Bolton communities. A well-organized and easily-accessible volunteer transportation and social support network is necessary to increase access to all categories of services for seniors.

Goals

1. Seek and develop a suitable site for affordable elder housing in one of Huntington's Village Districts.
2. Engage elderly residents in discussions about the details of services and housing that should be available in Huntington.
3. Pursue financing for elder housing and related services through communication with appropriate agencies.
4. Provide opportunities for seniors to remain active, productive members of the community by developing access to recreational, social, cultural, and other human services.
5. Develop a partnership between Huntington Green and the Town in order to develop opportunities to access public funds.

Objectives

1. Refine a vision for elder housing as needed.
2. Develop a framework for operating, including whether Huntington Green should be a Town-sponsored committee.
3. Increase awareness of housing projects in order to determine potential sources of funding (public or private).
4. Develop walking paths for access to village services.
5. Engage residents over the age of 55 in the discussion about elder services and housing.
6. Work with the Town, County, and others to provide public transportation to neighboring towns and into the Greater Burlington Area.
7. Huntington Green should collaborate with HERO and other Town organizations and community groups to formulate plans to increase access to existing social, cultural, health, and human services and events; meal programs; and other needed services to decrease isolation and increase access to available resources for Huntington's elders.

Implementation

1. The Selectboard and Planning Commission should meet with Huntington Green to discuss how to best advance senior housing and related services in Huntington.
2. Huntington Green should work with the HERO organization to align activities toward common goals.

- 3.** Implement Huntington Green’s plan to create a senior housing project:
 - a)** Develop elder housing donor list, key supporters, people and organizations
 - b)** Begin fundraising efforts in order to demonstrate local commitment to potential funding sources
 - c)** Phase I—Land acquisition by January 2015
 - d)** Phase II—Site development, including initial design, by January 2017
 - e)** Phase III—Construction completed by January 2020
 - f)** Phase IV—Occupancy by Spring/Summer 2020
- 4.** Schedule presentations with community groups and individuals.
- 5.** Hold gatherings with people aged 55 years and over regarding their specific housing, social, and health services needs and desires.
- 6.** Apply for planning/development grants.
- 7.** Meet with landowners to discuss access for walking paths in villages.
- 8.** Introduce opportunities, such as HomeShare Vermont, that allow residents to remain in their homes.
- 9.** Explore regulatory changes that encourage accessory housing.
- 10.** Work with the Selectboard to secure regular public transportation in the community for seniors by having a Huntington representative on transportation initiatives similar to the Hinesburg commuter bus.

6. Population Data

Huntington's population was 1,938 individuals in 2010. The data included in this section are based on US Census Bureau, Census 2010, and Vermont Housing Data Site, Vermont Department of Labor, Economic & Labor Market Information, and the Center for Rural Studies at the University of Vermont. As Table 6.1 indicates, the Town's population increased by less than 4 percent from the previous census in 2000. This is a sharp reduction in the rate of increase in population from the previous four decades.

Since the last census, Huntington's population growth rate nearly mirrored the state's growth of 3 percent, while Chittenden County increased at a higher rate of 9 percent. While increasing rapidly in population from 1970 to 2000, it appears that Huntington's rate of increase may be stabilizing due to geographic constraints of the river valley with wide flood areas and steep slopes in upland sites that limit the availability of new housing sites and a lack of infrastructure (water and sewer) to support development in the villages.

Population Comparisons							
Year	Huntington	% Change From Last Census	County	% Change from Last Census	Huntington % of County	Vermont	% Change from Last Census
1950	601		62,570		1.0	377,231	
1960	581	-3	74,425	18	0.7	389,811	3
1970	748	13	99,131	33	0.8	444,732	14
1980	1,161	55	115,534	17	1.0	511,456	15
1990	1,609	39	131,761	14	1.2	562,758	10
2000	1,861	16	144,001	9	1.3	608,827	8
2010	1,938	4	156,545	9	1.2	625,741	3
Table 6.1 Huntington's Population Compared with Chittenden County and Vermont							

Demographic Characteristics

Demographic characteristics of Huntington residents include the following comparison between the 2010 and 2000 censuses. One can see the overall age has increased substantially for the period.

- The median age was 41.1 years old in 2010; this increased from a median age of 36.6 years old in 2000.
- School age children (ages 5-19) made up 19.9% of the population in 2010, which decreased from 23% in 2000.
- The number of residents 21 years and older was 72.9% in 2010, which increased from 69.5% in 2000.

- The number of residents over the age of 62 was 10.1% in 2010, which increased from 6.3% in 2000.
- The 45-54 year old age group had the largest number of residents in 2010 with 21.2%, up from 18.6% in 2000. However, in 2000 the 35-44 year old age group was the largest at 23.1%, which decreased to 17.2% in 2010.
- The population was comprised of 973 females (49.8%) and 965 males (50.2%) in 2010. The ratio of males to females was nearly the same as in 2000.
- 96.7% of the individuals residing in Huntington were white in 2010, with the remaining reporting their race as Black; American Indian or Alaska Native; Asian; “some other race”; or multiracial. The percentage of whites was just about the same in 2000 at 97.5%.
- Approximately 93% of residents had at least a high school education in 2010, with 45% of those having a bachelor’s degree or higher. This was an increase from 2000, when approximately 89% of residents had at least a high school education, with 40% of those having a bachelor’s degree or higher.
- There are 1,169 workers over the age of 16 in Huntington and of those, most commuted to work by themselves in 2010. The percentage of those workers who drove by themselves increased from 2000. Hopefully the percent of people that drive alone will decrease substantially by next census.

Household Size			
Year	Huntington	Chittenden County	Vermont
1990	3.17	3.08	3.06
2000	3.09	3.02	2.96
2010	2.90	2.92	2.85
Table 6.2: Household Size—from the Vermont Housing Data Site			

Means of Getting to Work		
Year	2010	2000
Workers over 16	1,169	1,057
Car, truck, or van—drove alone	918	830
Car, truck, or van—carpooled	122	130
Public transportation	17	1
Other means	2	7
Worked at home	96	72
Mean travel time in minutes	31.6	32.1
Table 6.3: Means of getting to work for Huntington’s workers over 16		

Labor Force Participation

In 2010, 77% of Huntington's residents were in the labor force and 4.5% were unemployed. The unemployment rate has been dropping steadily as we continue to recover from the recession of 2009 when the unemployment rate was 6.1%, compared to the rate of 3.8% in 2012. See Table 6.4 for comparison of the Town's and Chittenden County's unemployment percentages from 2006 to 2012.

The most frequently reported occupations are: management, business, science, and arts occupations (48.1%); service occupations (13.5%); natural resource, construction, and maintenance (11.4%); and production, transportation occupations, and material moving occupations (10.2%). The median household income was \$68,710 in 2010, which was an increase from \$49,559 in 2000. There were 4.7% of families and 7.1% of individuals in Huntington in 2010 with annual incomes below the poverty level.

Unemployment Rate—Annual Averages		
Year	Huntington	Chittenden County
2006	3.00%	3.30%
2007	3.40%	3.30%
2007	3.40%	3.90%
2009	6.10%	5.80%
2010	4.50%	5.20%
2011	4.20%	4.40%
2012	3.80%	4.00%
Table 6.4: Vermont Department of Labor, Economic & Labor Market Information		

Housing

Huntington has a high percentage of homes that are occupied by owners versus renters compared to the rest of the county and Vermont.

About 90% of the homes are owner-occupied in Huntington compared with 70% in Chittenden County (see Table 6.5). This can be explained in part by the large number of rental units in our cities and larger villages.

Owner Occupied versus Renter Occupied Units			
Total Population in Owner vs Renter Occupied Units	Huntington	Chittenden County	Vermont
Total	1,938	146,750	600,412
Owner Occupied	1,748	101,732	444,608
Renter occupied	190	45,018	155,804
Table 6.5: Total Population in Owner versus Renter Occupied Units 2010 – the Vermont Housing Data Site			

The increase in the total number of housing units in Huntington has grown about the same percentage rate as both Chittenden County and the State in the last decade (see Table 6.6). However, Huntington accounts for only a small amount of the total units in the county.

Number of Housing Units			
Year	Huntington	Chittenden County	Vermont
1950	169	14,020	106,362
1950	176	17,852	121,911
1960	174	22,467	136,307
1970	268	30,668	165,063
1980	448	41,347	223,198
1990	622	52,095	271,214
2000	744	58,864	294,382
2010	821	65,722	322,539
Table 6.6: Housing Units—The Vermont Housing Data Site			

Huntington's fuel usage has a different profile from the State and the County (see Table 6.7). Huntington heats with a much higher percentage of wood and fuel oil compared with the rest of the county.

Fuel Usage			
Home heating fuel, 2007-2011	Huntington	Chittenden County	Vermont
All occupied housing units	820	61,989	256,711
Gas	35%	62%	30%
Electric	0%	7%	4%
Fuel oil, kerosene	41%	25%	50%
Wood	23%	5%	14%
All other fuels	1%	1%	1%
No Fuel used	0%	0%	0%
Table 6.7: Fuel Usages – the Vermont Housing Data Site			

7. Childcare

Despite the importance of quality childcare for working parents, availability is limited and it is not uncommon for parents to add their child to waiting lists before birth. Child Care Resource (CCR), a non-profit organization providing services to parents and child care providers, estimates that 6,800 Chittenden County children age 0-12 are in regulated child care each week.

In July 2013, CCR's census of child care programs and availability listed vacancy rates ranging from less than one percent to eight percent. Child care for the youngest children is most difficult to find. Sixty-two percent of CCR's referral services are for children under three years of age, even though they make up only twenty-two percent of children under the age of twelve in Chittenden County.

According to CCR, average tuition for full time childcare ranges from \$164-\$230 per week depending on the type of program and the age of the child. Average aftercare tuitions for school age children range from \$74-\$92 per week¹. Many families struggle to balance their desire for the best care they can find with their ability to pay.

A number of studies identify the benefits of high quality childcare. The Carolina Abecedarian Project found children in early intervention programs performed better on cognitive tests, had higher levels of math and reading achievement, completed more years of education, and delayed parenthood. Mothers of children in intervention programs also reached higher levels of education and employment.² The HighScope Perry Preschool Study found children in early childhood programs had lower arrest rates, higher graduation rates, higher achievement rates, higher IQs, and higher earning potential.³ In March 2003, The Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis published an article advocating for public investment in early childhood education and estimated a 12% rate of return for "society in general."⁴

In September 2013, CCR listed as the child care options in Huntington three registered family child care homes, the Brewster-Pierce Preschool Program, and the Y School Age Program (after school at BPMS). In Vermont, people providing childcare to more than two families must be registered with the Department of Children and Families.

To ensure the optimal development of the Town's children, the Town must support quality childcare and offer parents resources in locating care for their children.

¹ <https://www.childcareresource.org/community-statistics#Average>

² <http://abc.fpg.unc.edu/major-findings>

³ <http://www.highscope.org/Content.asp?ContentId=219>

⁴ http://www.minneapolisfed.org/publications_papers/pub_display.cfm?id=3832

Goals

1. The Town should not adopt regulations that create unreasonable obstacles to the creation of home-based or center-based child care that meets registration and licensing criteria set by the State of Vermont.
2. Promote safe, high-quality, and affordable child care and after-school care.
3. Promote access to local and regional resources for families and child care providers.

Objectives

1. Identify State, regional and community resources and/or organizations that are available to coordinate and/or provide playgroups, child care referrals and reviews, financial assistance, etc. (Chittenden East Partnership, Building Bright Futures, Vermont Bright Futures Child Care System, Child Care Resource, etc.).
2. Determine the demand for providing additional information for parents and child care providers in Huntington.
3. Determine whether zoning regulations adequately describe safe pick up and drop off areas at family-based and center-based child care providers.
4. Determine whether zoning and subdivision regulations should be amended to facilitate child care in multi-use areas and/or large Planned Unit Developments or Planned Residential Developments.

