

# STRATTON TOWN PLAN



**2020**

STRATTON PLANNING COMMISSION 2020:

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# **STRATTON**

## **A UNIQUE TOWN IN WINDHAM COUNTY VERMONT**

Adopted on December 14, 2020 by the Stratton Selectboard

Approved by the Windham Regional Commission on \_\_\_\_\_

Town Clerk: \_\_\_\_\_

David Kent Young

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## **PART 1**

# **INTRODUCTION**

## **Objectives of the Stratton Town Plan**

This Town Plan was created by the Citizens of the Town of Stratton, through their Planning Commission, to provide a guide for the development of the Town of Stratton. In general our objective is to protect the health and general welfare of the public, while allowing the Town to develop as a rural-residential and second-home community, with a popular resort area, within the Green Mountain National Forest. Subsequently, a variety of goals and objectives have been laid out on the pages that follow to promote many of the favorable aspects and social responsibilities this Town offers to its community and the State of Vermont. Land use planning, growth management, economic development, resource conservation, and environmental protection are all priorities that have been, and will continue to be, weighed, measured, and then balanced to provide an optimum guide by which to regulate development within Stratton.

## **Framework for Planning**

The Vermont Municipal and Regional Planning and Development Act (24 V.S.A. Chapter 117, as amended by Acts 200 and 115) enables municipalities to undertake planning for the appropriate development of land in order to *“promote the public health, safety against fire, floods, explosions, and other dangers; to promote prosperity, comfort, access to adequate light and air, convenience, efficiency, economy, and general welfare; to enable the mitigation of the burden of property taxes on agricultural, forest, and other open lands; to encourage appropriate architectural design; to encourage the development of renewable resources; to protect residential, agricultural, and other areas from undue concentrations of population and overcrowding of land and buildings, from traffic congestion, from inadequate parking and the invasion of through traffic, and from the loss of peace, quiet, and privacy; to facilitate the growth of villages, towns, and cities and of their communities and neighborhoods so as to create an optimum environment, with good civic design; to encourage development of a rich cultural environment and to foster the arts; and to provide means and methods for the municipalities and regions of this State to plan for the prevention, minimization, and future elimination of such land development problems as may presently exist or which may be foreseen and to implement those plans when and where appropriate.”* In accordance with statutory regulations, a Town Plan must be reviewed and revised or readopted every eight years. This plan is a modification of the Stratton Town Plan adopted February 22, 1999 and subsequently updated and adopted on September 27, 2004, June 22, 2009, and October 27, 2014.

## **Interpretation and Implementation of the Town Plan**

The Stratton Town Plan is a plan and not a bylaw in itself. It is the responsibility of the Planning Commission and the Selectmen to create, revise and implement enforceable laws and bylaws that reflect the intentions of the Town Plan. During the development of the Town Plan, certain language was used within the objectives of the plan to stress the importance of these guidelines for implementation. In this language, verbs such as “should,” “can” or “may” have been used to suggest that some action is encouraged, but not mandated, while verbs such as “shall” “will” and “must” are used where the Town has strong intentions to ensure that a requirement is to be implemented.

## Stratton Town Plan 2020

Specifically, this plan is to be used by Town boards, commissions, departments, residents, and businesses in the following ways:

1. to provide a framework for planning the future growth of the Town of Stratton;
2. to guide decision making in site development plan reviews, and conditional use permits;
3. to serve as a guide in responding to Act 250 permit application requests and Section 248 petitions;
4. to provide the Town of Stratton's disposition during Act 250 application Section 248 considerations by the State of Vermont;
5. to provide a framework for updating the Zoning Ordinance;
6. to provide a guide for the updating of the Subdivision Regulations;
7. to recommend future planning studies;
8. to assist in the development of a capital budget and program; and
9. to serve as a source of information and guidance to individuals and businesses making decisions regarding their development plans.

## **Town Land Use Regulations**

The Vermont Municipal and Regional Planning and Development Act enables ten specific regulatory tools which can implement the Plan:

1. Zoning bylaws.
2. Site plan review.
3. Planned unit development.
4. Subdivision bylaws.
5. Unified development bylaws.
6. Official map.
7. Phasing.
8. Impact fees.
9. Transfer of development rights.
10. Shorelands; river corridor protection areas; flood or hazard area; special or freestanding bylaws.

Of the ten, the two below are in use in Stratton.

## **Zoning Ordinance**

The Zoning Ordinance shall implement the Town Plan and shall be in accord with its policies.

## **Subdivision Regulations**

Subdivision regulations shall supervise the manner in which land may be developed by setting forth the requirements for submission, processing, and design of plats. They should provide for suitable layout of lots, improvement of roads, installation of utilities, open space, landscaping and screening, recreation areas, and the protection of natural areas. Subdivision regulations should incorporate performance standards reflecting Town policies.

## **How This Plan Was Developed**

The planning process for this Town Plan was begun in 2005. The 1999 Town Plan was reviewed and updated for current use. That document was a revision of the 1992 Town Plan, which was based on a public opinion survey. Windham Regional Commission (WRC) staff reviewed the Town Plan in 2007 and 2008 and actively worked with the Stratton Planning Commission to focus on revisions to the Town Plan in preparation for achieving Regional Planning Commission approval of the Plan in 2009. WRC staff assisted the Planning Commission with 2014 and 2019 updates with the same objective.



## **PART 2**

# **GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES**

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## **GOAL 1: SETTLEMENT PATTERNS**

To plan development to maintain the Town's characteristic settlement pattern in the designated growth area (CR 1) which is typified by a recreation-oriented village within a rural and forested setting that includes adequate undeveloped land. To plan development that is characteristic of the settlement pattern of the rest of the Town which is typified by individual homes, mixed uses along Route 100 in the southeastern part of Town (CR 2), and a small government center (CR 3) all surrounded by forested land.

### **Policies of Goal 1**

1. Intensive residential development should be encouraged within the designated growth area, Zoning District Commercial Residential 1 (CR1).
2. Strip development should be discouraged.
3. Commercial growth should be encouraged within the designated growth area.
4. Any expansion of the infrastructure should reinforce this growth pattern.
5. In general, mixed use development will be encouraged in the designated growth area to provide for multiple uses on the same lot.

### **Action Items under Goal 1**

1. Planned Unit Development (PUD), Resort PUD, Ski PUD, and Commercial Industrial PUD shall be allowed by Site Plan Review throughout Town.
2. In order to maximize the development potential of the Zoning District CR1 and to minimize environmental impact, the Town shall encourage developers to in-fill the land ignored in the earlier development process. Most of this District has municipal sewer and water. Because of these services, the Town shall encourage developers to devote a portion of the area to be developed, whether contiguous to the site or not, to affordable housing at densities greater than one unit per two acres. There are provisions for several kinds of Planned Unit Development included in the Stratton Zoning Ordinance that can be used for the development of affordable housing. Private home development should remain at a maximum density of one unit per two acres. In Zoning District CR 3 the maximum density is one unit per acre.
3. Any proposed development plan shall be evaluated to ensure that the high scenic quality of the area will be maintained.

4. In order to prevent strip development and to minimize traffic congestion and other problems, commercial uses in the designated growth area should share access and parking facilities and shall maintain ample landscape buffers between commercial and noncommercial uses.
  5. Within any development, either residential or commercial, landscaping and tree planting in keeping with the surrounding area should be required.
  6. Signs shall be regulated to minimize the impact on scenic views, to avoid confusion, and to prevent unsafe conditions.
  7. The residential area of the Town of Stratton should continue to be developed in single-family lots or in Planned Unit Developments with ample buffers around clustered dwellings, in order to maintain the forested appearance of the Town and to maintain the residential character of the Town.
  8. Town Highway 8, Mountain Road, should be maintained as the principal route connecting the designated growth area with the rest of the Town.
- 

## **GOAL 2: ECONOMIC GROWTH**

To encourage economic growth activities that provide year-round, satisfying, and rewarding job opportunities and that maintain environmental standards.

### **Policies of Goal 2**

1. To encourage multi-use growth, especially within individual structures and / or individual projects.
2. To discourage incompatible and uncoordinated development activity that could jeopardize public and private investment.
3. To allow for the orderly and imaginative development of the designated growth area.
4. To encourage the protection of the quality of life of Stratton residents.
5. To allow for a diversity of economic activities which brings diverse job growth.

### **Action Items under Goal 2**

1. Economic, cultural, and recreational development opportunities should be pursued to provide long-range economic benefits and stable employment.
2. Encourage business growth in Town from high wage job sectors, such as professional jobs, light industry, and technology sectors.

3. If an effort has the potential to directly or indirectly accelerate economic growth, it should satisfy all the planning goals, objectives, and policies of this Plan.
  4. Allow for a mix of economic activities for consumers, such as retail, chain restaurants, appropriate developers (builders, contractors, etc.), realtors, and tourism related business.
  5. In planning for development the following shall be considered: transportation, preservation of scenic character, utilities, and conservation of natural resources.
  6. All business and industry shall control and dispose of all wastes, relate favorably with existing land use, and account to the Town for both direct and indirect municipal costs.
  7. The quality of life of Stratton residents should be protected.
  8. The Town of Stratton accepts service-type businesses and vacation home and resort development, which provide adequate protection of natural resources and the quality of life of the residents and which maintain Vermont's traditional character for visitors.
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## **GOAL 3: EDUCATION**

To broaden access to educational and vocational training opportunities sufficient to ensure the full realization of the abilities of the residents of Stratton.

### **Policies of Goal 3**

1. To continually evaluate the quality of education provided for Stratton school children.
2. To investigate ways in which to enhance the educational experience of all residents.

### **Action Items under Goal 3**

1. The education of the residents of Stratton is important and should be evaluated continually.
  2. The Town should monitor population and school enrollment trends to address future needs in an efficient and cost effective manner.
  3. Rely on the School Board for leadership in efficiently developing and maintaining the highest quality educational opportunities consistent with the financial capabilities of the community.
-

## **GOAL 4: TRANSPORTATION**

To provide for safe, convenient, economic, and energy efficient transportation systems which maintain the integrity of the natural environment.

### **Policies of Goal 4**

1. Stratton's road infrastructure should ensure public safety and provide convenience, balancing necessity with a respect for the integrity of the environment, the Town's scenic beauty, rural characteristic, and historic sites.
2. To consider the development of paths for pedestrians and other non-motorized use.
3. To encourage the integration of transportation facilities and public utilities into corridors to minimize the impact on the environment and to assist desired development patterns.
4. To provide for an adequate system of roads through proper short and long-term maintenance practices and through the construction of all roads to Town and / or State specifications.
5. To encourage current use and expanded use of private and public shuttle buses, which provide transportation services between various residential communities and the Stratton Mountain Resort area, as well as to neighboring towns and facilities.
6. Encourage road design standards that provide for adequate shoulder width for pedestrians and bicyclists.
7. Support community services that provide transportation for elderly and physically handicapped residents of Stratton.
8. Coordinate with the Vermont Agency of Transportation and neighboring towns in planning for road improvements along VT 100 and adjacent collector roads.