Implementation

1. The Planning Commission will consult with local, regional, and safety officials to determine whether a need exists to develop safety plans and/or references for Fire Department and First Responder personnel, the Emergency Management Coordinator/Town Administrator, the Town Health Officer, the Town Clerk, and/or others and for the Emergency Management Plan regarding child care centers in Town.
2. The Planning Commission will consult with the Library, the School, child care providers, play group organizers, the Town Website Committee, and others to determine how information about resources can be most effectively communicated to parents, providers, and others. Resource examples include book bins, playgroups, summer pizza, story circles, referral services, community passes (ECHO, Audubon, etc.), the Toy Van, State requirements, and

Change of Use applications. Implementation examples include:

- a. Include child care referral information, agency links, and training opportunities on the Town Website
 - b. Coordinate between child care providers and BPMS
 - c. Investigate the use of “Average Daily Membership” State Education Funds in order to help pay for preschool child care in qualified home-based and center-based facilities
3. The Planning Commission will consult with the Zoning Administrative Officer, local child care providers, regional organizations, and others to determine whether the Town’s Land Use Regulations pose barriers to center-based and home-based child care facilities.
4. The Planning Commission will consult with the schools, the Library, parents, the Town Recreation Committee, and others to determine whether there is adequate access to quality afterschool programs.
5. The Planning Commission will recommend the Selectboard create an Ad Hoc Committee or volunteer childcare coordinator position if they deem it necessary in order to achieve the Goals and Objectives of the Childcare section of this Town Plan

8. Natural Resources

Huntington's Natural Resources predate human occupation and are an invaluable asset to the Town; they are the reason that many residents live here. Preserving and protecting these resources while land is developed is the challenge facing the Town.

In 2013, ongoing work and mapping of natural resources was underway as part of the ECOS project, a Chittenden County Regional Sustainability Project. Huntington, Richmond, Bolton and Jericho participated in the project as part of a multi-community Municipal Planning Grant.

Riparian & Surface Water

Riparian areas and surface waters form a complex and interdependent hydrological system. Riparian areas are ecosystems located on the banks of streams, rivers, lakes, wetlands, and floodplains. They provide food and habitat to the species that inhabit them and perform essential functions for the adjacent surface waters.



Photo: Janet Labelle

Riparian vegetation slows and filters runoff, stabilizes stream banks, contributes food and structure to the aquatic habitats, slows flood waters, and stabilizes water temperature—thus protecting water quality. Stabilizing stream banks minimizes erosion and sediment buildup in aquatic communities.

Surface waters occupy close to 90 acres in Huntington and are an important resource for the Town. The rivers, streams, and ponds are used for fishing, swimming, canoeing, and scenic enjoyment. Most notable is the Huntington River, which flows through the middle of the Huntington Valley and links the Lower Village, Huntington Center and Hanksville areas of Town. Designated by the State as Class B waters, the Huntington River should be swimmable and boat-able. Class B waters are also considered drinkable if filtered and disinfected.

Flowing 18 miles from its headwaters north to its mouth where it enters the Winooski River at Jonesville, the Huntington River drains 67 square miles of land. It is fed by many tributaries including Jones Brook in Hanksville; Cobb Brook by Charlie Smith Road; Brush Brook in Huntington Center; Carpenter Brook south of Shaker Mountain Road; Hollow Brook by the Hinesburg Hollow Road; Fargo Brook by East Street; Texas Hill Brook by Huntington Acres; Sherman Hollow Brook by the Audubon lands; and Johns Brook, which is the most northerly tributary in Huntington.

The Huntington River Conservation Partnership is a collaboration of the Richmond and

Huntington Conservation Commissions and has overseen monitoring of coliform levels in the Huntington River and its tributaries. Monitoring began in Huntington in 2002. In 2006, sites in Richmond were added. In 2006, the Huntington River below Bridge Street in the Lower Village was identified as bacteria impaired based on the ongoing sampling. While not all coliform bacteria are pathogenic, their presence can indicate fecal contamination by other pathogenic organisms.

Sources of fecal coliform can include failing septic systems, pet waste, farm runoff, and contamination by wild animals. In 2009, a Microbial Source Tracking study (on three dates under high flow conditions) found evidence of contamination from canids and ruminants. The study recommended ongoing coliform monitoring, inspection and mitigation of potentially failing septic systems, groundwater monitoring, improved agricultural nutrient management planning, and enhancing riparian buffers.⁵



Photo: Jimmy Vaughn

A river corridor management plan was published in 2008 and updated in 2009. It is available on the Town Website and at the Huntington Public Library. Recommendations in the management plan include additional geomorphological assessment, analysis of wetland restoration potential, inventory of stormwater runoff related to roads and ditches, investigation of the presence of berms blocking flood plain access, and five-year updates to the corridor management plan.⁶

Development setbacks in Huntington's Zoning Regulation establish a 100 foot buffer along the Huntington River and a 50 foot buffer along a number of its named tributaries.

Gillett Pond, a surface water popular with Huntingtonians, is actually located in the Town of Richmond. It provides fishing opportunities and habitat for many large and small mammals. An important wetland adjacent to the pond is found in Huntington.

Ground Water

Ground water is an important resource because it is the primary source of drinking water in Huntington and because of its interconnection with surface waters. Ground waters discharge into surface waters; and surface waters replenish ground waters. The quality of ground water can be impacted by land use practices such as septic systems, underground fuel tanks, solid waste, unused vehicles, road salt, fertilizers, storm water runoff, and hazardous waste.

⁵ http://www.vtwaterquality.org/mapp/docs/mp_13huntingtonriver.pdf

⁶ http://www.huntingtonvt.org/index.php?option=com_rokdownloads&view=folder&Itemid=200224&id=358:huntington-river-corri-dorplan-hard-copy-available-at-library

Ground water provides water for home, business, and agricultural needs. Most residences are served by individual wells. The public water systems and source water protection areas are described in the Facilities section of this Town Plan.

Wetlands

Wetlands have three basic characteristics: (1) they are inundated by or saturated with water for some period during the growing season; (2) they contain wet or hydric soils; and (3) they are dominated by plants that are adapted to saturated soils. Wetlands are found in the upland areas and the river valley throughout Huntington and they serve many important functions. They act as filters to purify water and as “sponges” and storage areas to minimize flooding. They stabilize shorelines from erosion, recharge groundwater, and provide critical habitat for fish and wildlife.

Swamps are wetlands dominated by woody plants, while marshes are wetlands dominated by herbaceous plants. Vernal pools are small seasonal isolated wetlands. Seeps are sloping wetlands and can be open or covered with woody vegetation.

Wetlands provide habitat for most species of wildlife at some point in their life cycle. Huntington’s wetlands support a variety of birds, mammals, reptiles, amphibians, invertebrates, and plant life. Some species are largely dependent on the wetlands while other species use wetlands occasionally. Vernal pools, while small in size, provide important breeding habitat for pool-breeding amphibians and invertebrates. A number of wetlands in Town have beaver activity and are dynamic with respect to size, vegetation, and amount of open water.



Moose alongside Hinesburg Hollow Road—Phone: Joan Sargeant

The National Wetland Inventory (NWI) identifies 159 acres of wetlands in the Town of Huntington. The wetlands shown on the natural resources map are derived from this inventory. While not complete or thoroughly field checked, this is the best source of wetlands information the Town currently has available. Wetlands shown on the NWI maps are considered to be Class II wetlands under the Vermont Wetland Rules and require a 50-foot buffer zone in most instances.

The Town of Huntington contains many scattered river valley (floodplain) wetlands associated

with the Huntington River and its larger tributaries. An important river valley wetland is also located along Hinesburg Hollow Road. It is a large, connected complex of shrub and emergent wetlands that provides habitat for a variety of birds and other wildlife.

Many of the larger floodplains along the Huntington River have been converted to agricultural land because of their alluvial soils, which are well suited for crop or pasture land. Even these converted floodplains are important for protection of the river's functions and values, particularly if vegetated buffers are intact. Restoration to naturally forested floodplain may be a consideration for some of the land. Floodplains in Town are shown on the Natural Resources Map 1. The boundaries are subject to field verification.



Barred owl--Photo: Alison Wagner

Natural Areas & Sites of Biological Significance

Huntington has several areas identified by the Vermont Natural Heritage Inventory that are considered to have statewide biological significance.

The largest area of biological significance identified is part of the Camel's Hump State Forest in the northeast part of Town. The following natural communities are considered to be significant examples: montane spruce-fir forest, montane yellow birch-red spruce forest, and alpine meadow. Huntington's alpine meadow is the second largest example in the state and harbors a number of rare arctic-alpine plants. The montane spruce-fir forest is one of the larger examples identified in the state during a statewide assessment of this natural community type. Currently the State is completing a natural community base map for the entire Camel's Hump State Forest and it is likely that other significant sites will be identified.

One area outside of Camel's Hump State land that has been identified as significant by the State is the dry oak-hickory-hop hornbeam forest of Mayo Mountain. This forest type is also found on the ridge tops of the western side of Town, but needs further investigation.

Future Town-wide inventories should identify sites of local significance for natural community types, including wetlands and rare species. Identification of these sites provides a starting point for prioritizing protection of natural resources in Town through purchase, transfer of development rights, covenants and other mechanisms. Protecting these and other natural resources will be considered in the Town's Land Use Regulations subdivision process.

Forestland

Huntington is largely forested with contiguous forest on the eastern side of Town, and large interconnected forest blocks on the western side of Town. Development along the Huntington river valley fragments the forestland from the east to the west side of Town. To a lesser

extent, development along the lower portion of the tributaries also fragments the forestland. However, the forests of the Town are largely intact. These forestlands provide ample habitat for animals, including wide ranging species such as bear. Well planned development is necessary to minimize future impact to these large unfragmented blocks.

Huntington forests are a mixture of hardwood and softwood. Much of the lower elevation forest can be characterized as hardwood including: red and sugar maple, beech, yellow birch, and white ash. Ravines and north facing slopes occasionally have a strong hemlock component. The tops of the low hills facing south and west also have a strong red oak component, and white pine is commonly scattered here too. White pine also can be the dominant species in forests that were abandoned from agriculture. The higher elevation woodlands are a mixture of softwood including: red spruce, balsam fir, and yellow and heart leaved paper birch. The forests of Huntington are characteristic of the northern Appalachian Mountains. Nearly 5,000 acres of forest is within the Camel's Hump State Forest. The forests contribute both directly and indirectly to the economy of Huntington. The lower elevation woodlands provide wood for timber harvest, maple sugaring, and valuable wildlife habitat. Huntington's woodlands also provide a place for hunting, fishing, snowmobiling, cross-country skiing, hiking, mountain biking, snowshoeing, wildlife observation, and simply for enjoyment.

Soils

Huntington has approximately 2,500 acres (10%) of soils with a prime or statewide agricultural designation. Most of these soils are found along the Huntington's river valley. According to the US Natural Resource Conservation Service (NCRS), prime agricultural soils have the highest potential for crop production, with few limitations. Statewide soils have more limitations for crop production such as steep slopes, stoniness, or flooding problems. The presence of prime and statewide soils is also considered important in the ACT 250 process; and their presence along the river valley may affect the potential for development that is subject to ACT 250 review.

The Natural Resources Conservation Service also rates forest soils according to their potential to grow timber for commercial purposes and for maple syrup production. Forestland soil values are assigned according to slope, wetness, rooting depth, and harvest costs. A total of approximately 2,000 acres (8%) of the soils in Huntington have a high forestry rating, and 1,500 acres (6%) have a median forestry rating. This is not a high percentage of forestland with good soil potential relative to other towns in Vermont that have forests at lower elevations. These soils are also subject to the Act 250 review process.

Quality of Natural Resources

The Huntington River and its tributaries provide recreational opportunities; the waters are of acceptable quality for swimming and fishing. There has been a loss of fish habitat in certain sections of the river and concerns about stream bank stability exist. The quality of deep

ground water appears to be acceptable in Huntington for drinking. However, there has been degradation of shallow ground waters in the Lower Village and Huntington Center areas which has impacted the water quality of the Huntington River for swimming. The Town's extensive woodlands support both economic opportunities and habitat for large animals, and are in relatively good shape. Air quality is generally good, except for certain times in winter when woodstove emissions combine with local weather conditions to cause the build-up of airborne particulate matter.