### **Action Items under Goal 4**

1. Continue to financially support public transit providers such as Connecticut River Transit through annual donations (Selectboard)
  2. Continue to work toward adding sidewalks, crosswalks, and traffic calming treatments throughout Town where feasible to accommodate a mix of users (Selectboard and / or Planning Commission,)
  3. Complete a Town-wide Infrastructure Inventory to assist in future transportation planning efforts
-

## **GOAL 5: NATURAL AND HISTORIC FEATURES**

To identify, protect, and preserve important natural and historic features of the Stratton landscape including:

- unique natural areas from uses that would significantly alter their unique, scenic, educational, or scientific value;
- the Town's water resources;
- scenic roads, waterways, and scenic views;
- sites of historic or geologic significance; and
- historic structures and designs relating to the development of Stratton Ski Resort.

### **Policies of Goal 5**

1. Protect wetlands, which in turn protects wildlife habitat, the retention of surface runoff, and provides for scientific and educational values of these areas.
2. Keep shorelines and banks of perennial streams in natural vegetation.
3. Protect flood hazard areas.
4. Protect and enhance scenic views and sites.
5. Protect historic structures and sites.
6. Improve the sites of the Old Town Common.
7. Encourage preservation of the original character of the Stratton Mountain Resort.
8. Protect bear travel corridors (Significant Bear Areas on Significant Habitats map), forest blocks, and habitat connectors.

### **Action Items under Goal 5**

1. It is the policy of the Town of Stratton to regulate the use of land above 2,500 feet of elevation so that the resources and / or conditions are not threatened, and the public good is upheld.
2. Slopes greater than 25% should remain in forest cover; slopes exceeding 15% should not be planned for intensive development unless served by municipal / community sewer and water systems.
3. Areas characterized by shallow soils should not be planned for intensive development.

4. Forests should be utilized in a manner that will not significantly reduce their ecological function of replenishing surface and ground water.
5. It is the policy of the Town of Stratton to protect its waters by restricting development in:
  - watersheds of upland streams
  - watersheds characterized by steep slopes
  - aquifer recharge areas, and
  - Grout Pond and Stratton Pond watersheds
6. Permanent water courses, lakes, ponds, and shorelines should be retained in their natural condition. In logging operations, cutting along stream banks should be minimized to reduce erosion and siltation.
7. Natural areas are places of unique scientific or educational value. These places are not necessarily scenic or historically significant; rather, they are primarily ecological reserves with unique qualities that distinguish them from the general landscape. Unique natural areas should be protected from uses that would have an adverse impact on them.
8. Scenic highways, stream corridors, trails and roads, views and other scenic resources should be protected from development that would have an adverse impact on those resources.
9. Development should not obstruct views. Structures should be sited so that visual conflicts with the existing landscape are minimized.
10. Only selected removal of tree cover along ridge lines should be allowed in order to maintain ridge continuity.
11. Development and timber removal on steep slopes should be planned so that they do not adversely affect scenic quality.
12. Scenic views and areas should be protected from development which would substantially diminish their scenic value.
13. Improvements to scenic back roads should be carried out in a manner that would protect, conserve, and enhance their scenic quality.
14. The quality of the wilderness surrounding designated hiking trails should be preserved.
15. Surface waters should be protected from uses which would reduce the scenic appeal of their shorelines.
16. Lands adjacent to, or including, areas or sites of historical, educational, cultural, scientific, architectural and / or archeological value should be used only in a manner that would not reduce or destroy the value of the site or area.

17. The reuse or recycling of historic buildings in community development should be encouraged as a method of preservation.
  18. The site of the Old Town should be protected so that its significance will not be diminished.
  19. Development within the Stratton Mountain Resort should evaluate ways to preserve the original character of the resort.
  20. Minimize the disturbance of stone walls and foundations.
  21. Work on protecting bear travel corridors (Significant Bear Areas shown on the Significant Habitats map).
- 

## **GOAL 6: LAND, WATER, AND AIR RESOURCES**

To maintain and improve the quality of air, water, wildlife, and land resources.

Stratton's air, water, mineral, and land resources should be planned for use and development according to the principles set forth in 10 V.S.A. Section 6086(a).

### **Policies of Goal 6**

1. To continually evaluate the emissions into the air from the development of the designated growth area.
2. To identify and protect unstable soils.
3. To protect ground water from contamination.

### **Action Items under Goal 6**

1. Limit development to low densities on soils characterized by seasonal high water table, hardpan, areas of significant ground water recharge, and steep slopes.
2. In order to conserve the Town's water resources and minimize the cost of water supply and wastewater disposal systems, developments should be planned, designed, and operated to minimize water demand.
3. Subdivisions shall have water supplies large enough to serve all the units within the subdivision, as well as to provide fire protection.
4. Any new water supply or wastewater disposal system shall not deplete or contaminate any existing water supply systems.

5. Areas characterized by unstable soils, i.e., muck, peats, clays, or silts, shall not be planned for intensive development.
6. Lands within flood hazard areas shall be devoted to agricultural and open space uses. Where continuation of only agriculture and open space use is feasible, only those forms of development which do not restrict or divert the flow of water or endanger the health, safety and welfare of the public or riparian owners during periods of flooding shall be permitted.
7. Within the flood fringe (the Special Flood Hazard Area outside the floodway; also known as the 100-year floodplain, the area that will be inundated by a flood event having a 1-percent chance of being equaled or exceeded in any given year), structures shall be allowed, provided they will not:
  - encroach on wetland areas both associated with the flood fringe and those that do not occur within the flood fringe;
  - significantly reduce the use of the land for agricultural production;
  - impair the potential use of aquifer recharge areas, identified in the proper way, for community water supply, recreation, and fire-protection; and
  - significantly reduce the recreational and scenic value of the floodway or floodway fringe.
8. Corridors 50 feet wide on each side of perennial streams and lakes of 20 acres or more are valuable wildlife, recreation, and aesthetic resources. These corridors are intended to protect the physical and scenic quality of the streams, lakes, and ponds of Stratton to prevent damage from flash-flooding and localized storms and to preclude pollution of the waters. These corridors should be protected from development.
9. Removal of vegetation along stream banks and shorelines of lakes and ponds should be minimized. Except in cases of hardship or special topography, principal buildings should be set back not less than 50 feet from the top of the bank.
10. Deer yards are crucial to the white-tailed deer population in winter. These areas are used perennially by wintering deer and are characterized by softwood growth near young hardwoods and water on south-facing slopes. Deer yards should be protected from any intensity of development that would harm this vital resource.
11. Waterfowl habitat in Vermont is in limited supply and should be protected from harmful development.
12. Stratton's streams are natural habitats of the eastern brook trout; therefore, these streams should be protected to maintain their viability.
13. The current knowledge is that black bears range over most of the land in the Town of Stratton, except for where humans live or use the land continuously. Road crossings are an exception to this. There are two major crossings in the Town of Stratton. One is on Mountain Road, between the Stratton Mountain



Resort area and Sage Hill in Jamaica. The other crossing is at Route 100 in the southeast section of Town.

Generally, but not always, bears change their behavior when humans come to within 400 meters (¼ mile) of them. In the Town of Stratton, bears have several favorite places. Usually, but not always, the favorite places change on a seasonal basis. The favorite places may be critical for bear survival as stated in the Act 250 definitions of necessary wildlife habitat. At this time it is believed that most of the favored spots shown on the Significant Habitat Map are critical for survival of the bear.

When bears travel, they generally like to be in forest cover, especially coniferous cover. The literature discusses bear corridors. The term corridor is a misnomer. They do not travel down a well-worn game path, nor do individual bears take the same path from one favorite location to another; rather they converge on the favored spot and disperse radially.

Due to the evolving nature of what is known about black bear, it is difficult to write land use policy and law that will always apply to changes in human activity in their range. Any land use policy regarding the black bear should be with cooperation and consultation with ANR, Department of Fish and Wildlife, and evolve with new information. Any zoning bylaws will have to be flexible enough to satisfy the basic requirements of the bear population, as well as other goals set forth in the Town Plan.

Suggestions for changes and inclusions in any changed bylaw follow:

- a. Map all known sensitive black bear habitat in the Town of Stratton.
  - b. Provide for special review of any development within sensitive black bear habitat areas in consultation with the ANR Wildlife Biologist to avoid, minimize, and mitigate negative impacts.
  - c. Provide for a permanent network of conifer tree cover along stream banks, shorelines, and roadsides.
14. Encourage private and public landowners to recognize the importance of protecting, maintaining, and enhancing fish and wildlife habitat and ecosystems by supporting a variety of community and regional programs and incentives.
  15. Any potential development should be evaluated for impact on the quality of the air from gasoline and/or diesel engines.

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## **GOAL 7: ENERGY**

To encourage the efficient use of energy and the development of renewable energy resources.

### **Policies of Goal 7**

1. The Town should encourage and promote the use of solar energy, wind power, cogeneration, hydro, and other innovative technologies, for commercial, residential, and public uses.
2. To encourage the management of local forest resources for use as a sustainable energy resource.
3. Promote the use of alternative forms of energy that respect the built and natural environment.
4. Encourage the development of energy efficient subdivisions and buildings.
5. Coordinate with public transportation providers regarding alternative transportation opportunities in the region.
6. Encourage the formation of a Town Energy Committee.

### **Action Items under Goal 7**

1. Continue to limit the types of land uses and allowable densities in areas outside of the Residential and the three Commercial-Residential districts.
2. Maintain the Conservation Districts as areas with a very low density in order to promote sustainable management of wood lots.
3. Continue to maintain provisions in the Zoning Ordinance that encourage clustered and multi-family housing in new residential developments and provide opportunities for appropriate home occupations and larger home-based businesses to minimize commuting to work.
4. Promote the reduction of transportation energy use by supporting carpooling, public transit, and the use of energy efficient vehicles.
5. Develop and maintain sidewalks and non-motorized pathways, where feasible.
6. Stratton shall continue to enforce State residential building energy standards per 21 V.S.A. § 266 for all new residential construction in Town. To assure compliance with 21 V.S.A. § 266, Stratton should continue to require receipt of the certificate of code compliance.
7. Encourage new commercial, industrial, and major housing developments to follow design and construction principals that are energy efficient, conserve energy, encourage alternative energy production, conserve important forest and agriculture soils, and minimize contribution to greenhouse gases. Stratton's Subdivision Regulations, as well as public purchase of easements on private land, can be utilized to accomplish these goals. Grouping of buildings can reduce utility footprint, make cogeneration a possibility, and reduce fragmentation of wildlife habitat and agricultural land.

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## **GOAL 8: RECREATION**

To maintain and enhance recreational opportunities for Stratton residents and visitors.

- Growth should not significantly diminish the value and availability of outdoor recreational activities.
- Public access to noncommercial outdoor recreational opportunities, such as lakes and trails, should be identified, provided, and protected wherever appropriate.

### **Policies of Goal 8**

1. Public access to noncommercial recreational resources should not be limited by new development.
2. To provide (and maintain) descriptions and maps of trails and other areas of recreational potential currently available to Stratton residents. This should include such areas available on lands of the Green Mountain National Forest and on lands of Great River Hydro that include and surround Somerset Reservoir.
3. The Town should work towards increasing opportunities for outdoor recreation during all seasons generally.

### **Action Items under Goal 8**

1. Provide ways to protect public access to outdoor noncommercial recreational activities.
2. A system of access trails and paths should be developed. The Town could also require trail development along open space portions of Planned Unit Developments.
3. The Town should have on hand maps and descriptions of the noncommercial opportunities available to benefit residents and visitors.

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## **GOAL 9: AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY**

To encourage and strengthen agricultural and forest industries.

- Strategies to protect the long-term viability of forest lands should be encouraged.
- The manufacture of value-added forest products should be encouraged.
- Sound forest management practices should be encouraged.
- Public investments should be planned so as to minimize development pressure on forest land.

## **Policies of Goal 9**

1. To encourage the continued sustainable use of land for timber and forestry purposes.

## **Action Items under Goal 9**

1. Forest and secondary agricultural soils have significant potential for forestry. As these soils are often well suited for commercial forestry or pasturage, it is the policy of the Town of Stratton to plan for development that will not reduce or eliminate these soils for forestry use.
- 

# **GOAL 10: EARTH AND MINERAL RESOURCES**

To provide for the wise and efficient use of Stratton's natural resources and to facilitate the appropriate extraction of earth resources, as well as the proper restoration and preservation of the aesthetic qualities of the area.

## **Policies of Goal 10**

1. To protect and conserve natural resources which are intolerant of intensive use and which perform vital functions in creating and maintaining a safe, healthy, beneficial environment for all.
2. To identify and protect earth resources from development that would limit their extraction in the future.
3. To ensure site rehabilitation after earth resources have been extracted.

## **Action Items under Goal 10**

1. Sand and Gravel are nonrenewable resources important for the construction and maintenance of roads and buildings. Development should be avoided on extractable deposits of sand and gravel until they have been removed.
2. The extraction of processing minerals or earth resources should not have an adverse impact on the environment, result in inconvenience to neighboring property owners, or represent a burden on municipal services. At the discretion of the Planning Commission the extraction of such resources must ensure site rehabilitation within one year of completion, or as extracted.
3. Limit the extraction of earth and mineral resources to areas that are not heavily settled.
4. Extraction sites must handle truck traffic without creating unsafe travel conditions on Town roads and bridges.

5. Any site rehabilitation plan shall provide for the restoration of the natural and aesthetic characteristics of the land. Site rehabilitation plans should also provide for suitable alternative uses.
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## **GOAL 11: HOUSING**

To ensure the availability of safe and affordable housing for all residents of Stratton.

- Housing should be encouraged to meet the needs of diverse social and income groups in Stratton, particularly for those citizens of low to moderate incomes.
- Sites for multifamily and manufactured housing should be available in locations similar to those generally used for single-family conventional housing.

### **Policies of Goal 11**

1. To encourage the construction of affordable housing and employee housing where developers are able to provide the needed utilities and facilities.
2. To encourage the development of year-round housing that meets the needs of the Town's increasing population, and encourage development that provides for the needs of the second-home community.
3. To encourage housing that is energy efficient and does not cause undue burden on municipal services. All housing should be designed to maximize energy efficiency.

### **Action Items under Goal 11**

1. Stratton's Zoning Ordinance should provide for the use of various types of housing such as duplex housing, single-family housing, manufactured housing and / or rehabilitated housing.
2. Stratton's Zoning Ordinance shall provide for the use of multifamily housing as stipulated by 24 V.S.A. Chapter 117.
3. Working with the Stratton Planning Commission, developers should be encouraged to use a portion of their land for affordable housing and / or employee housing, at a higher density than one unit per two acres. The land devoted to affordable housing and employee housing does not need to be contiguous with the second-home development site but should be served by municipal water and sewer.
4. New development and expansion of existing development with a high need for seasonal workers should make provisions for employee housing or assist in placing seasonal employees in housing designed specifically for seasonal use, such as accessory apartments or dormitories.

## **GOAL 12: PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES**

To plan for, finance and provide an efficient system of public facilities and services to meet future needs.

- the full-time residential community of Stratton is too widely dispersed to make municipal water and sewer services feasible for everyone. All subdivisions should provide water and sewer services where possible.
- The rate of growth should not exceed the ability of the Town to regulate the provision of facilities and services.

### **Policies of Goal 12**

1. To ensure that the basic needs of health, safety, education, and housing are met and maintained at satisfactory levels.
2. To encourage the assessment of public investment in municipal services and facilities required by increasing private development.
3. Provide efficient and cost effective local government.

### **Action Items under Goal 12**

1. The Town of Stratton should continue its efforts to improve solid waste management.
2. Recycling is strongly recommended.
3. Composting is encouraged.
4. It is the policy of the Town of Stratton that no privately owned municipal-type facility or service, such as water or sewer systems or roads, be accepted by the Town unless the cost of maintaining and operating such a system or facility conforms to the Town's existing and / or projected operating budget.
5. The Town should be encouraged to plan for future law enforcement requirements. If the need were to arise, the Town should be prepared to join in cooperation with neighboring towns or regions.
6. The Town provides funding for the Stratton Mountain Volunteer Fire Company, which should regularly evaluate its fire-fighting capacity.
7. All developments and subdivisions should consider providing for water impoundments or hydrant systems. Private individuals and neighborhoods should be encouraged to build ponds and install hydrants.

8. Because the current school population is small and widely dispersed throughout the Town, a school is not planned for the near future. The Town of Stratton pays tuition to surrounding school districts and any other approved elementary or secondary school for its students. Local transportation is provided by the Town. If school facilities become necessary, future population centers and the compatibility of the land should be taken into consideration before a site for a school is chosen. A potential site has been designated at the Stratton Recreation Area.
  9. Although there appears to be satisfaction with the existing healthcare services, the Town should evaluate the need for and the benefits of joining with other towns in the sub-region to provide for future additional needs.
  10. Promote volunteerism and recruit to fill vacancies on Town committees as appropriate.
  11. Take advantage of municipal, state, and federal grants, as a means to finance Town projects.
- 

## **GOAL 13: CHILDCARE**

To ensure the availability of safe and affordable child care and to integrate child care issues into the planning process, including child care financing, infrastructure, business assistance for child care providers, and child care workforce development.

### **Objectives of Goal 13**

1. To ensure that the basic needs of childcare for Stratton residents are met and maintained at satisfactory levels.

### **Policies under Goal 13**

1. Currently, professional childcare facilities exist and are available to employees and the general public at the Stratton Mountain Resort. Additionally, there are facilities available in surrounding towns. The 2010 census indicates that the Town of Stratton had 12 resident children under five years of age at that time, compared with only one reported in the 2000 census, and five ages 5-9, 13 ages 10-14, and 12 ages 15-19. The 2017 American Community Survey estimates that the number of children under five decreased to 6, ages 5-9, remained at five, ages 10-14 increased to 21, and ages 15-19 decreased to five. Although these absolute numbers are relatively low, the Town of Stratton recognizes the importance of availability of such facilities to its residents. It is the policy of this Town to encourage the continued availability of affordable childcare at the Stratton and Mount Snow resorts and to work with surrounding towns for programs such as summer day camps offered by or within their schools.

### **Action Items under Goal 13**

No further action is required at this time.

## **GOAL 14: FLOOD RESILIENCE**

To encourage a flood resilient community.

### **Objectives of Goal 14**

To ensure that Stratton is as flood resilient a community as it can be.

### **Policies of Goal 14**

1. New development in identified flood hazard, fluvial erosion, and river corridor protection areas should be avoided. If new development is to be built in such areas, it should not exacerbate flooding and fluvial erosion.
2. The protection and restoration of floodplains and upland forested areas that attenuate and moderate flooding and fluvial erosion should be encouraged.
3. Flood emergency preparedness and response planning should be encouraged.

### **Action Items under Goal 14**

1. Consider augmenting flood hazard area regulations with fluvial erosion hazard areas (river corridors).
-



## **Part 3**

# **TOWN PLAN ELEMENTS**

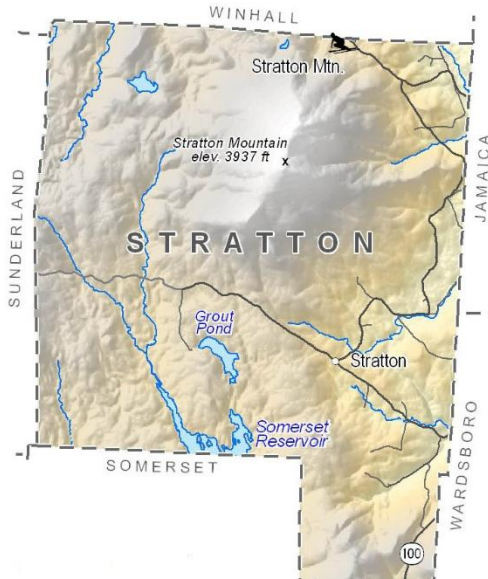
## **LAND USE PLAN**

### **EXISTING LAND USE**

The Town of Stratton is located in northwest Windham County, abutted by the Towns of Jamaica, Winhall, Sunderland, Dover, Somerset, and Wardsboro. It lies entirely within the Green Mountain National Forest Proclamation Boundary. The mixed softwood and hardwood forest-covered terrain is mountainous with much of the northern part of the Town at an elevation of 2,500 feet or more. A portion of the Lye Brook Wilderness Area is located in the northwestern corner of the Town. East of this area, the Appalachian and Long Trails cross the Town in a north-south direction. Within the Town are several ponds, many wetlands, and the northern part of Somerset Reservoir. Stratton Mountain Resort and its associated commercial and residential development occupy the northeastern part of the Town.

Land that is level enough to accommodate development is limited. Approximately 79% of the land in Town is in public ownership or private ownership with conservation easements, including the lands of the Green Mountain National Forest, lands of Great River Hydro, lands of Meadowsend Timberland, LLC., and the Stratton Town Forest. It is important to note that currently, more than 46% of Windham County's total Federally-owned National Forest lands lie within Stratton. The only land not in forest cover is at the Stratton Resort and around the scattered homes in the Town. There is a narrow strip on the eastern boundary of Stratton that is not public or semi-public land. Within this boundary lie the Stratton Mountain Resort complex and the limited amount of land that can be developed. The Town has a very small village area, centrally located on the eastern side of Town, as well as a concentrated commercial area at the Stratton Mountain Resort complex. There is a substation of the South Londonderry Post Office in the resort area. Industry, other than recreation and limited logging, is not present. Stratton is a residential town.