Wildlife Habitat

The forests, streams, wetlands, and open fields provide habitat for a variety of fish and wildlife species. Necessary wildlife habitat is defined by the State as habitat that is critical to a life stage of a species and must be identifiable. The State has mapped deer wintering habitat in Huntington. Deer winter areas are considered necessary for the survival of deer in winter. They are typically dominated by conifers such as pine, hemlock, and spruce that provide important shelter from winter snows and allow deer to move freely. The deer wintering area maps, in reality, indicate areas that are likely to be utilized by deer but most have not been field checked in recent years. The value of deer wintering areas can be degraded by the close proximity of human disturbance that results from development.



Fisher at suet feeder—Photo: Alison Wagner

A few locations are mapped by the State as bear mast and wetland feeding areas although additional unmapped areas exist. In Vermont, mast stands are typically composed of a group of mature beech trees but may also include oak. The bears will forage on the beechnuts and acorns in the fall. These nuts are highly nutritious and are one of the primary ways bears gain the necessary weight for the inactive wintering months. Wetlands are also important to bears, especially in the early spring when they will feed on the tubers of perennial wetland plants.

Wetlands provide habitat not only for bear, but for a variety of species such as waterfowl for nesting. Vernal areas provide critical habitat for pool breeding amphibians

Wildlife corridors are areas that allow a variety of animals to move between or along habitats. Stream and river corridors provide important wildlife corridors especially when naturally vegetated buffers are present to serve as both habitat and screening for wildlife.

The Huntington River's vegetated buffer often only includes the bank and a narrow strip at the top of the bank, with a quick transition to agricultural land. Other corridors can include uninhabited forested land and hedge rows that are in between settled areas and allow wildlife

to move freely without disturbance. These areas are especially important where wildlife is crossing our river valleys.

Grasslands provide habitat for grassland nesting birds. This habitat has been declining across the state and region wide. Mechanized agriculture has had a major impact on nesting birds. Allowing some land to not be mowed or having delayed mowing can increase the nesting success of grassland birds.

Huntington and our neighboring towns support some of the highest diversity of breeding bird species in the United States. The Partners in Flight Land Bird Conservation Plan calls the northern forest region a “Neo-tropical Migratory Bird Factory.” The large intact forest block around Camel’s Hump is nursery for the next generation of migrant birds from as far away as South America. A recent National Audubon Society analysis looking at forest habitat, bird abundance, and species diversity ranks Huntington’s forests in the top 15% of forests in the Atlantic Flyway. As such, Huntington’s forests are a globally important resource for bird populations.

Huntington fisheries are considered cold water habitat supporting such species as brown and brook trout. The main stem of the Huntington River supports a natural reproducing population of brown trout. The tributaries of the Huntington River and the main stem upstream of Huntington Center support brook trout. The tributaries, with their greater forest cover, create the cooler temperatures that are required by brook trout. The fishery in Huntington is limited and is supported by stocking. The habitat has been degraded from natural conditions because of the removal of streamside vegetation for agriculture and by stream channelization.

Salmon fry have been successfully stocked in the Huntington River, maturing to smolt and migrate downstream. They tolerate higher temperatures than both trout species. The Huntington River has been identified as having excellent potential for meeting salmon restoration goals with stocking fry.

In conclusion, the type and diversity of wildlife habitat in Huntington needs to be better documented so the Town can make informed decisions in land use planning. The ECOS Grant, ending in 2013, began the process of documenting wildlife inventory in Huntington. Work will need to continue to support this effort.

Goals

1. Ensure adequate protection and preservation of rare, sensitive, or important natural resources and prime agricultural soils.
2. Protect important natural areas, critical wildlife habitat, rare, threatened and endangered species and overall biodiversity with the help of landowners.
3. Provide connectivity among natural areas and critical wildlife habitat.

4. Protect surface and groundwater in the Huntington River watershed.
5. Promote private, commercial, and recreational access, use, and development of private and public natural resources that balances environmental impact, public safety, economic benefits, infrastructure demands, and quality of life concerns.
6. Maintain and improve the air quality in Huntington.

Objectives

1. Determine the location of critical wildlife habitat, contiguous forest blocks, wildlife corridors, surface waters and wetlands, important natural communities, conserved and protected areas, and other natural resources in order to establish land use, conservation, and outreach priorities.
2. Improve the water quality and riparian zones of the Huntington River and its tributaries to provide “Full Support” of all “Designated Uses” (Overall, Aquatic/ Biota Habitat, Contact Recreation, Secondary Contact Recreation, Aesthetics, and Fish Consumption) and maintain Class B status of rivers and streams.
3. Protect and improve the quality of groundwater and drinking water sources by limiting point and nonpoint source pollution.

Implementation

1. The Town should not adopt regulations which allow the degradation of surface water and groundwater.
2. The Town should adopt regulations which encourage development away from surface waters, fluvial erosion zones, riparian habitats, and other sensitive natural resources and create opportunities for land-owners and developers to protect them.
3. The Planning Commission will consult with the Conservation Commission, site engineers, contractors, and water quality personnel to determine whether the zoning and subdivision regulations provide clear guidance and adequate protections to prevent erosion during and after construction.
4. The Planning Commission will consult with the Conservation Commission, the Huntington River Conservation Partnership, and others to determine whether the Huntington River can be included in the work of other advocacy organizations (TU Mad Dog or Central Vermont

chapters, New Haven River Anglers Association, Vermont River Conservancy, etc.).

5. The Planning Commission and Conservation Commission will review the implementation of the Uplands Mapping Grants and the Huntington River Corridor Plan to determine future priorities and needs, including grant funding, and make recommendations as necessary to conserve natural resources.
6. The Planning Commission will consult with the Conservation Commission and others to determine the feasibility of and necessity to:
 - a. Provide public access points to the Huntington River where landowners are willing and where wildlife will be minimally impacted or disturbed by human activity.
 - b. Identify and map wetlands that are not shown on the National Wetland Inventory maps and verify the mapped wetland boundaries and types, including vernal pools. This should be done using residents, including local natural resources experts, in conjunction with other outside experts.
 - c. Continue developing long-term plans for conservation of the Town's natural resources for economic, recreational, and ecological benefits.
 - d. Review the corridor management plan for the Huntington River to identify ways to protect the Town and landowners from flood and erosion damage.
 - e. Identify large forest blocks and encourage conservation of these forests.
 - f. Identify opportunities to utilize Conservation Fund money for projects such as mitigation of invasive species, riparian buffer restoration projects, etc.

9. Recreation & Open Space

Huntington is fortunate to have public, private, and State owned land that offers outstanding natural beauty and recreational opportunities for Huntington residents and visitors. In addition to the recreation they provide, these resources help support Huntington's economy.

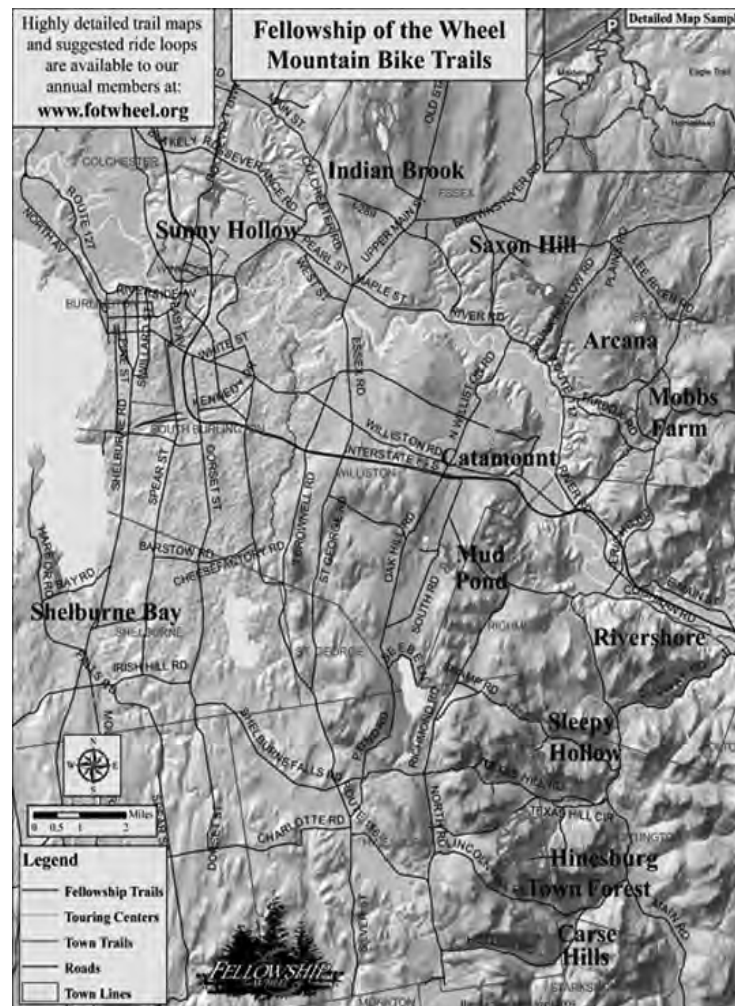
A number of recreational opportunities currently exist in Huntington including: multiple access points to the Vermont Association of Snow Travelers' (VAST) system of snowmobile trails; the Catamount Trail; the Long Trail; Camel's Hump State Park; numerous hiking, backcountry skiing, and snowboarding areas; and cross-country skiing trails. Fishing, swimming, canoeing, and kayaking opportunities abound with access to the Huntington River and its many tributaries. Abundant open land in the state forest, Camel's Hump State Park, proximity to the Hinesburg Town Forest with Economou Road access, Huntington Gap Wildlife Management Area, and several other private undeveloped areas allow residents and visitors to enjoy hunting, fishing, and trapping many species including but not limited to upland birds, deer, moose, bear, and brook trout.

Camel's Hump Nordic Ski Area offers cross-country skiing and snowshoeing and is run as a non-profit cooperative. Sleepy Hollow Inn offers Nordic skiing, snowshoeing, and mountain biking. The Audubon Center has numerous hiking trails, day camps, and other recreational and educational activities. The Birds of Vermont Museum also offers hiking trails and educational opportunities for residents of all ages.



Photo courtesy of Camel's Hump Nordic Ski Area

Through the efforts of Fellowship of the Wheel and private landowners, an ever-expanding network of mountain bike trails attracts riders of all abilities from within and outside of Huntington. Three major trail networks originate in Huntington. Numerous Class 3, Class 4, and abandoned logging roads provide opportunities for walking, horseback riding, and mountain biking.



Map courtesy of Fellowship of the Wheel—www.fotwheel.org

Many trails on private land can only be accessed with permission of the landowner. Connectivity between these various trail networks is limited. A major transportation and recreation challenge facing Huntington is to connect the existing sidewalks, unpaved roads, public trails, and private trails into a safe, well thought out system.

Huntington also has public facilities that host a variety of activities from youth soccer leagues to horseshoes and volleyball.

The Town owns 100.5 acres of undeveloped land designated as the Town Forest. This parcel of land has limited access and is adjacent to Camel's Hump State Park.

Other recreational activities are emerging. An active and growing arts community founded Huntington Valley Arts, a not-for-profit corporation that provides educational and cultural opportunities for the community. The Hanksville Mud Bog, a twice-yearly community motorsports event, draws participants and spectators and is growing in popularity.



Hanksville Mud Bog—Photo: Jessica Bordeaux

The future of recreation in Huntington will depend on the efforts of public groups such as the Huntington Conservation Commission and the Recreation Committee, non-profit organizations such as the Audubon Center, private entities, and individual citizens. The Town is becoming a destination spot for recreational and educational opportunities in nature. Ecotourism is steadily increasing and will likely continue to help support our local economy.

The Huntington Planning Commission's Town Plan Survey of 1999 showed that Huntington residents have a continued interest in maintaining and developing additional recreational opportunities. Although Gillett Pond itself is located in Richmond, a survey conducted in early 2014, after community discussion of the possibility of removal of the dam, showed interest in maintaining the recreational aspects of the pond by many residents of Huntington. The following goal provides for improved recreational opportunities and preservation of existing resources.

Goal

1. Provide a diversity of quality recreational activities for Huntington's residents and visitors.

Objectives

1. Support and optimize usage of recreational resources including the following:
 - a. Bicycle lanes
 - b. Mountain biking trails
 - c. Trails and trail-related facilities
 - d. Walking and running paths/trails



Photo: Heather Ferguson

- e. Nordic skiing
 - f. Backcountry skiing/snowboarding
 - g. Swimming, fishing, and other uses of the Huntington River
 - h. The Huntington Recreation Field
 - i. Snowmobiling, horseback riding, and designated ATV trails
 - j. Hunting and fishing
2. Plan for anticipated increased demand on recreational resources and the impact on these resources.
 3. The Huntington Planning Commission, Conservation Commission, and Recreation Committee should prepare management plans to maintain and improve recreation resources.
 4. Where appropriate, encourage ownership retention of Class 4 roads and allow recreational access to Town properties and Town roads.
 5. Recreation facilities including trails, paths, playgrounds, conservation areas, and water access should be included as features of new development projects and remain open to the public.
 6. Increase awareness and proper stewardship of the recreational resources within the community including developing partnerships with the relevant advocacy organizations and individuals.
 7. Collaborate with neighboring Towns to develop recreational resources for residents.
 8. Incorporate recreational access for the handicapped and people with disabilities/limitations.

Implementation

Mapping

1. Develop a comprehensive map and brochure of the recreational resources within the Town.
2. Explore access opportunities to the Huntington Town Forest land with the adjacent landowners.
3. Conduct an analysis of Town highways for possible designation as local scenic byways and opportunities for bike lanes.
4. Explore the possibility of reclassifying the Town's Class 4 roads as Town trails where appropriate.

Development

1. Work with VAST and local snowmobile enthusiasts to identify the potential for expansion of trail networks.
2. Support Fellowship of the Wheel and Camel's Hump Nordic Ski Area in their efforts to build and maintain trails and promote respectful and responsible usage of trails and parking areas.
3. Work with willing landowners to improve access to the Huntington River through enhanced walking paths and signage.
4. Identify potential locations for a network of recreational paths on both public and private lands and explore options with willing landowners to provide access for hunters, naturalists and people with disabilities/limitations.

Management

5. Evaluate the potential for creating management plans with the Conservation Commission and the Recreation Committee.
6. Explore whether there is regulatory support for the development of recreational resources in conjunction with new development projects.
7. Explore the possibility of having information kiosks in the Lower Village and Huntington Center to direct visitors to recreation opportunities and that provide guidelines for usage of Huntington's recreational resources.

10. Historic Features

Some of the questions involved in understanding our society as it is now can be answered by looking at the context of the past. Huntington's historic features provide a physical touchstone for that context; the challenge is to preserve them against deterioration.



Huntington's long and rich history is expressed in both its built and its natural environment. The preservation of its historic sites, its vibrant villages, and its rural heritage is an important part of keeping Huntington a desirable place to live as our county, state, and world evolve. The Town's historic features are also a critical component of attracting tourists, who generally value conservation, recreation, and rural Vermont living. Such tourists contribute to the Town's economic vitality with a relatively low impact on the Town's infrastructure and rich cultural attributes.

In 1979, the State Division for Historic Preservation identified forty-six buildings in Huntington as being worthy of the State Historic Site and Structures significance. (A copy of this document is available at the Town Clerk's Office and on the Town Website.) Eleven of these buildings are included in the Huntington Center Historic District, which includes all structures on either side of the Main Road from thirty yards south of Camel's Hump Road to a boundary south of the Town Office and represents three historical periods of growth: early, middle, and late 19th century (see Map 4).

The structures in this historic district are also included in a larger area that received "Village Center" designation from the Vermont Downtown Program in 2012. This designation applies to the village cores in both the Lower Village and Huntington Center. See Map 6 for Village Center boundaries. The designation encourages (without mandating) development that is



Union Meeting House, Lower Village—adaptive reuse of a church

compatible with the existing structures and the traditional compact, coherent form of the villages. A benefit of the designation is that it allows the community and residents in the district to qualify for certain tax credits and priority consideration for State grants. This designation will help preserve the Town's historic features.

Huntington has two buildings that are on the National Register of Historic Places:

- The Union Meeting House (a white, Greek Revival, gable front structure capped with a three-staged steeple and simple restrained classical details) is owned by the Town and is actively used as a Town Library and Community Center.



Jubilee Barn, Huntington Center—
restoration & adaptive reuse of a dairy barn

- The Jubilee Farm Barn, formerly known as the Randall Barn, is owned by Huntington resident Sarah Jane Williamson. In addition to serving as a barn and farm stand for Williamson and other local farmers whose products are sold in the stand, it is used as a community gathering place for artistic, social, and cultural events. Shortly after it was restored in 1998 it received the Chittenden County Historic Society's annual award for Historic and Architectural Excellence.

Adaptive Reuse of Barns & Residences

Many historic buildings throughout Huntington are in need of repairs and investment.

The adaptive reuse of certain historic structures for commercial, industrial, and residential uses would allow owners to use existing buildings that provide a sense of place and context of the Town's history. In the past 15 years, adaptive reuse has allowed at least four large buildings in Town to be restored and used: the white barn and the tractor shed at Jubilee Farm in Huntington Center, used for a variety of events; the Fuller House in the Lower Village, now the Huntington Post Office and other offices; and the Union Meeting House in the Lower Village, now the Huntington Public Library. In the early 1980s, the school house in Huntington Center was renovated into the Town Clerk's Office and a later expansion was made in the late 1980s to accommodate expanded Town services.

Two barns were adapted for reuse in the 1980s. Liberty Head Post and Beam is located south of the Lower Village. The building and the large addition on the back are used for the manufacture of post and beam barns, houses, and other buildings. In Huntington Center, the milking parlor at the south end of a large dairy barn on the Main Road was converted into housing by owner Ken Pillsbury. The remaining



Fuller House, Lower Village—adaptive reuse of a house



Liberty Head, near Lower Village—adaptive reuse of a barn

free stall is used for storage. Previous to this, in the 1970s, the Green Mountain Audubon Nature Center on Sherman Hollow Road renovated its large barn for nature study and summer camp use.

Huntington was chosen to participate in the Vermont Barn Census in 2009. The preliminary barn and farm building research in thirteen Vermont towns is offered as a public service to assist with efforts to learn more about the agricultural heritage of these communities. The historical research and preliminary field documentation was conducted during the fall 2009 semester by the Researching Historic Structures and Sites course at University of Vermont Historic Preservation Program with the assistance of local volunteers as part of the statewide project of Historic Windsor's Preservation Education Institute, Save Vermont Barns, Vermont Housing and Conservation Board, and the Preservation Trust of Vermont. Funding support was provided in part by a Preserve America grant through the National Park Service to the State of Vermont Division for Historic Preservation. More information on this survey can be seen at <http://www.uvm.edu/%7Ehp206/2009/Huntington/history.html>.

Town Hall

A current effort to preserve Huntington's historic character is the work that is underway by the Town Hall Committee. Many Huntington residents remember March Town Meetings upstairs in the Town Hall.

The south and west sides of the Town Hall were painted in 2013 and plans are underway to replace all, or part, of the roof. Grants are pending to make the entire building accessible and in compliance with American Disabilities Act (ADA) standards. This includes an approved bathroom, front ramp and handicap parking, and access to the upstairs with a compliant fire escape. In previous years, there was discussion about moving the building to a site with more land. After reviewing this option extensively, the Committee determined that in order to access grant funds the building should be renovated at its current location.

Historical & Community Trust

A partner in protecting Huntington's historic character is the Huntington Historic and Community Trust (HHCT), a nonprofit organization established in 2000 as an outgrowth of the Huntington Historical Society. HHCT's mission is "to protect and enhance the historical and rural aspects of Huntington's character through: the conservation of agricultural and forested lands; the preservation of sites and structures of historic value; and the cultivation of a quality environment and cohesive community." It has helped landowners purchase land of merit for conservation, recreation, or open space so that it is protected in perpetuity, and it has been active in the work of the Town Hall Committee and the restoration of the historic Henry Curtains that now hang in the Library, among other activities.

Ancient Roads

Due to the 2006 Ancient Road Legislation, Act 178, all towns in Vermont were required to decide whether to retain Ancient Roads as public rights of way or discontinue them. In 2014, the Huntington Selectboard will inform the Agency of Transportation which Ancient Roads will be discontinued. A synopsis of the process may be found on the Huntington Town Website.

Archaeological

In addition to recognizing the significance of the built environment and Huntington's heritage, we are aware of the potential for archaeological resources. The Town's potential archaeological sites include: 18th century and 19th century Euro-American stone walls, homesteads, farms, mills, and lumber camps. Native American sites that predate the chartering of the Town in 1763 may range from small camps to large villages spanning at least 13,000 years of pre-European settlement history. The archaeological site locations can be expected at different elevations in the Huntington river valley, along smaller streams, at headwaters, and near natural springs, wetlands and ponds. Over time, the Town should work with the Division for Historic Preservation to identify archaeologically-sensitive areas and sites and protect these valuable resources.

Another recent effort that has enhanced community awareness of our history is the 2010 work by author Elise Guyette related to Lincoln Hill. Her book, *Discovering Black Vermont*, is written about the black families who farmed and thrived on Lincoln Hill for 70 years, primarily in Hinesburg, mainly from 1790 to 1870. The book shows this history is tied closely to Huntington, as some residents of "the Hill" attended school and church in Huntington and also owned property in the Town.

Goal

1. Promote awareness and appreciation of Huntington's historic buildings, spaces, and districts and of the economic and cultural benefits of protecting them, recognizing their role in shaping Huntington's character, and making Huntington a desirable place to live and visit.

Objectives

7. Prioritize appropriate zoning regulations and the exploration of improved water and wastewater capacity to encourage thoughtful development in our historic village centers.

8. Encourage the adaptive reuse of appropriate historic structures throughout Town. The “character of the neighborhood” must be respected when considering such conversions in area neighborhoods.
9. Explore the possibility of a Historic District Overlay District in the Land Use Regulations in order to protect the historic and architectural heritage throughout Huntington.
10. Support efforts to further repair and utilize the Town Hall as a community center and the continued use of the Union Meeting House as a library and community center.

Implementation

1. Revise Zoning Regulations to reflect thoughtful development of historic village centers and reinforce traditional village building patterns.
2. Explore and promote the benefits that the Village Center and Historic District designations offer the Town and individual landowners.
3. Whenever possible, encourage new structures that are compatible with the existing structures and forms in our village centers.
4. Include language in the Zoning Regulations that encourages the adaptive reuse of barns and outbuildings and other historic structures.
5. Work with Community Trust of Vermont to educate property owners to apply for low-interest loans and grants for restoration and renovation of historic buildings.
6. Explore the permit process for removal of privately-owned historic buildings.
7. Propose regulation revisions that support uses of historic Town buildings.
8. Identify structures that might qualify for listing on the National Register of Historic Places and encourage residents to seek such designation if appropriate.
9. Encourage Vermont Historic Preservation to put a sign at the bottom of Lincoln Hill in Huntington to recognize early black settlers.
10. Consider requiring that new structures proposed within the Historic District be subject to a public hearing process in order to ensure their compatibility with the character of the neighborhood, as described by the State Historic survey or by expanded criteria created by the Planning Commission.
11. Produce a public document and/or pamphlet listing the historic structures included in the Vermont Division of Historic Preservation’s inventory of historic places, other historic landmarks, and our historic district.

12. The Planning Commission will consult with the Huntington Historic & Community Trust to identify collaborative opportunities to protect Huntington's historic character, such as working to update the Vermont Division of Historic Preservation's list of historic structures.

11.Schools

Huntington's residents value education and the role the school plays in building community. This is evidenced by the annual support of school budgets at Town Meeting, as well as the level of volunteerism at the three schools where Huntington students receive their education: Brewster-Pierce Memorial School (BPMS) in Huntington, Camel's Hump Middle School (CHMS) in Richmond, and Mt. Mansfield Union High School (MMU) in Jericho.

BPMS serves pre-kindergarten through grade 4, CHMS serves grades 5-8, and students complete grades 9-12 at MMU. The three schools operate within the Chittenden East Supervisory Union #12 (CESU), with a single regional school board serving all the middle and high schools.