# TOWN OF STRATTON: TOWN PROFILE



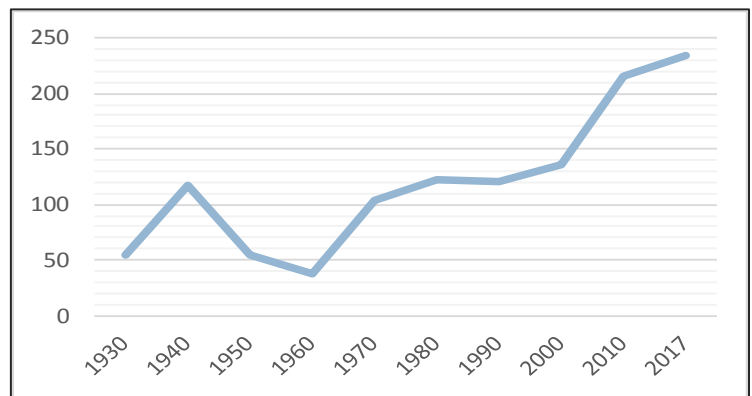
**Figure 1 Stratton, Vermont.**  
 Source: Windham Regional Commission

## Understanding the American Community Survey Data

The Town of Stratton town profile uses data from the 1990, 2000, and 2010 U.S. Censuses, and from the 2017 American Community Survey (ACS) five-year estimates. Data published in the ACS are five-year estimates and do not reflect actual counts like population, age, or sex. These estimates are useful when analyzing trends in small populations, but should be used cautiously when making direct comparisons with decennial Census data. ACS data are estimates over a five-year period and have a relatively large margin of error. The ACS is conducted year-round to gather “period” data, unlike the decennial Census which is only conducted every ten years and collects actual “point-in-time” data.

## POPULATION 🏠


- † According to census data, the population of Stratton made up less than 1% of the 46,720 people in the Windham Region in 2010. According to the most recent ACS estimate, the population of the Town in relation to the region has not changed significantly since then.
- † Stratton ranked as the third smallest town in the Windham Region in 2017 according to ACS estimates. This was also true in 1990, 2000, and 2010.
- † The population of Stratton increased 79% between 1990 and 2010, from 121 to 216 people. This increase is consistent with the trend of growth seen in historical population data for the Town since the establishment of the Stratton Mountain Resort in 1961 (Figure 2).
- † Between 2000 and 2010, the population of Stratton increased 59%, from 136 to 216 people. The region experienced less than 1% growth during those same years. The ACS estimates that the population of Stratton grew another 9% by 2017, from 216 to 235 people. At the same time, the population of the region decreased by 3%.





**Figure 2 Population of Stratton, VT – 1930 to 2017**  
 Sources: US Census and the American Community Survey


- † Population density in Stratton was 5.1 persons per square mile of land area in 2017, a 9% increase from 4.7 persons per square mile in 2010.
- † In 2010, the median age in Stratton was 47, which was up from 43 in 2000. In 2017, the ACS estimates that the median age in Stratton decreased to 46. The median age in Windham County increased from 40 in 2000 to 45 in 2010, and to 47 in 2017.
- † In 2010, 21% of the population of Stratton was 65 years or older while 6% of the population was under 5 years of age. The most recent ACS estimates that in 2017 the percentage of the population age 65 years or older increased to 26% while the population under 5 years old decreased to 3%.


## HOUSING

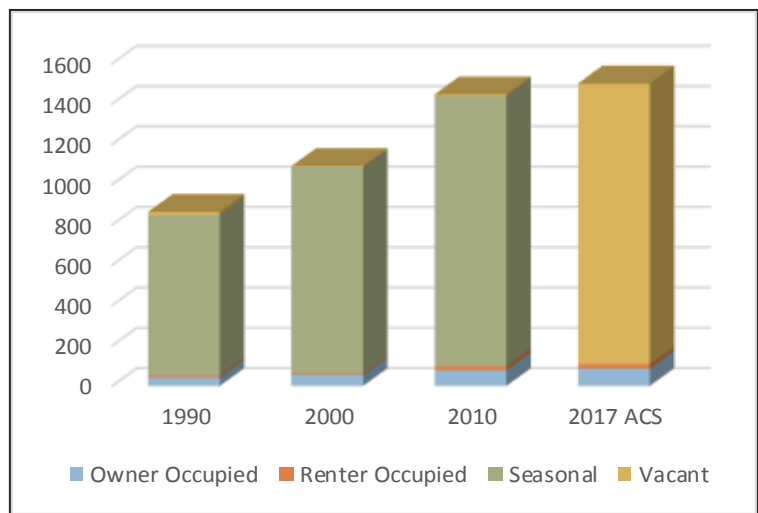
 Between 2000 and 2010, the total number of housing units in Stratton increased by 33%, from 1091 units to 1447 units. There was a 31% increase in seasonal units and a 45% increase in owner occupied units. From 2010 to 2017, the total number of units increased by another 4% to 1501 and the number of owner occupied units increased by 10%. In the 2017 ACS estimates, the total number of vacant units includes seasonal housing and does not differentiate between seasonal and vacant units. In previous census counts, seasonal units made up between 98 and just under 100% of the total vacant units (Figure 3).

 Stratton contributed 11% of the seasonal housing supply for the region in 2000 which increased to 12% in 2010.

 Stratton had 98 households in 2010, up from 60 in 2000 and 51 in 1990. The ACS estimates that the number of households increased to 109 in 2017.

 The average household size in Stratton decreased from 2.27 persons in 2000 to 2.2 persons in 2010. The region’s average household size also decreased during this period, from 2.4 in 2000 to 2.3 in 2010. The 2017 ACS estimates suggest that the average household size decreased slightly in both Stratton at 2.16 and the region at 2.26.

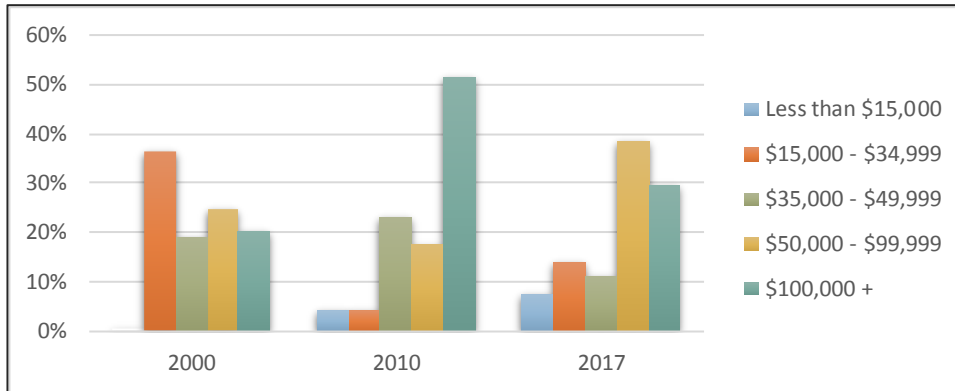
 The median gross rent in 2000 was \$675, which decreased to \$480 in 2010 (margin of error in 2010 is high and the numbers should be used with caution). The region’s median gross rent in 2010 was \$741. In 2017 the median gross rent in Stratton was estimated to have increased to \$1141, while the region increased to \$829.



**Figure 3 Housing units by tenure and vacancy status**  
Sources: Census and American Community Survey

## INCOME \$

- \$ The median household income in 2017 was \$80,750, down from the 2010 median household income of \$115,924 (adjusted to 2017 dollars).
- \$ In 2010, 4% of households earned less than \$15,000 per year, which increased to 7% by 2017 (Figure 4).





**Figure 4 Household Income in Stratton, VT – 2000 to 2017**

Sources: US Census and the American Community Survey

- \$ In 2000 64% of all households earned more than \$35,000 per year, which increased to 92% in 2010, and then decreased to 78% by 2017.
- \$ An estimated 6.4% of households received Food Stamp/SNAP benefits in 2017.
- \$ An estimated 34.9% of households received social security income in 2017.
- \$ In 2017, an estimated 4.7% of the population of Stratton fell below the poverty level, compared to 13.4% of the population of the Windham Region and 11.4% of the population of the State of Vermont.




## EMPLOYMENT

-  The educational services, health care, and social assistance industry employed the largest number of people residing in Stratton in 2017 (Table 1). The majority of occupations in this category were in educational services. The estimated number of employed workers residing in Stratton who were age 16 and older decreased 2% between 2010 and 2017, from 125 to 122.
-  Finance, insurance and real estate experienced the largest industry increase of Stratton residents employed between 2000 and 2010 with a 1400% gain. The ACS estimates that the number of employees in these industries decreased by 67% by 2017.

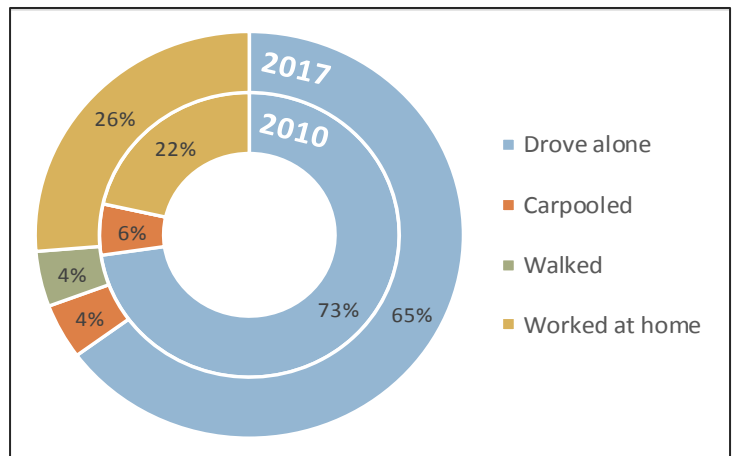
**Table 1 Industry in Stratton, VT - 2017**

Civilian employed population 16 years and over	2000	2010	2017
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	0	0	10
Construction	7	29	19
Manufacturing	3	2	7
Wholesale trade	4	4	2
Retail trade	5	0	4
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	0	1	0
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	2	30	10
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	9	4	3
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	14	22	31
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	16	29	23
Public administration	15	4	8
Other services	4	0	5
Total	79	125	122

Sources: US Census and the American Community Survey

-  Stratton residents traveled an average of 24.9 minutes to work in 2017, an increase from 19.3 minutes in 2010 and 14.8 minutes in 2000.
-  In 2017, 30% of employed workers residing in Stratton worked at home or walked to work, as compared to 22% in 2010 (Figure 5).
-  65% of Stratton residents drove alone to work in 2017 while 73% drove alone in 2010. The number of residents carpooling to work dropped from 6% in 2010 to 4% in 2017.

**Figure 5 Transportation to work – 2010 and 2017**



Sources: US Census and the American Community Survey

## PROPOSED LAND USE DISTRICTS

The lands of the Town of Stratton have been divided into six districts. These districts are described below with their permitted uses and conditional uses. The following land use districts shall provide the basis for municipal land use regulations. While the zoning regulations specify use and dimensional standards for each district, the Town Plan sets the foundation. The locations of the districts are represented on the Proposed Land Use Map that is incorporated into this plan.

### Conservation District

These lands are defined as essentially undeveloped lands which are predominantly forested, and have substantial physical limitations for development. Much is over 2,500 feet in elevation. They are in the southern part of Town, including the Town Forest, mainly to the west of Route 100 although a Conservation District also exists in the southeastern part of Town to the east of Route 100.

Conservation lands shall be used for forestry, low-density development and open space. They shall be withheld from intensive development until there is a demonstrated public need for their development, until public utilities and services can be provided to these lands and until it can be determined that overriding benefits to the community would accrue from their development at higher densities.