Our supervisory union, CESU, has six local elementary schools, two middle schools, and one high school serving children from the Towns of Richmond, Jericho, Underhill, Bolton and Huntington. Each elementary school has its own locally elected school board. Huntington's BPMS school board consists of 5 members. The monthly meetings are open to the public. The CESU website (www.cesu.k12.vt.us) provides information about many school functions, including the time and place for committee meetings, athletics, programs, and much more.

Elementary School



Brewster-Pierce Memorial School (BPMS) in Huntington Center is the public school serving Huntington's pre-kindergarten through grade 4 students. Its stated mission is two-fold: "to create an educational environment that promotes rigorous academic achievement, responsible social behavior, and active civic involvement" and "to create a foundation that fosters healthy decision-making, creative expression, and environmental awareness."

Brief History

The Huntington school property was donated in 1965 to the Town by the estate of Georgia Brewster Pierce, a descendant of one of the Town's original families. At the time, Huntington students were served by three village schoolhouses, and students from Huntington whose education went past the eighth grade attended local high schools in Richmond, Bristol, Hinesburg, and elsewhere.

Brewster-Pierce Memorial School has been built and maintained through the efforts of volunteerism and Town support for the school and its programs, as is evident at Town Meeting and by the continued volunteerism of many community members.



Photo: Pennie Rand

Enrollment

Enrollment, which includes preschool through grade 4, was 157 in 2012-2013 and is expected to remain under 200 students for the foreseeable future. The building has been expanded over the years and currently has capacity for 200 students—so the capacity is adequate for the foreseeable future.

Facility

The school building serves as a valuable community resource even outside the school day. The gym/auditorium/cafeteria facility is the largest indoor public room in Town and is the site of many Town-wide community activities from fitness classes to community dinners and public meetings—including the annual Town Meeting. A free-standing pair of solar panels, installed in 2007, sits on the northwest side of the property. Acquired through the efforts of parents and the assistance of grant money, the panels were installed with the goal of teaching students and the community about the benefits of sustainable renewable energy sources. The panels produce approximately 1700 kWh of energy annually.



School garden and solar array—Photo: Pennie Rand

The school's facilities plan outlines maintenance which will be needed in the next five years, including new windows, new flooring for the gym/cafeteria, kitchen equipment, duct work and other air circulations tasks, upgraded lighting, communications and security infrastructure, parking lot and playground improvements, and technology to optimize efficient use of energy.

Community Involvement

Parents and other community members are active in volunteering in the classrooms, the library, and throughout the school, and many Huntington residents are employed at the school, contributing to a strong sense of community.

The school's parent group, Partners in Education (PIE), holds events and fundraisers to support numerous activities for the school. The organization is the conduit for much of the school's interaction with the community at large. PIE raised approximately \$12,000 through its fundraising activities during the 2012-2013 school year. These funds go toward activities and events that take place during the school year, including (among many other programs):

- the Four Winds Science program for K-4 students (PIE funds paid for half of this program)
- two Flynn Theatre field trips (grades K-2 and grades 3-4), coordinated by BPMS staff
- the biennial Boston trip for 3rd and 4th grade students, coordinated by BPMS staff

PIE hosts annual events at the school for all community families, including the Halloween party, Winter Festival with free activities, Wicked Fun Day, and the Community Pancake Breakfast held in conjunction with the School Lunch Program. Parents were also responsible for building several raised garden beds on the school grounds where students participate in growing vegetables and composting.

Program

The school follows the curriculum of the Chittenden East Supervisory Union and offers all-day kindergarten, preschool, foreign language, music, art, and nutrition education. The staff participates in collaborative teaching, and in-service days are provided for staff development. The school works with three-year action plans and is currently studying and incorporating the Common Core of Standards & Practice into teaching methodologies. Academic goals are developed and reviewed on an on-going basis. Technology is incorporated into the classroom in an ever-widening array of uses including many types of student learning, recordkeeping, research, and communication.

Greater School District

The majority of the education that Huntington students receive through the public school system takes place in other Towns.

Middle School

Huntington students join students from Bolton and Richmond for grades 5-8 at Camel's Hump

Middle School (CHMS) in Richmond. CHMS offers a multitude of in-school and extracurricular activities to enrich students' experiences and education. Students may participate in band, chorus, and orchestra as well as intramural and interscholastic sports. They can join after-school activities in the computer labs and compete in statewide programs such as the Vermont Geography Bee and Math Counts. Other enrichment activities such as drama and Odyssey of the Mind (OM) add still more variety and appeal to many individual interests and talents. All these extra-curricular activities provide ample opportunities for healthy exercise, group participation, collaboration, and team spirit to complement class work in math, science, social studies, language arts, and other basic educational concentrations.

High School

For grades 9 through 12, students from Huntington, Richmond, Bolton, Jericho, and Underhill attend Mt. Mansfield Union High School (MMU) in Jericho. In addition to a full curriculum of academic subjects at all levels, students are also offered summer programs, enrichment/leadership opportunities, Advance Placements courses, and a chance to study abroad. Vocational training opportunities are offered at the Center for Technology-Essex and at the Burlington Technical Center. Training in culinary arts, aeronautics, recording, and other technical skills are offered. The programs are part of MMU Student Services. Older residents may also enroll in vocational education programs. MMU offers Community Based Training courses for students who will be seeking employment right after high school: Real Life English, Real Life Math, and Real Life Exploration with an emphasis on occupational and vocational skills.



Memorial Day Parade—Photo: Heidi Racht

MMU values the arts. Painting, sculpture, photography, and other visual arts enrich the corridors. Talent is also on display through many theatre and music programs. Sports teams and clubs keep the facility busy in all seasons. Competitions, like the Scholars Bowl, the Math League, and Debate foster skills beyond those offered in the classroom setting.

MMU's social mission is broad and includes many outreach activities: Student Council's Blood Drive; the Leo Club (building leadership through social service); the SHAPE Club ("engaging and empowering students through philanthropic activities, leadership opportunities, civic engagement, and career development... to help them achieve personal and professional success"); and the MMU Gay Straight Transgender Alliance ("to create environment where students feel more included and equal"). MMU strives to "allow an opportunity for every student to take part in an extracurricular activity."

Transportation

Most students endure a long commute to attend school, especially at the high school level. Transportation by bus is available for all students although many parents, for a variety of reasons, choose to transport their children themselves. Long bus rides, early pick-up times, shared time together, and convenience are all mentioned as reasons for not taking the bus. The parking lots at the schools are usually filled to overflowing, not only during the school day, but whenever there are school programs. Many high school students transport themselves to MMU and the Tech Centers. Huntington students travel at least seven miles to Camel's Hump Middle School and as many as 26 miles to get to Mt. Mansfield Union High School.

These distances may explain why Huntington student participation in extracurricular activities is proportionately low, particularly at the high school level. The school and the community must continue to work together to support student participation in extracurricular activities, including transportation for after-school and evening activities. Students in activities before the school day begins (band, tutoring, National Honor Society, etc.) rely on parents and personal vehicles to participate. Public school districts in Chittenden County are exploring ways to share transportation services to reduce expenses, use fewer resources, and better serve students and families throughout the region.

Assessments

Student assessments are conducted annually and results are posted in the Town Report. Comparisons with other schools—locally, regionally, and nationally—are provided for all CESU schools. These assessments are reviewed by school leaders, teachers, and the board of directors to celebrate accomplishments, identify shortcomings, and to inform the annual goals of the school. Results are also shared and discussed annually at the Annual School Meeting.

Enrollment & Capacity

The middle school in Richmond and the high school in Jericho appear to have adequate capacity for the projected enrollment needs of the next five years. All buildings are maintained to a high standard.

Safety & Security

With the increase in school violence nationally, the administration and staff continue to focus on procedures that create a safe environment for students and staff. Emergency procedures are continually reviewed, updated, and shared with local and statewide authorities.

Adult Education

Multiple opportunities exist for Huntington residents to pursue higher and continuing education in the region. Vocational training opportunities are available at Essex Junction High School and the Burlington Technical Center. Courses are available at the University of Vermont (UVM), Johnson State College (JSC), Community College of Vermont (CCV), St. Michael's College, Burlington College, Champlain College, CVU Access program (Champlain Valley Union High School, Hinesburg), and MMU After Dark Program. The State of Vermont offers adult education and literacy programs through ten Learning Works centers throughout Vermont.

Efforts to Form a Unified School District

In 2010, the CESU Executive Committee, with the support of the seven additional CESU school boards, formed a Volunteer Merger Committee to explore the benefits of forming a unified school district. After approximately one year of committee work and informational sessions within each district, residents of CESU towns voted to determine whether all six towns would form one unified district. Huntington and Richmond voted against this.

In 2013, a revision was initiated in the Vermont State Legislature in an attempt to address some reasons why the initial plan was rejected. This resulted in modifications to the original law, and a renewed effort is underway to study the formation of modified unified union school districts.

The Brewster-Pierce Board of Directors recognizes the importance of this issue and will work to study the respective advantages and disadvantages and help citizens understand the choices so that voters can make a well-informed decision.

Goals

1. Provide access to high-quality education locally and in collaboration with surrounding towns through a variety of academic, athletic, social, cultural, and community activities.
2. Promote highly-motivated academic learners and critical thinkers, who then become lifelong learners.
3. Encourage parents, teachers, and administrators to recognize the inherent ability of all students.
4. Create and pursue sustainable and reasonable funding strategies that address facility and capital expenses, transportation, the increasing costs of healthcare, and regular increases in compensation for employees.
5. Maintain the Brewster-Pierce School building in a safe, educationally friendly, and fiscally responsible way.

6. Reduce the carbon footprint for school participation on all levels.

Objectives

1. Encourage the continued use of BPMS as a focal point for a wide range of community activities.
2. Review the impact of proposed development on BPMS school enrollment, transportation, and property taxes; and continue incorporating phasing requirements into zoning regulations.
3. Encourage collaboration between the BPMS school board and the CESU administration to maintain a ten-year maintenance plan with annual updates provided to the voters.
4. Encourage Huntington students' participation in extracurricular school activities and community activities.
5. Make maintenance decisions that are environmentally responsible.
6. Develop a broad view of transportation options for Huntington students at all grade levels that includes accommodation for participation in extracurricular activities.
7. Encourage community use of CESU transportation for large school events outside the boundaries of Huntington.
8. Increase awareness of adult education opportunities in the greater community.

Implementation

1. The Planning Commission and School Board will work to establish regular communication, such as an annual joint meeting and/or the identification of a liaison between the boards.
2. Monitor activity around efforts to create a consolidated educational district.

Student Enrollment

1. Advocate and plan for keeping class sizes in the schools at, or below, State recommendations.
2. Annually obtain and review current and projected pre-kindergarten through 12th grade

enrollment data, monitoring enrollments in relation to facility and program capacities.

Community Involvement

1. Promote school, community, and parent partnerships and engagement as well as fundraising efforts to benefit BPMS and other schools in the CESU.
2. Increase awareness of adult education opportunities in the surrounding areas through local media.
3. Encourage and maintain the use of the Huntington Brewster-Pierce school facility for adult classes, workshops, and other community uses.

Transportation

1. Advocate for transportation “hubs” for students participating in extracurricular activities to avoid unnecessary travel to the high school and to facilitate student participation.
2. Encourage a broader geographical range for sports practices that creates more equity in travel distances and enables Huntington participants to travel to areas closer to their homes.
3. Investigate the feasibility of a community school bus to transport residents to school activities outside the Town.

12. Energy

The Vermont Comprehensive Energy Plan (CEP) for 2050 lays out the necessary goal of converting our energy system from one based on fossil fuels to one based on renewable energy supplied electricity (Vermont Comprehensive Energy Plan, http://publicservice.vermont.gov/publications/energy_plan/2011_plan). To achieve the goals of the CEP, we also must reduce energy use by at least half. That means a 50% reduction by conservation, electrification, and efficiency. It also means moving towards a mass transit system of walking, biking, buses, and trains. People in Huntington will need to work in town occupations (farming, forestry, services), telecommute, or commute efficiently to jobs in surrounding Towns.

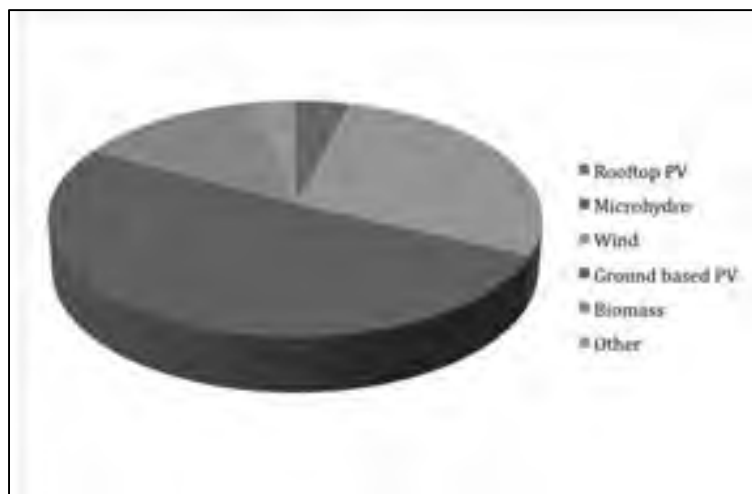


Table 12.1: Renewable sources needed to meet Huntington's requirements

Our energy system is becoming reliant on electricity, so for the sake of clarity in envisioning Huntington's energy future, all forms of energy described in this section will refer to common electrical units. Total estimated energy per capita is 153 million BTU or a 44,842 kWh/year electrical equivalent (Vermont Comprehensive Energy Plan, http://publicservice.vermont.gov/publications/energy_plan/2011_plan).

The total Town-wide energy consumption is an equivalent of an approximate 87 million kWh/year—for heating, transportation, and electricity combined. If all types of energy used are converted to kWh and assuming \$0.15/kWh, Huntington residents would spend over \$12 million per year for energy. Present cost is around \$7 million per year as lower cost fossil fuels are used for most of the heating and transportation needs of Huntington residents. (See this Plan's Transportation section.)

The Town's 800+ homes consume around 6 million kWh/year residential electricity (7,552 kWh/year per household), and commercial activities consume another 0.642 million kWh/year of commercial electricity (Renewable Energy Atlas of Vermont, www.vtenergyatlas.com).

Fossil fuels supply over 90% of our energy needs. Huntington has varying amounts of renewable energy potential. It has a small amount of residential and ridgeline wind potential and some micro-hydro potential. Biomass in the form of firewood and wood chips is available along with solar electric and solar hot water. Assuming 87 million kWh/year of present energy usage and a projected 50% reduction in energy usage, in order to meet its own energy needs the Town would need to produce about 39 million kWh/year ($87 \times 0.50 \times 0.90$) (Vermont Comprehensive Energy Plan, http://publicservice.vermont.gov/publications/energy_plan/2011_plan).

What would meeting Huntington's energy needs look like? (See Table 12.1.) If all the available home roofs had a 5 kW solar PV system installed (25% of 811 homes due to limitations based on shading, orientation, size, etc.), total electrical production would equal 1.3 million kWh/year or 3.3% of the Town's need.

Ground mounted solar installations on about 200 acres could provide an additional 20 million kWh/year of electricity production. Note that a large solar farm may have impacts on viewsheds.

No potential large hydroelectric sites are found within Huntington. However, there is some low-impact run-of-river micro-hydro potential. If 100 1 kW micro-hydro sites were developed an additional 0.26 million kWh/year (0.7%) of electricity would be produced.

If a small wind farm of 5 MW (2 – 3 large turbines) was sited on one of the few available ridges in Town, 11 million kWh/year or 28% of the Town's energy would be met. Some additional residential-scale wind energy potential can be found in the Town.

Woody biomass is one of the bigger renewable energy sources the Town has for space heating with cordwood, chips, or pellets. Wood is limited to sustainable harvesting amounts.

Currently Huntington imports almost all of its energy needs in the form of electricity, gasoline, diesel, heating oil, and propane. Even assuming widespread adoption of renewables and efficiency measures, Huntington is not an island and will need to be part of regional and state planning to cover its energy needs, if only for grid-tied storage.

However, it should be noted that Huntington does not support renewable solutions that are out of scale with maintaining and protecting our natural resources.

Goal

1. Use energy efficiency and renewable energy to reduce usage of fossil fuels throughout Huntington in accordance with the State of Vermont's Comprehensive Energy Plan (CEP).

Objectives

1. The Town will evaluate opportunities for efficiency measures and use of renewable energy in all construction or refurbishment of Town buildings.
2. An integrated approach will be used for development of future municipal facilities to maximize their potential benefits in efficiency and energy production.
3. The Town will support weatherization and other efficiency programs by making information readily available as part of the building permit application process and through the Energy Committee.
4. As part of the development review process, district or shared thermal energy and photovoltaic systems will be encouraged.
5. The Town will promote awareness of energy and climate change issues through education and participation in Town-wide challenges.
6. The Town will support development of local renewable energy resources.

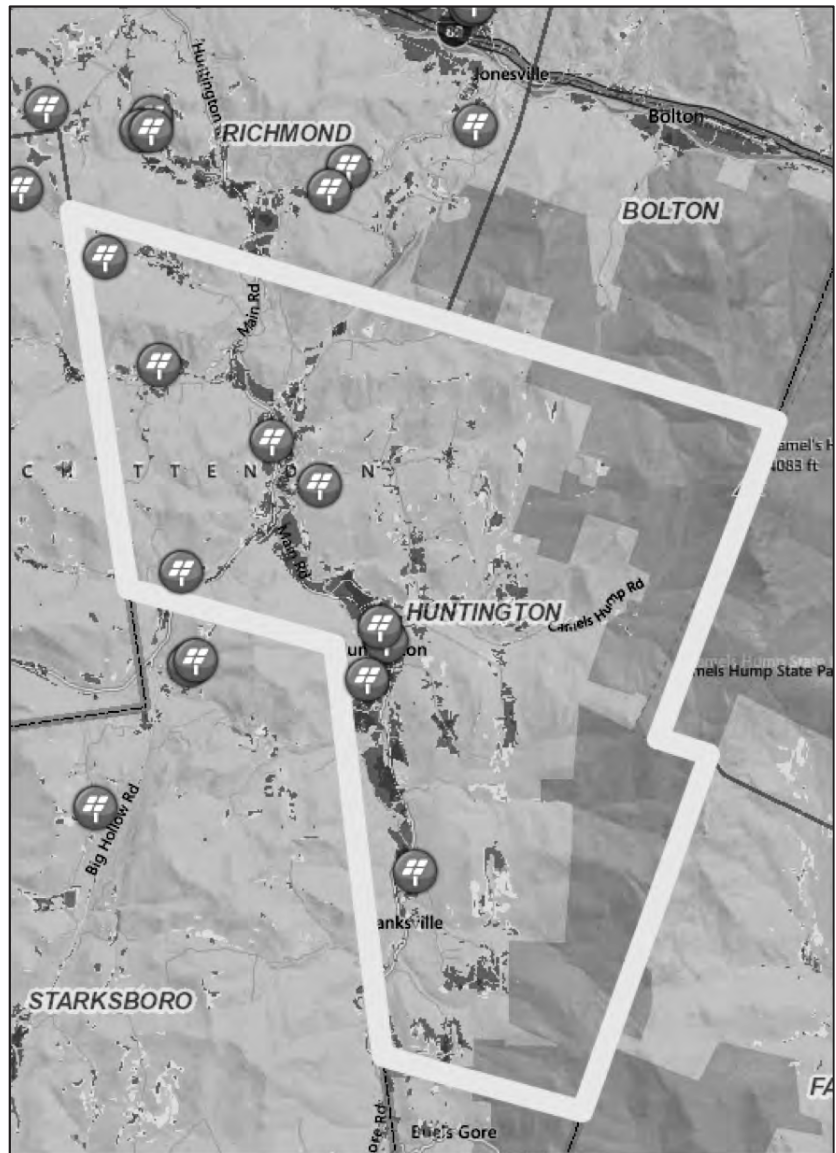


Hegman's photovoltaic in Huntington Center
Photo: Knox Cummin

Implementation

Municipal

1. Facilitate an active Energy Committee which has stated goals, objectives, and implementation strategies—and reports back to the Selectboard on a periodic basis.
2. Perform energy audits of Town buildings.
3. Review opportunities for deploying renewable heating technologies (biomass, solar, geothermal), photovoltaics, and/or solar hot water during any new construction or refurbishment of Town buildings.
4. Investigate availability of Clean Energy Development Funds (grants and loans) to support the ability of Town buildings to convert to biomass heating or combined heat and power systems.
5. Reduce total fossil fuel consumption across all Town buildings by an additional one-half percent each year, leading to a total reduction of six percent annually by 2017 and 10 percent annually by 2025.
6. Explore opportunities for evaluation of school building efficiency and improvement recommendations through the Vermont School Energy Management Program.
7. Conduct a comprehensive Town energy inventory with assistance from available state, regional, and local resources.



Existing and potential ground-mounted photovoltaic systems
Map courtesy of www.vtenergyatlas.com

8. Identify opportunities for anaerobic digestion with methane capture energy production in conjunction with municipal waste treatment facilities.
9. Consider the potential for in-pipe energy capture through use of hydroelectric turbines in conjunction with a municipal water and wastewater system.

Residential

1. Develop an information packet on efficiency, weatherization, adaptive re-use, and renewable energy that can be provided to building permit applicants and interested residents.
2. Identify opportunities to provide access to energy savings measures to residents regardless of their financial resources.
3. Identify opportunities for consumer outreach and education on topics such as weatherization, home energy, and heating efficiency such as Do It Yourself, Button Up, and other similar energy efficiency efforts.
4. Set goals for energy efficiency and Vermont energy code compliance for new construction.
5. Provide education regarding energy benefits of community-scaled thermal or photovoltaic projects or district energy projects in the context of PUD applications.
6. Establish a PACE (Property Assessed Clean Energy) district pursuant to State Act 45.

Efficiency

1. Engage students and initiate Town-wide challenges to re-duce energy consumption (particularly thermal and transportation fuels) with support from Huntington's Energy Committee and the Vermont Energy Climate Action Network.
2. Identify additional locations for commuter parking areas.
3. Encourage the Energy Committee to promote inexpensive energy audits.
4. Encourage greater innovation in fuel delivery systems such as group purchase of wood chips and wood pellets.

Renewable Energy

1. Identify and map Huntington's potential renewable energy resources.
2. Take an inventory of potential low-impact run-of-river hydro power resources.
3. Investigate opportunities for development of renewable energy projects with Vermont's

Qualified Energy Conservation Bonds through Vermont's Clean Energy Development Fund and Vermont Economic Development Authority.

4. Evaluate opportunities for farm energy and connecting farmers with available state resources for agricultural energy implementation.
5. Encourage residents with renewable energy systems to add their sites to the Vermont Energy Atlas.

13.Economic Plan

Huntington's local economy is intertwined and coexists with nearby communities and urban hubs. Huntington's small, but vibrant, local economy both generates opportunity and local employment for Town residents and keeps money circulating in Town and our neighboring communities. However, given the proximity to the greater Burlington and Central Vermont areas, a majority of Huntingtonians are employed outside of Town.

A number of businesses, nonprofits, and many resourceful and skilled individuals working in Huntington provide products and services to those within and beyond the Town's borders. This small-scale economic growth is in keeping with Huntington's rural character and natural resources that attract visitors to Town and should be supported. Development of village parking, sidewalks, water and waste water systems, and creative use of space are needed to encourage businesses to be expanded and established in our Town centers.

The availability of high-speed Internet in Huntington puts the Town on equal footing with our local metropolitan hubs in terms of communication and marketing and allows for new businesses to be established that were previously not feasible. However, there will continue to be limitations on larger-scale commercial and industrial development due to the Town's rural character and travel distance to the interstate highway system.