Permitted Uses:                    Conservation  
                                                 Forestry  
                                                 Single-family dwelling unit

Permitted Uses requiring Site Plan Review  
                                                 Recreation  
                                                 Small Wind Energy Systems

Conditional Uses:                Mineral and earth extraction  
                                                 Public utilities and facilities  
                                                 Telecommunications facilities

### Recreation District

These lands are defined as lands above 2,500 feet which are presently used and will continue to be used by the Stratton Mountain Resort for ski lifts, trails, and related purposes, and as lands which may have potential for such use in the future. They are on the northerly and easterly slopes of Stratton Mountain.

The Stratton Planning Commission will continue to work with the Stratton Corporation, and other owners of large tracts of land, for the most beneficial uses for these lands.

Permitted Uses:                    Conservation  
                                                 Forestry  
                                                 Recreation

Permitted Uses requiring Site Plan Review:

- Accessory uses related to primary uses requiring Site Plan Review.
- Small Wind Energy Systems
- Structures supporting ski resort infrastructure
- Camping

Conditional Uses:

- Mineral and earth extractions
- Public utilities and facilities
- Telecommunications facilities

## Residential District

These lands are defined as lands which are already committed to rural residential development or which appear capable of accommodating a significant proportion of the expected growth of Stratton. If not already committed for such development, these lands have generally slight or moderate physical limitations to development, and are readily accessible by existing or proposed public highways. They appear generally suitable for residential and associated uses. They include the eastern quarter of Town, as well as lands to the west of the center (CR 3), and two inholdings in the Public, Quasi-Public, and Public Utility District, one west of the Town Forest and one west of Grout Pond.

These lands shall be used to accommodate a major proportion of the growth of permanent and seasonal homes and associated uses. Development of these lands shall not unnecessarily damage resource values as shown on Town Maps, and should not ignore the physical limitations to development shown on the maps. Forestry, open space, and recreational uses shall be encouraged.

Permitted Uses:

- Agriculture
- Conservation
- Forestry
- Customary home industry
- Mobile home (single-family residential use)
- One-family dwelling
- Two-family dwelling
- Playground and/or picnic area
- Traditional Bed & Breakfast
- Short-term rental homes
- Family child care home serving six or fewer children

Permitted Uses requiring Site Plan Review:

- Accessory uses incidental to primary uses requiring Site Plan Review.
- Cemetery
- Floating affordable housing
- Greenhouse
- Nursery
- Multi-family dwelling
- Planned unit development
- Solid waste collection facility

Small wind energy systems  
Family child care home serving no more than six full-time children and four part-time children

Conditional Uses:

- Art center
- Church
- Commercial animals
- Family child care facility serving more than six full-time and four part-time children
- Helicopter landing pad
- Library
- Mineral and earth extraction
- Mobile home park
- Museum
- Public utilities and facilities
- Private and/or commercial water and/or sewer systems
- Restaurant and/or lounge
- Retail business
- School
- Telecommunication facilities
- Waste handling and recycling facilities
- Campers, Trailers, or Recreational Vehicle Parks

## Commercial-Residential Districts

The Commercial-Residential District 1 (CR 1) is located in the northeast corner of the Town and is the designated growth area for the Town of Stratton. Commercial-Residential District 2 (CR 2) exists as a small portion of the southeast corner of Town on Rte. 100. A third Commercial-Residential District – (CR 3) was proposed as part of the 2009 Town Plan update and created in the 2016 Zoning Ordinance update to allow for village-style commercial development in the center of Stratton. All three districts are described below.

**CR 1** – This area is comprised of land, located in the northeast section of the Town, with convenient access to the Stratton Mountain Resort complex, appears suitable for well-planned and controlled residential subdivision and commercial uses serving visitors and permanent residents. This district is the designated growth area for the Town of Stratton. Much is served by the Winhall-Stratton Fire District which provides water and sewer. It has a wider impact on the region than the rest of the Town. Many people who work in this district live beyond the limits of the Town. Visitors from outside the Town enjoy recreation, housing, dining, and other commercial facilities. The growth area has been developing over many decades. Housing development has taken place on slopes in excess of 15%. This area has sensitive black bear habitat. This plan encourages the in-fill of land ignored in the development process. These developments should be designed so that structures are grouped together, roads minimized and intrusions into sensitive bear habitat locations minimized. The use of Planned Unit Development (PUD) should be encouraged. Criteria for planning review and specific requirements for PUD have been set forth in the Stratton Zoning Ordinance. Appropriate development and performance standards shall be applied 1) to ensure that the high scenic quality of this area is maintained 2) to discourage commercial strip development, 3) to avoid traffic



congestion, undue noise, and other problems which would damage the resort-related values of this area and 4) minimize intrusion into sensitive black bear habitat.

**CR 2** – This area is comprised of land located in the southeastern portion of Stratton with access to Route 100. Although this land may present problems for some potential developers, it may offer advantages for well-planned residential and commercial uses. This area of the Town, within a short distance of Mount Snow Ski Area in Dover, has a motel, a small development of apartments and a number of newer homes. There are some sections of sensitive black bear habitat near this area. Review of development in this area should include provisions that will minimize impact on sensitive bear habitats, maintain the scenic quality of this popular tourist route, and avoid the appearance of continuous or strip development directly related to either Mount Snow or West Wardsboro.

Permitted Uses for Commercial-Residential Districts 1 & 2:

- Agriculture
- Customary home industry
- Conservation
- Forestry
- One-family dwelling
- Playground and/or picnic area
- Two-family dwelling
- Traditional Bed & Breakfast (in CR2 only)
- Short-term rental homes
- Family child care home serving six or fewer children

Permitted Uses requiring Site Plan review for Commercial-Residential Districts 1 & 2:

- Accessory uses incidental to permitted uses
- Art center
- Bowling alleys
- Cemetery
- Chairlifts, tows, tramways, alpine slides
- Church
- Family child care home serving no more than six full-time children and four part-time children
- Floating affordable housing
- Financial institution
- Gas station
- Greenhouse
- Hospital, clinic, or nursing home
- Library
- Motel/hotel and/or motor inn with a restaurant
- Multi-family dwelling
- Museum
- Office building
- Other group activities and services
- Planned Unit Development
- Professional or business office

## Stratton Town Plan 2020

- Public utilities and facilities
- Restaurant
- Retail store or stand
- Sales and sales rooms
- Service station
- School
- Skating rinks
- Theater
- Bed & Breakfast (in CR2 only)

### Conditional Uses for Commercial-Residential Districts 1 & 2:

- Earth and mineral extraction
- Fuel storage over 5,000 gallons
- Helicopter landing facility
- Mobile home park
- Private and/or commercial water and/or sewer systems
- Telecommunication facilities
- Waste handling and recycling facilities
- Commercial Animals
- Campers, Trailers, or Recreational Vehicle Parks
- Veterinary facility
- Family child care facility serving more than six full-time and four part-time children

**CR 3** – This area is comprised of lands surrounding the Town center at the junction of the West Jamaica Rd. and Stratton-Arlington Rd., in order to promote a village area, in the Vermont tradition, surrounding the Town Hall, Town Office, Old Stratton Meetinghouse and Schoolhouse #5. It extends approximately a half-mile from the intersection along those roads. The boundaries of the district are located at the intersection of Old Forrester Rd. and the Stratton-Arlington Rd., at the intersection of Plimpton Rd. and the Stratton-Arlington Rd. and at the intersections of Ball Farm Rd. / Old Town Rd. with the West Jamaica Rd. It includes all lots or portions of lots in this area, extending 1,000 ft back from either side of the Stratton-Arlington Road and the West Jamaica Rd. to these intersections, excluding any U.S. Forest Service Land.

### Permitted Uses for Commercial-Residential District 3:

- Agriculture
- Customary home industry
- Forestry
- One-family dwelling
- Two-family dwelling
- Playground and/or picnic area
- Traditional Bed & Breakfast
- Family child care home serving six or fewer children

### Permitted Uses requiring Site Plan review for Commercial-Residential District 3:

- Accessory uses incidental to permitted uses
- Art center

Church  
Family child care home serving no more than six full-time children and four part-time children  
Floating affordable housing  
Financial institution  
Gas station  
Greenhouse  
Hospital, clinic, or nursing home  
Library  
Lounge  
Motel/hotel and/or motor inn with a restaurant  
Multi-family dwelling  
Museum  
Office building  
Other group activities and services  
Planned Unit Development  
Professional or business office  
Restaurant/lounge only  
Retail store or stand  
Sales and sales rooms  
School  
Skating rinks  
Theater  
Bed & Breakfast  
Small wind energy systems

Conditional Uses for Commercial-Residential District 3:

Underground storage tanks less than 2,500 gallons  
Private and/or commercial water and/or sewer systems  
Telecommunication facilities  
Waste handling and recycling facilities  
Mobile Home Park  
Campers, Trailers, or Recreational Vehicle Parks  
Veterinary facility  
Family child care facility serving more than six full-time and four part-time children

**Public, Quasi-Public, and Public Utility Districts**

These lands are owned by public or quasi-public organizations and are used for purposes which might preclude their use for other purposes. They comprise most of the lands above 2,500 feet in the western three quarters of Town.

Permitted Uses:                   Agriculture  
                                          Conservation  
                                          Forestry

Low-impact recreation

Permitted uses requiring Site Plan Review:

- Playground and / or picnic area
- Public utilities and facilities
- High-impact recreation
- Small Wind Energy Systems

Conditional Uses:

- Private community water and sewer systems
- Earth and mineral extractions
- Camping, Camper, or Recreational Vehicle Parks

## NATURAL AND HISTORIC RESOURCES

### THE PRESENT

The Natural and Historic Resources areas and sites of the Town have been mapped. Information for this mapping has come from the U.S.G.S. maps, the Vermont Natural Heritage Inventory, the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, including the Department of Fish and Wildlife, the U.S.D.A. Forest Service, and the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

#### Soils

The soils of the Town of Stratton have been classified by the Natural Resources Conservation Service of the United States Department of Agriculture. With the exception of a small amount of soil at the head of Somerset Reservoir, none of the soils of the Town are prime agricultural soils as listed by the state.

#### Water Resources

Streams, lakes, and ponds: The Agency of Natural Resources has classified the major ponds and lakes in Stratton as follows:

<u>LAKES</u>	<u>ACREAGE</u>	<u>CLASSIFICATION</u>
Stratton Pond (GMNF)	50 acres	natural / pristine
Grout Pond (GMNF)	82 acres	natural / pristine
Bourn Pond (GMNF)	Mostly in Sunderland Stratton acreage 2 acres	natural / pristine
Somerset Reservoir (Great River Hydro)	Most of this reservoir is in Somerset. Stratton acreage 241 acres	natural / pristine

All of these ponds are in public or quasi-public ownership. All shorelines of lakes and ponds are important for maintaining water quality and providing wildlife habitat. They are valuable in reducing soil erosion and excessive siltation and tend to be highly vulnerable to excessive and poorly planned development.