The Town continues to have a growing number of small businesses and home-based occupations. There are several businesses that provide overnight accommodations and host weddings. There are carpentry shops, artist studios, bed and breakfasts, auto body and repair shops, environmental consulting services, wholesale bakeries, computer services, excavation businesses, a blacksmith forge, and child care services. More residents are choosing to work in the Town and telecommute part or all of the week. The results of these activities help bolster business at the Beaudry's General Store and other local businesses.



Beaudry's Store, Lower Village—Photo: Knox Cummin

There are a number of agriculture and forestry pursuits including dairy and beef farms, a goat dairy and cheese making business, an alpaca farm, sugarhouses, a vineyard, a nano-brewery, a bakery, greenhouses, seasonal farm stands, tree farms, and timber harvesting operations.



Our local businesses are becoming increasingly interconnected with local individuals and organizations including contractors, artisans, food producers, and professional services. The nonprofit sector also brings economic activity and resources to Town.

Huntington's beautiful natural landscape of mountains, hills, the Huntington river valley, and working farms provide business opportunities for local residents in terms of recreation and tourism. If the Town's rural character is maintained there will be increasing ecotourism and recreational opportunities in the future. Ecotourism will provide increasing prospects for businesses in the future. Recreational uses such as snowmobiling, snowshoeing, skiing, road and mountain biking, walking, hiking, running, wildlife watching, and other natural history pursuits are popular with our residents as well as visitors from other parts of Vermont and beyond. These recreational uses and an expanding tourist base are a means of bringing additional income into the Town.

Huntington's economic activity should fit with the rural character of the Town and should be appropriately scaled and environmentally sustainable. These characteristics must be reflected in economic development of our Village Centers.



Photo: Heidi Racht

Greater Burlington Industrial Corporation (GBIC) and the Lake Champlain Regional Chamber of Commerce are the two major organizations providing economic development services in Chittenden County. They have a broad array of services and affiliations that are listed in the Final Chittenden County, VT Competitive Assessment 1/25/2012 An ECOS Analysis Report. Western Slopes Business Association (WSBA) is a local business organization representing the municipalities of Huntington, Richmond, and Bolton. The Association's purpose is to provide support, structure, and a unified voice for area businesses, with a focus on making a positive contribution to the local community. WSBA provides a business directory and resources for business. There is also interest in establishing a Huntington-specific business organization.



Photo: Braeden Stone

The 2012 annual unemployment rate for Huntington was low and about the same as the County, 3.8% versus 4.0% (Source: Local Area Unemployment Statistics program produced by the VT Department of Labor, Economic and Labor Market Information). While Vermont still has one of the lowest unemployment rates in the country, we are vulnerable to a lack of market diversification as seen by the challenges faced when IBM has layoffs. This further supports the goals of this Plan to support and grow Huntington's local economy.

Goals

1. Promote Huntington businesses and home occupations and related job creation that are environmentally sustainable, fit with the rural character of the Town, and provide a livable community.
2. Support sustainable forestry and agriculture that provide needed products, protect our natural resources, and promote a vibrant working landscape.
3. Support low-impact ecotourism.
4. Promote Huntington's businesses and nonprofits within the Town and regionally.
5. Support local business and nonprofit organizations.

Implementation

1. Establish a Huntington Economic Development Commission or Committee (EDC) to work on Town-specific business issues.
2. Promote local businesses and market local resources, services, and products through the Western Slopes Business Association (WSBA), and an Economic Development Committee, or other suitable organization/ committee. Increase the number of local businesses and home occupations that are actively involved with these organizations.
3. Inventory and determine the scale of the Town's economic activity and publish a business directory.
4. Inventory farm and forestry land and form partnerships with landowners, Vermont Land Trust, and the Vermont Housing & Conservation Board for land conservation.
5. Investigate and develop opportunities for small businesses and home occupations that are environmentally sustainable.
6. Amend the Zoning Regulations to allow for the mixed and creative use of buildings that combine residential use with the development of offices, studios, and small-scale shops and stores in the Village Centers, especially in the Village Center Districts. Changes to the regulations should focus on buildings' form and performance standards.
7. Evaluate the Village Centers' infrastructure for water and wastewater systems as recommended by Stone Environmental's final report, Water and Wastewater Evaluation for Huntington's Villages, 2012, and other creative solutions that will allow for growth in our traditional Village Centers.

8. Educate townspeople about the Vermont Land Link program (and other New Farmer Project resources) that help farm seekers and Vermont farm property holders find each other, thereby keeping farmland in profitable farming enterprises.
9. Amend Zoning Regulations to maintain access and scale of working lands to ensure viability after subdivision in the rural lands and promote agriculture in areas planned for growth. This includes but is not limited to protection of log landings of previously logged forested parcels, zoning techniques to separate lot size from density, conservation zoning and homeowners' association bylaws that allow for farming on the open space lots, and protection of topsoil during construction so that yards are more suitable for gardening.
10. Amend Zoning Regulations to ensure reasonable farm-related improvements are not impeded by local regulations (such as farm houses, processing facilities, generation of energy for on-farm use and on-farm retail, and related enterprises). While farming is generally exempt from municipal zoning, these uses/accessory structures may be regulated.
11. Encourage businesses to work with the Town's Energy Committee to promote efficiency and minimize energy expenses.
12. Identify and educate townspeople about funding sources and other resources to support business start-up and expansion.
13. Work with local business associations and CCRP to analyze barriers and opportunity for economic growth in Town.
14. Investigate funding opportunities with Community Capital of Vermont and the Vermont Small Business Development Center.
15. Add Huntington's agricultural businesses to the Vermont Food System Atlas (<http://www.vtfoodatlas.com>)—a central portal for connecting farming businesses with a variety of partners working to advance our agricultural economy.

14. Relationship to Surrounding Towns & Region

Huntington is surrounded by a rural, largely forested landscape of privately-owned land in neighboring towns as well as State and Municipal Conservation lands: Camel's Hump State Park and Forest; Robbins Mountain Wildlife Management Area; Lewis Creek Wildlife Management Area; Fred Johnson Wildlife Management Area; Huntington Gap Wildlife Management Area; and Hinesburg Town Forest. Several private lands with conservation easements exist along Huntington's borders. Huntington is connected to surrounding towns by forests that are largely unfragmented and that provide basically intact travel corridors for wildlife species. Similar to surrounding towns, Huntington has small village centers that are the Town's focal point.

The goals and visions expressed in the Town Plans of surrounding towns are similar to Huntington's Town Plan:

- Focus on preserving the traditional rural village centers.
- Continue to support thoughtful land conservation and development between working landscapes and forested mountains.
- Promote a high quality of life for all residents.
- Encourage a community comprised of diverse populations.



Richmond

The Town of Richmond shares the western three-fifths of Huntington's northern boundary. Many local services including banks, restaurants, and other professional services not offered in Huntington are available in Richmond.

Richmond's 2012 Town Plan provides goals for the Town that will preserve Richmond's character: its vibrant, multi-use village with the surrounding working rural landscapes, forests, water resources, and natural resources. The Plan addresses the need to protect the health and stability of the natural environment; provide efficient transportation and a range of transportation options essential to improve the quality of life in Richmond and the region; direct economic development to areas that are designated as appropriate through the planning process and public review of zoning ordinances; recognize that locally-owned and operated stores, farms, restaurants, and other businesses are important in maintaining a vibrant village, contribute financially by broadening the tax base, and provide employment opportunities for the Town's residents; encourage business to be located both centrally and in identified outlying areas; encourage Town regulations and actions that support the growth of agriculture and forestry activities; and encourage a mix of housing types in a pattern that is compatible with the Town's rural character and that allows people of diverse economic backgrounds to reside in Richmond.

The Plan also calls for preservation of Richmond's identity by managing and promoting

development consistent with its historic structures and settlement patterns; providing opportunities for a high quality education to each of its citizens with educational facilities that are cornerstones for a healthy community and that should be supported by all of its citizens including those without school-aged children; and managing school and municipal budgets so as to keep Richmond affordable to an economically diverse population.

Bolton

Bolton shares the eastern third of Huntington's northern border. Most of the land on either side of that border is within Camel's Hump State Park, and all of it lies above 1,500 feet. Bolton's Town Plan, approved June 4, 2007, calls for support of agriculture, forestry, and recreation, as well as commercial development which will offer employment opportunities for local residents—similar to Huntington's Town Plan.

Bolton envisions its future as continuing to be a rural municipality, focusing on the aspects which make it unique: a tight-knit community; acres of forested land bisected by recreational trails; ridgelines and valley-bottom cropland; and rural village centers tucked in between working landscapes and the "beloved" Green Mountains. The thoughtful placement of housing and commercial opportunities will help preserve the villages and keep the rural areas from being heavily developed. Bolton is continuing to support thoughtful land conservation and development, and public access to recreational trails and the Winooski River corridor. Bolton's future success depends on maintaining Town facilities, improving local services, and creating and promoting a viable and diverse economic environment in order to continue to be a livable community with a high quality of life for all residents.

Hinesburg

The Town of Hinesburg shares Huntington's western border and has a centrally located village. The goals of the Hinesburg Town Plan, adopted May 16, 2011, are similar to Huntington's goals, as well as those of surrounding towns. The emphasis is on maintaining a rural small-Town character and environment; planning well-managed growth; providing adequate community facilities and services; and protecting natural resources. Both Hinesburg and Huntington emphasize the importance of the protection of important natural resources and rural character along their common border.

Among many goals, the Hinesburg Town Plan promotes an enhanced Village area, by maintaining its rural character and providing for environmental sustainability with reinforcement of compact settlements surrounded by open lands; promoting the wise use and conservation of natural resources to conserve viable agricultural and forestry lands in the rural regions of the Town and to promote the wise use and conservation of natural resources; promoting the participation of a wide range of Hinesburg citizens in all aspects of community life and maintaining diversity in Hinesburg's population with safe and affordable housing in a variety of types and price ranges, local services, and job opportunities; recognizing the significance and

importance of private land and seeking to balance the community good with private property rights; providing and planning for efficient and adequate community facilities and services, balanced with the Town's ability to pay for and efficiently manage Town services and facilities; and providing safe and well-designed transportation systems including an interconnected network of sidewalks, trails, bike paths, and greenways with protection of wildlife habitat, protection of riparian areas, and with ecological connectivity between natural areas.

Starksboro

Starksboro is located southwest of Huntington and shares more of its border with Huntington than with any other town. The terrain along this border is mountainous and the village areas of Starksboro are in the southern and western areas of the Town, quite removed from Huntington. Three roads provide direct access to land in Starksboro: Hinesburg Hollow Road, Shaker Mountain Road, and Parker Bean Road. Parker Bean Road, now nominally shortened to Beane Road, is a dead end road that originates in Huntington. In order to reach those areas of Starksboro that are accessed by Parker Bean Road, an alternate route must be taken through Huntington. For this reason, Huntington should stay apprised of the development of land along Parker Bean Road.

Starksboro's collective vision is similar to Huntington's as well as surrounding towns: to maintain the Town's environmental quality, scenic beauty, diverse working landscapes, rural character, sense of community, and quality of life. Further, the writers of the Starksboro Town Plan have a goal that the future Starksboro will remain recognizable to current residents – that the best parts will be conserved.

Other goals include proper management of change to the benefit of individuals as well as the community as a whole; agriculture becoming an increasingly vital and economically viable enterprise; and helping the Town to move towards greater sustainability—producing food and energy locally and providing more jobs in Town in a diversity of small businesses, which are built on natural and human assets. To accomplish this, the goals of the plan include compact neighborhoods with houses and services that meet the needs of residents of all ages; encouraging civic participation and pride; and increasing understanding and appreciation of wildlife populations and their habitat needs.

Buels Gore

Located in the extreme southeastern corner of Chittenden County, Buels Gore was formed in 1790 out of land left over after surveys of surrounding towns were completed. It is 3500 acres and is deeply forested. A large portion of Camel's Hump State Forest lies within its boundaries. A single road, Vermont Route 17, winds its way through the Appalachian Gap in Buels Gore. A population of 12 was recorded in the 2000 census, which increased to 30 by 2010.

The Gore has a supervisor appointed by the Governor. Its land records and vital records are

maintained by the Chittenden County Clerk in Burlington. Buels Gore residents vote in Huntington. Students attend the school of their choice.