## **Streams**

The Water Resources Board designated the following as Class A waters: Kidder Brook, its watershed and Styles Brook to and including the reservoir. They should be protected as such. The policies listed under Goals 5 and 6 indicate limitations on the use of these lands. The Stratton Zoning Ordinance implements these policies.

## **Wetlands**

Wetlands are marshy or swampy areas which store water and gradually release surface runoff after heavy rains and melting snow. Wetlands help to maintain surface water and ground water flow and quality and are valuable as wildlife habitat.

## **Aquifer Recharge Areas**

Aquifer recharge areas are lands which help to maintain the underground water supply by transmitting surface runoff to underground storage. Two types have been identified:

1. Gravel: recharge to gravel and sand aquifers. If the presence of these areas is confirmed, they may be particularly important as future sources of water for commercial, industrial, or municipal purposes.
2. Bedrock: well data, soil studies, and geologic maps tend to show that recharge potential is confined to fissures and cavities in bedrock. Excessive or careless development of aquifer recharge areas can result in damaging consequences to the quality of well water.

## **Wildlife**

Wildlife habitats, shown on the Significant Habitats Map, include lands with suitable habitat conditions for significant or endangered species of plants and animals. The following general habitats have been identified:

1. Upland habitats including large forested areas of steeper slopes, of coniferous or mixed forests, which provide substantial winter cover for a variety of wildlife.
2. Shoreline habitats include shoreline areas which are undeveloped and otherwise attractive to a variety of amphibians, reptiles, birds, and mammals.
3. Wetland habitats include lands that are important for a wide variety of song birds, game birds, and other wildlife such as beaver, moose, and black bear. In addition to the habitats specifically identified on the natural resources map, many smaller streams, lakes, and ponds have significant potential for fish and migratory waterfowl, and nearly all undeveloped forested areas and hedgerows support significant wildlife.

4. Significant Bear Areas are road crossings critical to bears, such as the area crossing VT100 south of Penny Ave., providing access to habitat including food sources as shown on the Significant Habitats map.

## **Historical Sites and Structures**

The following have been identified by the Stratton Planning Commission or the state of Vermont as having significant local historical value, and as deserving protection and continued maintenance: the Old Stratton Meetinghouse, Stratton School House (#5), Stratton School House (#2), the Daniel Webster Historical Monument, all local cemeteries, and sites along Old Town Road, within the Stratton Recreational Area, which include the Old Town Common. School House #2 is now a private residence.

## **THE FUTURE**

Stratton will continue to take actions to identify and work towards protection of natural resources in Town, such as soils, surface and subsurface water. The Town continues to work with the Agency of Natural Resources to assure the protection of wildlife habitat throughout Stratton.

The Planning Goals listed in PART 2 of this Plan identify the following goals as applicable to the LAND USE ELEMENT of this Town Plan: GOALS 1, 2, 5, 6, 9 and 10.

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# **COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES PLAN**

## **THE PRESENT**

Community facilities and services are the infrastructure and services which are provided by the Town, or in cooperation with the Town, for the health, safety, benefit, and enjoyment of the general public. They include Emergency services, schools, solid waste disposal, and recreational facilities.

The emergency services provided by the Town are police and fire protection. For police services the Town relies on contracted Police services (currently the Winhall Police Dept.), an elected constable, appointed security personnel within the resort area (hired by the Stratton Mountain Resort), and occasionally the Vermont State Police.

The Town now relies on the Stratton Mountain Volunteer Fire Company and those of neighboring towns through mutual aid agreements with Wardsboro, Dover, Jamaica, Londonderry, Weston, Peru, and Winhall.

The Town makes contributions to the Wardsboro Volunteer Fire Company. The Stratton Mountain Volunteer Fire Company is supported by the Town, Stratton Corporation, and by individual contributions. Fire engines and equipment are stationed at the Stratton Mountain Volunteer Fire Company fire house. A fire tanker truck is stationed at the Town garage on Mountain Rd. Equipment is available at the Stratton Mountain base area.

Health care for Stratton residents is provided by Grace Cottage Hospital in Townshend, the hospitals in Bennington and Brattleboro, as well as the clinics in Wilmington, Chester, Londonderry and the Carlos Otis Clinic at Stratton Mountain Resort.

The Town relies upon three different groups of ambulance and rescue service providers. Emergency and ambulance services are provided by Wardsboro Fire and Rescue, the Londonderry Volunteer Rescue Squad, and Rescue Inc. In addition, the Stratton Mountain Ambulance operates during the day during ski season.

The Town of Stratton operates a Transfer Station at the Stratton Town Garage. Commercial establishments and large residential developments are required to make arrangements for the pick up and disposal of all solid waste generated therein. The Town is part of the Windham Solid Waste Management District, which manages the Town's recyclables. Currently, the Town contracts with Casella Waste Management, Inc. for solid waste disposal, as well as recyclable disposal

The Stratton Recreation Area was established in the Town in the late 1990s with a picnicking area, a baseball field, a basketball court / ice skating rink, volleyball and badminton courts, hiking and cross-country ski trails, a playground, and a sledding hill.

The costs for the above-listed community facilities and services are met by municipal taxes.

Because the small permanent population is so widely dispersed throughout the Town, and because there are so few children, a school is not planned. The Town pays tuition to surrounding towns and any other state-approved elementary or secondary school or high school. Local transportation, if available, is funded by the Town. Schooling is paid for through the State Education Property Tax. The local budget affects the tax rate set for the Town by the State.

## **THE FUTURE**

If school facilities become necessary, future permanent population centers and the compatibility of the land should be taken into consideration before a site for a school is chosen. One site has been designated within the Stratton Recreation Area.

The Town should consider the development of a capital budget and program.

PART 2 of this Plan provides the Planning GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES of the Town of Stratton. The general statements of the goals that apply to the COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES ELEMENT of the Town Plan may be found in GOALS 3, 8 and 12.

# TRANSPORTATION PLAN

## EXISTING TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

### Roads

The majority of Stratton’s transportation infrastructure includes Town roads and State highways. The closest federal highway is Interstate 91, which passes through Brattleboro about 30 miles east of Stratton. Regional access to Stratton from state maintained roads is limited with only 1.3 miles of State Highway running through Town. Those 1.3 miles are on the portion of VT 100 which runs through the southeast section of Town. A major travel corridor for winter ski resorts, VT 100 runs in a north-south direction through the region connecting the Towns of Londonderry, Jamaica, Wardsboro, Dover, Wilmington, and Whitingham.

**Table 2: Town and State Road Mileage in Stratton**

Town				State
Class 1	Class 2	Class 3	Class 4	State Highway
0	16.7	11.0	0.6	1.3

*Source: Stratton Road Certification 2019*

No state appropriation is made for maintaining Class 4 roads. These roads are seasonally functional for normal vehicular traffic and have a gravel surface. Like many Vermont communities, Stratton may have Class 4 roads and legal trails that are not mapped on the VTrans Highway Maps. So while the current maps show 0 miles of Class 4 roadway, it is possible that Class 4 roads do exist in Stratton. Recent statutory changes require the accounting of mileage and mapping of Class 4 roads and legal Town trails. Many class 4 highways are old, unmapped, and often observable. These particular roads are called “ancient roads.” Act 178 required municipalities to identify these “ancient roads” and formally declare their existence to the State of Vermont by February 10, 2015, by adding them to the official Town Highway Map. Those ancient roads that were not added to the official map by that date became “unidentified corridors” on July 1, 2015.

Of the Town maintained roads, just over 15 miles are paved. The surface of the remaining 13 miles is a mix of gravel and dirt. Unpaved roads tend to limit the amount of traffic and discourage speeding, thereby promoting vehicle safety. However, while the traffic calming effect of dirt roads is beneficial, unpaved surfaces are less ideal for commuter bicyclists.

Stratton-Arlington Road is a Class 2 Town Highway, part paved and part gravel. that provides seasonal access to many outdoor recreation activities. This road is popular for hikers who take summer hikes along the Appalachian Trail and Deerfield River. Stratton-Arlington Road also provides access to Stratton Mountain Resort via West Jamaica Road and Mountain Road. VTrans collected Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) data for 2007 which shows that 890 vehicles traveled the section of Stratton-Arlington Road between West Wardsboro and West Jamaica Road. At the same location in 2011 and 2014, the AADT was estimated to be 790. In 2017, the AADT was estimated to have dropped to 490. Estimates are based on data from nearby count locations, and where none are available they are calculated using the statewide average growth rate for the appropriate class of road. The AADT falls off considerably for vehicles traveling further west from Grout Pond Road to the Sunderland Town Line to 160 vehicles in 2007. VTrans



estimated that the volume at this location dropped to 130 in 2011, and 50 in 2014 and 2017. A major reason for this is the fact that this section of Stratton-Arlington Road heading west is closed during the winter months. Along West Jamaica Road which connects to Mountain Road and the Stratton Mountain Resort, AADT in 2011 was 370 approximately a half mile north of Stratton-Arlington Road. In 2017, the AADT dropped to 327. On Mountain Road just north of Bear Creek Road AADT was 380 in 2011, which increased to 401 in 2017. Just north of Sun Bowl Road the AADT was 570 in 2011, which increased to 734 in 2017.

## **Alternative Transportation**

The Southeastern Vermont Transit MOOver provides public transit service to the towns along VT 100 on several different bus routes, serving all the villages between Readsboro and West Dover. For more information regarding the MOOver's bus services refer to their website at <http://www.moover.com/>.

VTrans supports Go! Vermont, a free resource for commuters seeking to decrease their transportation costs and environmental impact. The program provides carpool/vanpool matching services, travel planning, and information on bus routes, bike routes, and pedestrian resources. Commuters can create an account and access resources on its website <https://www.connectingcommuters.org/>.

## **VT Route 100 Scenic Byway**

The short section through Stratton passes through low density mixed residential and commercial areas. This section has the distinction of providing a very nice view north from one of the highest elevations anywhere on VT 100. The surrounding forest is prime bear habitat and measures to protect crossing bears and warn drivers should be installed here. While Stratton has the least amount of mileage among the communities that participate in the Scenic Byway, there are still some general problems that Stratton officials should consider in future transportation planning efforts. Poor roadway conditions exist throughout as physical conditions of narrow valleys, steep hillsides, and narrow road width discourage pedestrian and bicycle travel. These physical conditions do sometimes have the effect of creating natural traffic calming areas that keep driving speeds down and can curtail aggressive driving. However, efforts should be made to provide major roadways with safe shoulders for both pedestrian travel and bicycle travel that occurs throughout Town and between towns.

## **FUTURE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM**

Stratton as a rural town on the western periphery of Windham County will still rely heavily on motor vehicles as a primary form of transportation. However, given the increased cost of vehicle transportation, Stratton should encourage residents to use alternative modes of transportation where possible. In doing so, Stratton must be actively involved in efforts to provide expanded public transportation options and continued maintenance of existing routes throughout the region that help Stratton residents get from home to work or from home to shopping centers and grocery markets. The Town should also encourage residents to carpool. Information regarding The Vermont Agency of Transportation's Rideshare Program should be distributed to residents and information should also be posted on boards at municipal facilities.

PART 2 of this Plan provides the Planning GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES of the Town of Stratton, GOAL 4 relates to transportation issues.

## **HOUSING ELEMENT**

### **THE PRESENT**

An adequate supply of year-round housing of all types and costs is necessary in a town so that all segments of the population can enjoy home ownership or appropriate rental space. Housing for people of all income levels is essential. The elderly, young-adults, middle-aged individuals, small families, and large families all need housing that meets their needs.

A significant part of the growth of the Town has been in the construction of “second homes.” These homes far outnumber the homes of year-round residents.

A number of homes in the resort complex have become full-time residences. These residences are compatible with the resort complex. Other new construction of homes should be compatible with the existing architecture and community in which they will be located in the Town. These homes should also be as energy efficient as possible.

### **Affordable Housing**

Affordable housing is defined as housing that costs no more than 30% of the income of a household earning the county median income. This definition is used not only by Vermont Department of Housing and Community Development, but also by banks and lending establishments. The 2017 American Community Survey (ACS) estimates that the median household income in Windham County is \$57,808. Using the home price affordability calculator on the housingdata.org website, a household with that income can afford a home priced at approximately \$182,500 (assumes a 5% down payment and average interest rates, property taxes, insurance premiums, and closing costs). The median primary home sale price in Stratton is \$193,600 (VT Dept. of Taxes). While higher than the cost of an affordable home for the Windham County median, the median household income in Stratton is also higher at \$80,750 (ACS).

The National Low Income Housing Coalition (NLIHC) uses the fair market rent (FMR) to calculate the housing wage, which is the hourly wage a full-time worker needs to earn in order to afford housing without spending more than 30% of their income. In Vermont, the FMR for a two-bedroom apartment is \$1,165, which makes the housing wage \$22.40 (Table 3). In Windham County, the FMR for a two-bedroom apartment is \$1,051, with a housing wage of \$20.21. The estimated hourly mean renter wage in Windham County is \$12.49. Affordable rent at the mean renter wage in Windham County is \$649, and the gross median rent in Stratton is \$1,141. Approximately 16% of households in Stratton are severely cost-burdened, meaning that they pay more than 50% of their income towards housing expenses.

**Table 3 Fair Market Rent in Vermont and Windham County**

*Final FY 2019 FMRs By Unit Bedrooms*

	Efficiency	One-Bedroom	Two-Bedroom	Three-Bedroom	Four-Bedroom
<i>Vermont</i>	\$828	\$945	\$1,184	\$1,538	\$1,672
<i>Windham County</i>	\$685	\$792	\$994	\$1,247	\$1,460

*National Low Income Housing Coalition*

There are additional constraints as well. Approximately 79% of the land in Stratton is in public or semi-public ownership, while the remaining landscape that is available for potential development is generally characterized by steep wooded slopes, by soils with a shallow depth to bedrock, and by upland wetlands. These characteristics indicate probable limitations for onsite sewage disposal. As a result, the Stratton Zoning Ordinance allows, as the maximum ratio of housing units to acreage, only one unit per two acres, with the exception of CR 3 which allows one per acre if conditions allow.

In regard to these limitations, the Stratton Planning Commission finds that affordable housing could only be placed in areas that were served by municipal / community sewer and water systems. Currently all of these systems are within the boundaries of the resort. As of July 1, 1997, the entire Stratton Mountain water and sewer system is under the control and ownership of the Winhall / Stratton Fire District, a legislatively approved municipality. Recognizing these constraints, the Stratton Town Plan of 1987 directed that a new Zoning Ordinance addressing the issue of affordable housing be prepared. This issue has since been addressed. We continue to believe that our recommendation will be an ongoing, integral part of Stratton’s zoning ordinance. The following are necessary elements as printed in the current Ordinance:

**Floating Affordable Housing District**

This district has not been mapped, however, it is limited to the Commercial / Residential District CR 1 (the only district with municipal / community sewer and water systems). The density of building in this district may be increased to 5 dwelling units per acre provided that:

1. An adequate potable water supply is demonstrated and approved by the state of Vermont.
2. A wastewater system plan is approved by the state of Vermont.
3. An environmental impact statement is developed showing that the following will not be subject to negative impacts:
  - Wildlife,
  - Aquifer recharge areas,
  - Wetlands,
  - Prime agricultural soil, and

- Aesthetics quality of the landscape.
4. A buffer zone of 50 feet is maintained around the total parcel.
  5. All units are clustered so that as much open space is preserved as possible.
  6. Homeowners association bylaws have been approved by the Planning Commission.
  7. This housing shall be limited to families with low to moderate incomes as defined by the Agency of Commerce and Community Development.
  8. Homeowners in this district shall be limited to resale only to future owners in the low to moderate income brackets as defined (in 7.) above.

## **THE FUTURE**

Stratton Corporation is the largest employer with some of those employees living within the Town of Stratton and others living in surrounding towns. This issue of employee housing is critical. The Floating Affordable Housing District provides one answer. The provision for affordable housing by developers and employers will be difficult, except where wastewater treatment is already in place. The businesses should be encouraged to work with the Town in continuing efforts to provide affordable housing.

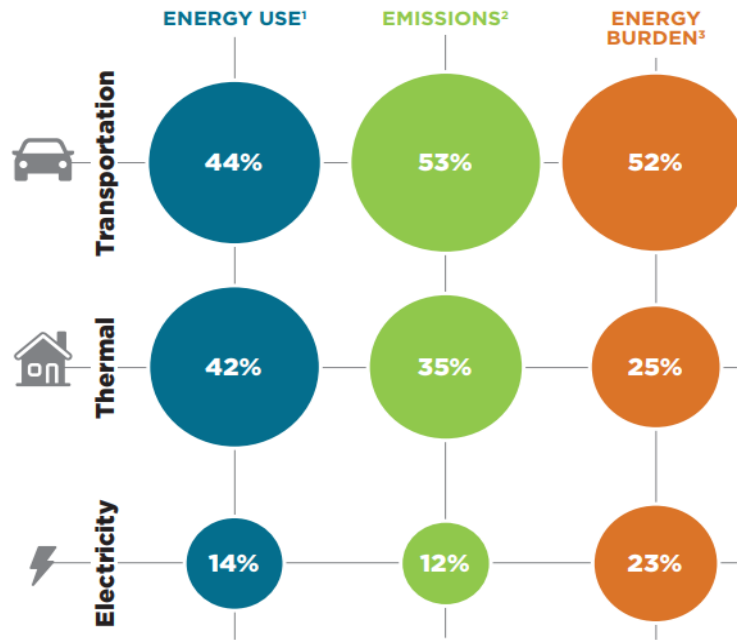
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## **ENERGY PLAN**

### **Energy Uses**

According to the Vermont Department of Public Services 2016 report *Vermont Comprehensive Energy Plan 2016*, the majority of energy consumption in Vermont derives from transportation and space heating. About half of Vermont's energy demand is met by the direct consumption of petroleum-based fuels. Of this, 33% is transportation fuels (predominantly gasoline and diesel) and 27% is heating and business processes (including distillate, natural gas, residual, propane and kerosene). Demand for total energy in Vermont continues to grow, driven largely by the pressures of population growth, economic development, and increases in vehicular travel and commuting distances.

**Figure 6 Total Energy - transportation, thermal, and electricity**



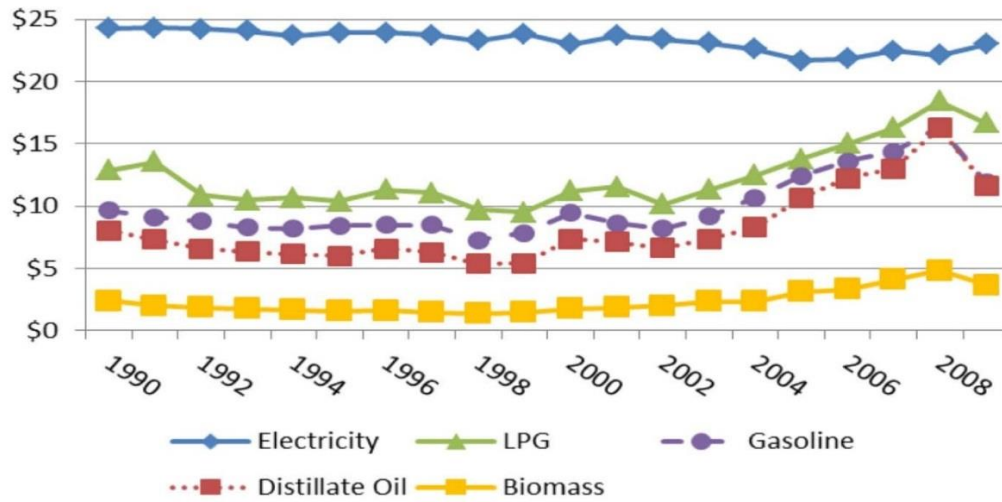
<https://www.eanvt.org/2018-progress-report/>

## Energy Costs

A price trend chart, Figure 7, is provided below to provide some background data on the increases in fuel costs from 1990 to 2008 in Vermont. It is dated, but provides useful baseline information about the relative cost of biomass. Following the chart, Table 4 and Figure 8 provide tabular and graphic comparisons of costs for various fuels in 2016.

**Figure 7 Inflation Adjusted Energy Source Prices.**

**Inflation Adjusted Energy Source Prices (\$/Million BTU)**



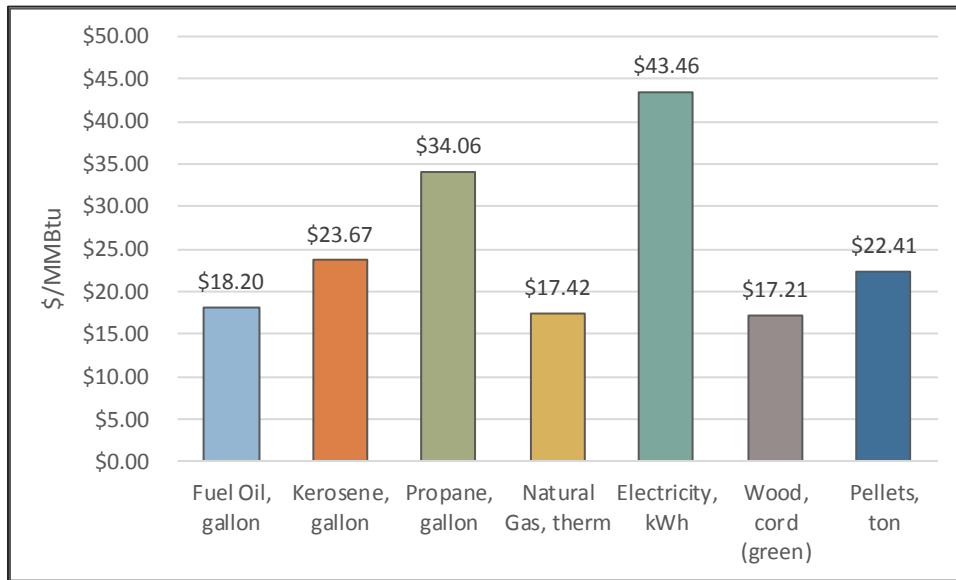
Source: Vermont Department of Public Service, Vermont Fuel Price Report, January 2011.