A January 2013 draft of the Buels Gore Plan (page 1) states that “It has been farm or forest land for at about 200 years. The residents and landowners would like this land use to continue. However, a small amount of low impact commercial development (e.g., home offices) would be appropriate.” Zoning Regulations were established in 2010 to help guide appropriate land uses within the four districts shown on the Future Land Use Map. Gore residents implemented a Design Review Board “to protect agricultural and silvacultural uses and the preservation of the scenic beauty of the land. Any structure in the [General Land Use] district should be architecturally in keeping with the other houses on Gore Road in Buels Gore and Starksboro. Therefore, any structure over 120 square feet in this district must be approved by the Board of Adjustment. The minimum lot size is 10 acres.”

The Buels Gore Plan encourages coordination with Huntington’s Planning Commission in this endeavor in order to ensure that the goals articulated in Huntington’s Town Plan are considered.

Duxbury & Fayston

Huntington’s eastern boundary is formed by the steep, rocky spine of the Green Mountains and is shared with the Towns of Duxbury and Fayston. The Duxbury and Fayston Town Plans are compatible with this Plan, and both state that the areas along the Huntington border are sensitive and that development will be discouraged there.

Duxbury’s Plan states similar concerns to that of other surrounding s: to be able to retain its identity as a small rural community while providing sufficient Town services. In fact, the Plan states that large-scale land developments are inappropriate in Duxbury and should be discouraged.



Camel’s Hump at sunset—Photo: Doug Graver

Fayston’s focus is in the Mad River Valley and its recreational, educational, and economic opportunities. In the 2008 Town Plan, Fayston worker commute patterns show that relatively few Fayston workers commute from outside of the Mad River Valley and the number of home-based businesses are increasing. Its Town Plan addresses the relationship to those towns, while indirectly discussing the high terrain border it shares with Huntington. It is noteworthy that, with two major ski areas operating in Fayston, the town has nearly 1,200 full-time residents and approximately 1,000 part-time residents (many of which are second homes). Huntington has seen a huge increase in traffic along the Main Road as skiers travel through the Town to reach these ski areas.

Chittenden County Regional Plan

The Chittenden County ECOS Plan (ECOS plan), adopted June 19, 2013, combines the Regional Plan, Metropolitan Transportation Plan and the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy into one document. By statute, the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC) is charged with preparing a regional plan every eight years and a metropolitan transportation plan every five years. The Greater Burlington Industrial Corporation (GBIC) is charged with establishing a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy every five years.

According to page two of the ECOS plan, the document represents “an unprecedented effort to acknowledge and act upon the interconnectedness of our County’s institutions and Towns”—a big picture perspective that shares a common vision for the future. The document was funded through a three-year grant from the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development. The Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant Program administers the grant.

Broad Goals

1. **Natural Systems** – Design and maintain a strategically planned and managed green infrastructure network composed of natural lands, working landscapes, and open spaces that conserve ecosystem values and functions, and provide associated benefits to our community.
2. **Social Community** – Promote the skills, resources, and assurances needed for all community members to participate in the workforce and in their family, civic, and cultural lives, within and among their neighborhoods, and in the larger community.
3. **Economic Infrastructure** – Build the region’s capacity for shared and sustainable improvements in the economic wellbeing of the community through support of both local and globally competitive initiatives.
4. **Built Environment** – Make public and private investments in the built environment to minimize environmental impact, maximize financial efficiency, optimize social equity and benefits, and improve public health.

Principles

Principles outlined in Section 1.4 describe the underlying values and guide the selection of strategies and actions for local governments in sustainable communities to achieve the goals. These 10 principles will guide the selection of strategies and actions to achieve goals (adapted from Sustainability Goals & Guiding Principles, ICLEI, October 2010).

1. **Think — and act — systemically.** Recognize that people, nature, and the economy are all affected by their actions. Broader implications and multiple goals should be considered before embarking on specific projects, rather than default to short-term, piecemeal efforts.

2. Instill resiliency. Possess a strong capacity to respond to and bounce back from adversity. Local governments in these communities prepare for and help residents and institutions prepare for disruptions and respond to them swiftly, creatively, and effectively.
3. Foster innovation. Capture opportunities and respond to challenges by cultivating a spirit of problem solving and to enabling the risk-taking inherent in innovation.
4. Redefine progress. Measure progress by improvements in the health and wellbeing of their people, environment and economy by using a broad set of indicators rather than just a GDP (economic indicator).
5. Live within means. Maintain natural resources for future generations to have as many opportunities available to them as today's residents have by recognizing that resources exist for the benefit of life forms other than humans. Assess resources, track impacts, and take corrective action when needed.
6. Cultivate collaboration. Create a culture of collaboration by government representatives, community members, and organizations that encourages innovation, sharing of resources, and jointly shared accountability.
7. Ensure equity. Allocate resources and opportunities so that all people, who do the full range of jobs that a community needs, can thrive in it. Actively eliminate barriers to full participation in community life and work to correct past injustices.
8. Embrace diversity. Celebrate and foster a broad spectrum of peoples, cultures, and economies underpinned by a richly functioning natural environment by celebrating and fostering ethnic, cultural, economic, and biological diversity and encourage multiple approaches to accomplish a goal.
9. Inspire leadership. Provide leadership through action and results by recognizing the opportunity to effect change by backing visionary policies with practices that serve as an example for citizens and businesses to emulate.
10. Engage in continuous discovery, rediscovery, and invention about the impacts of actions, by tracking both performance and outcomes, and by modifying strategies based on observed results.

Working Lands

The ECOS Plan addresses working lands, also a priority for Huntington. In section 2.4.3, the plan encourages future growth in areas, including Village Planning Areas, to maintain Vermont's historic settlement pattern and respect working and natural landscapes.

Working lands and resource extraction industries are critical components of a self-reliant and diverse economy, making a region less vulnerable to market crises. Local food and fuel production is preferred since the transportation to import these products consumes

tremendous amounts of energy and generates pollution. In addition, when food is imported from faraway places, nutrient value is reduced during the transport time.

Working lands and resource extraction industries are economically viable within the constraints of our natural landscape. Sustainably managed farmland and forest land means less developed land, fewer impervious surfaces, and thus a greater presence of the natural ecosystem's features and functions. Conversely, high quality food and productive forests are dependent upon clean water and clean, nutrient-rich soils. It is imperative that we maintain high quality water and soils for healthy and viable food and forest product industries.

Housing

The Housing Goal (Section 2.5.2) calls for the increase of opportunities for safe, decent, energy efficient, affordable, accessible, and fair housing for all types of households in all neighborhoods. Adequate and affordable housing is central to a sustainable community. The financial burden of owning a home is “unaffordable” when these costs consume more than 30% of the household's income. Observations conclude that households paying 50% or more of their income for their housing costs—both owners and renters—are at a higher risk for foreclosure, eviction, homelessness, and frequent moving.

Transportation

Section 2.5.3 of the ECOS Plan has a goal to provide accessible, safe, efficient, interconnected, secure, equitable, and sustainable mobility choices for our region's businesses, residents, and visitors. Although Public Transportation is identified as priority in both the Huntington Town Plan and the ECOS Plan, Huntington does not appear on the Prioritized Metropolitan Transportation Project List by Project Type and Corridor (pages 199-203), where projects listed include transit, rail, roadway safety, and traffic operations including sidewalks and bike lanes.

Planning Area Designation

The ECOS Plan Priorities & Implementation (Chapter 3) presents strategies for a planning effort that acts to achieve the concentration of development and infrastructure needed for an improved economy. On Land Use Districts Map 6, Huntington's Planning Area Designation shows three villages with the remainder of the Town—and adjacent areas in surrounding towns—as rural. Section 3.2.2 has a goal to strive for 80% of new development in areas planned for growth, which amounts to 15% of the land in the defined areas, including rural villages. A change from previous regional plans is that there is no longer a housing quota by municipality. Instead, CCRPC will monitor trends in each community through annual updates. Recent public sentiment seems to lead in the direction of developing and implementing policies that support investing in denser, mixed use growth areas, thus increasing the supply of affordable housing, reducing energy consumption, and using existing infrastructure efficiently. Included in the plan are four

points for establishment of wastewater, water and public transit infrastructure; reuse, rehabilitation, redevelopment, infill, and brownfield investments; retrofitting existing buildings to reduce energy use and greenhouse gas emissions; and improvement of design quality for high density areas and flexible creative solutions.

In most respects, the Huntington Town Plan is consistent with goals of the ECOS Plan; although currently we do not have plans for infrastructure that would support the density of development in the villages that the Regional Plan proposes. The geography of the Huntington river valley may also preclude the densities in the villages that are proposed by the Regional Plan.

Huntington's Town Plan is also consistent with other goals in the ECOS Plan: educational, environmental, optimal health and personal safety goals; efficient use of tax dollars; inclusive municipal policies; and regional and local economic development. The authority to prepare and implement the Town Plan is granted through Vermont Statutes Annotated (VSA) Title 24, Chapter 117, Municipal and Regional Planning and Development, Section 4302.



Lower Village—Photo: Owen Rachampbell

15. Managing, Amending, & Updating

The Huntington Planning Commission is our elected body for developing, maintaining, reviewing, and revising the Town Plan. Commission meetings, which are open to the public, are held twice each month.

The Town Plan before you has undergone public discussion in many forums for over a year. In addition to the work done by the Planning Commission members at their regular meetings many committees, boards, and individuals have reviewed and revised sections of the proposed 2014 Town Plan.



Photo: Doug Graver

Townpeople were invited and encouraged to participate through surveys, open meetings, and hearings. Following the successful August 1999 survey asking residents for their opinions and comments regarding issues to be addressed in the 2001 Plan, a new survey was sent out in October 2011 offering broad questions to give the participants the chance to express opinions as well as answer questions. Results reinforced the directions of the 1999 survey. During the process of updating this Plan, Townpeople have also had opportunity to give comments to the Huntington Planning Commission in a public hearing held on December 5, 2013, and later in a public hearing held by the Selectboard.

All Town Plans must be consistent with the statewide planning goals in 24 V.S.A. §117 (Vermont Statutes Annotated). Our Plan must be coordinated with the plans of neighboring municipalities and needs to be compatible with the Chittenden County Regional Plan. To this end, the Huntington Planning Commission has consulted with the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission staff to help determine the Town's compliance with the requirements of the Vermont Municipal and Regional Planning and Development Act.

The Town Plan is a living document, constantly responding to the changing needs of the Town. This is achieved through the five-year cycle of updates and through the interim hearing process which this 2014 revision is following. Under these circumstances, the Huntington Planning Commission advises the Huntington Selectboard, the Huntington Conservation Commission, and the Brewster-Pierce School Board of needed changes.

Proposed changes will be warned and separate hearings will be held by the Huntington Planning Commission and the Huntington Selectboard. When considering an amendment to the Huntington Town Plan, the Huntington Planning Commission is required to prepare a written report of the proposal. The contents of the report are specified in 24 V.S.A. §4384 (c).

The Huntington Town Plan will undergo another mandatory update in 2019, as required by Vermont's State Statutes. In preparation the Planning Commission will conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the 2014 plan; statistical data, public opinion, and changes that have occurred in the Town will be reviewed and the status and success of implementation strategies will continue

to be reviewed and reassessed.

With this information the Town's policies and goals will be amended and new strategies will be developed as necessary. This is the same method by which recent Town Plans were developed.

The Planning Commission will annually review this Plan to assess progress toward implementation, working together with other Town boards, committees and commissions to determine if amendments are needed.



View of Lower Village—Photo: Owen Rachampbell



Photo: Heidi Racht

16. Maps

- 1. Natural Resources**
- 2. Hydrologic features**
- 3. Transportation and Recreation**
- 4. Facilities and Historic Structures**
- 5. Agricultural Soils and Conserved Lands**
- 6. 6 Land Use Districts**
- 7a Existing Buildings and Parcels**
- 7b Existing Land Use: Primary Activities**

17. Location of Huntington Town Plan maps:

- 1. Town Website: huntingtonvt.org**
- 2. Two paper copies to be viewed in Town Clerk's Office during business hours**
- 3. Large copies to be viewed in Huntington Public Library during open hours**

—The End—