**Table 4 Comparing the Cost of Heating Fuels in Stratton, VT – 2016**

Comparing the Cost of Heating Fuels							
Type of Energy	Btu/unit	Typ. Effic.	\$/unit	\$/MMBtu		High Efficiency	\$/MMBtu
Fuel Oil, gallon	138,200	80%	\$2.01	\$18.20		95%	\$15.33
Kerosene, gallon	136,600	80%	\$2.59	\$23.67			
Propane, gallon	91,600	80%	\$2.50	\$34.06		95%	\$23.59
Natural Gas, therm	100,000	79%	\$1.39	\$17.42	*	95%	\$14.67
Electricity, kWh (resistive heat)	3,412	100%	\$0.15	\$43.46			
Electricity, kWh (heat pump)	3,412		\$0.15		#	240%	\$18.32
Wood, cord (green)	22,000,000	60%	\$227.14	\$17.21	^		
Pellets, ton	16,400,000	80%	\$294.00	\$22.41	^		
* The natural gas price is based on the rate effective 12/15/2015.							
# see October 2015 Fuel Price Report for discussion of heat pump coefficient of performance							
^ Wood green and Pellets updated 8/5/15							

Source: Vermont Department of Public Service, Vermont Fuel Price Report, January 2016

**Figure 8 Cost of heating fuels in VT**



Source: Vermont Department of Public Service, Vermont Fuel Price Report, January 2016

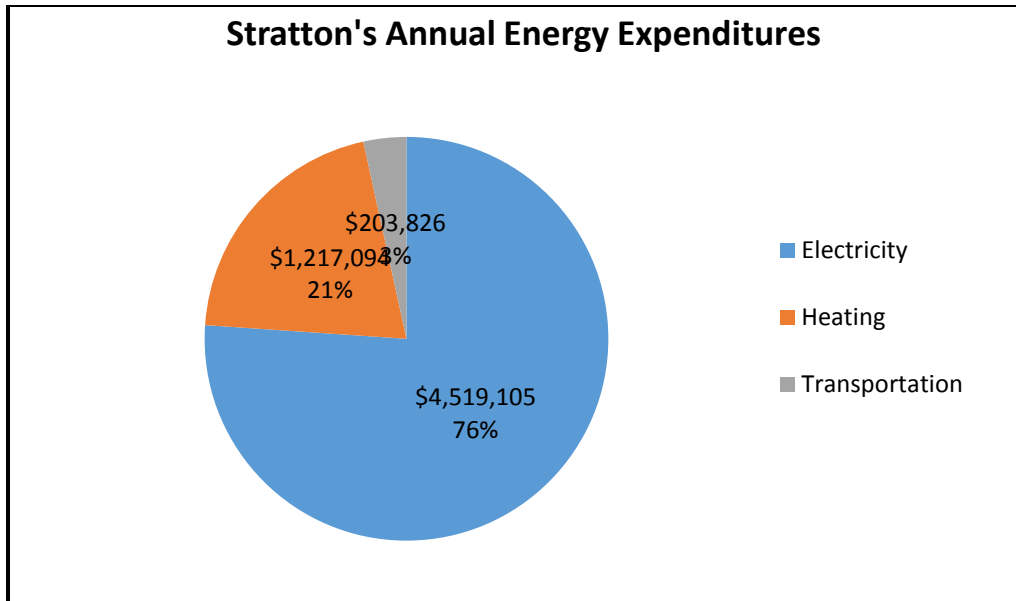
## Energy Sources

The residents of Stratton use a variety of energy sources for home heating fuel. According to 2017 American Community Survey estimates, 39.4% of all occupied housing units in Stratton were primarily heated with bottled, tank, or LP gas. Other home heating sources included fuel oil or kerosene (24.8%), wood (26.6%), electricity (7.3%), and solar energy (1.8%).

Renewable energy sources are available for use as a means of electrical generation and space heating. Solar, wood, hydro, and wind are all forms of renewable energy that can be more effectively utilized in the years ahead.

Passive solar designs and siting can increase the use of solar energy and the conservation of other heating fuels in homes and businesses. No mechanical means are employed in passive solar heating. Instead, siting and design measures, such as south facing windows, open floor plans, and ventilation are used. Photovoltaic systems, another option, can be used to convert sunlight to electricity. Under Title 21 § 266 of the Vermont State Statutes all new detached one-and two-family dwellings, multifamily and all other residential dwellings three stories or less in height, additions of 500 square feet or more, and factory built modular homes not on a permanent chassis constructed after July 1, 1997 must comply with the Vermont Residential Building Energy Standards (RBES), generally referred to as simply the Energy Code. This Energy Code is a minimum standard of energy efficiency relating to things like ventilation, appliances, insulation, and percentage of window space on the building envelope, known as the “glazing percentage. These minimum standards are supposed to be certified by the developer and the Town of Stratton should make sure these standards are duly enforced.

**Figure 9: Stratton Energy Expenditures**



Source: Efficiency Vermont and WRC, 2019

Stratton’s energy consumption does not follow the state’s normal trends. Electric is the dominant sector in the Town because 93% of the population is seasonal. Therefore, the transportation sector is only accounting for the 7% of residents and their vehicles, and the heating of the seasonal homes was an assumed 15% of a year-round residence.

## Electrical Infrastructure

Green Mountain Power provides service to Stratton. An important regional consideration is the “Southern Loop” transmission facilities, which currently operates at or near capacity much of the time. The loop consists of 75 miles of transmission lines connecting Bennington and Brattleboro with the southern Vermont ski areas between (extending as far north as Bromley). Involved Windham Region towns include Winhall, Stratton, Londonderry, Jamaica, Townshend, Newfane, Dummerston, and Brattleboro. The two major tie-ins to the loop (the Woodford Road substation in Bennington and the Vernon Road substation in Brattleboro) are distant from the areas of growing electrical demand. When either substation fails or is out of service at or near peak load conditions, the other may be unable to compensate. Transformer capacity was added at both substations in 1995, the first such improvement since the early 1970’s. Current demand suggests a need to upgrade the southern loop facilities, and anticipated future growth requires it. In anticipation of this need, utility companies (Vermont Electric Power Company - VELCO and the former Central Vermont Public Service Company - CVPS) inaugurated a major planning project that focused on identifying and implementing needed improvements to the “Southern Loop” that carries power between Brattleboro and Bennington. Some information relating to this study is provided below.

The Southern Loop subtransmission system consists of the 46 kV transmission line extending from the 115 kV substation in Bennington, Vermont to the 155 kV substation in Brattleboro, Vermont and the areas served by that line. Recently, the Southern Loop subtransmission system had only limited ability to support



increased electrical demand and was unable to withstand failures of, or to have preventive maintenance conducted on, key components at current demand levels. As the electric demand in southern Vermont grew, the ability of the Southern Loop to deliver power to all customers in all hours of the year became increasingly compromised.

An extensive planning study by CVPS, with input from VELCO, (as part of the Southern Loop Area Specific Collaborative, related to PSB Docket #7373 for the Coolidge Connector which culminated in 2009) identified five distinct root problems in Southern Vermont that affected the reliability and adequacy of service in this target area and should be resolved: These are listed below:

- 1) The then current Southern Loop system was vulnerable to an unplanned loss of a transmission line or a transformer much of the time.
- 2) The then current Brattleboro area system was vulnerable to an unplanned loss of a transmission line or a transformer 100% of this time.
- 3) The then current Southern Vermont system and the Southwestern New Hampshire system were vulnerable to a long-term outage of the T4 345/115 kV transformer at the Vermont Yankee nuclear plant (now decommissioned).
- 4) The then current Southern Vermont system would soon be unable to supply peak demand within the target area even with all facilities in service, due to demand growth.
- 5) Future problems that were related to the Southern Vermont system would soon emerge on the wider regional transmission system.

Potential solutions identified by the study tended to fall into one or more of four categories:

- 1) Adding voltage support devices such as capacitors and synchronous condensers. These devices are used to adjust voltage to acceptable levels.
- 2) Reductions in customer electric demand and usage, also referred to as Demand Side Management (DSM).
- 3) Development and installation of new electric generators that involve constructing either a relatively large power plant or dispersing smaller power plants along the Southern Loop.
- 4) Development of new transmission to add one or more new lines or substations to the existing Southern Loop subtransmission system.

Current initiatives have favored the category of voltage support devices by adding synchronous condensers to help provide more slack capacity and thus more breathing room during hours of peak demand. In 2008 the Public Service Board issued a Certificate of Public Good authorizing the installation of a 46kV electrical substation, synchronous condensers, and related equipment in Winhall. Subsequently, in 2009, the PSB authorized construction of the Coolidge Connector, a second 245kV line from Brattleboro to Cavendish, with a spur line to a new substation in Newfane connected to the Southern Loop.

## **Energy Conservation**

The State and Federal governments have far more control of energy supplies, sources, and pricing than local governments and municipalities. However, national leadership on the issue of energy conservation has been lacking and many communities have picked up the ball and been leading the way in setting efficiency goals and carbon reduction strategies. Effective land use planning is one method that communities can use to help

reduce energy consumption. Reducing automobile dependency will go a long way towards reducing transportation energy consumption. In 2010, 88 of Stratton residents commuting to work (73 %) drove alone. The Deerfield Valley Transit Authority is one option for residents who commute daily throughout the Windham Region from work to home. Commuters can use the Moover bus to get from Wilmington to Brattleboro. More locally, the Betty Boop bus provides transportation from West Wardsboro to Brattleboro two times per month. While there are no direct routes from Stratton to major commercial/business centers like Brattleboro or Bennington, commuters can still opt for a “park and ride” type option by driving some distance and then using a bus for the rest.

Effective land use planning can promote energy conservation. Concentrated development and land use patterns can reduce reliance on the automobile, vehicle miles traveled, and inherent system energy costs. Cluster development, where buildings and infrastructure (such as roads and power) are concentrated in specific areas rather than spread out, generally disturbs less land, and requires less fuel, material, and energy to both build and maintain. It also encourages people to walk, rather than drive, to nearby destinations.

PART 2 of this Plan, above, provides the Planning GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES of the Town of Stratton. GOAL 7 is directed toward energy issues.

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## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

### **THE PRESENT**

Most commercial and high density residential activity is concentrated in the growth area around Stratton Mountain Resort.

### **THE FUTURE**

More commercial activities and residential development that would support services-type businesses are encouraged in the growth area around Stratton Mountain Resort. Appropriate scale business activities are encouraged in the CR districts. The Town has created a new district CR 3 in the village. Other types of economic development, such as home-based businesses are encouraged throughout Town.

Policies, projects, and programs in support of desired economic development are provided in Part 2, above.

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## **FLOOD RESILIENCE PLAN**

### **THE PRESENT**

The Town of Stratton, much like the rest of Vermont, is no stranger to significant and damaging flooding. Ball Mountain Brook flows through the eastern side of the Town and the headwaters of Wardsboro Brook are in the southeasterly part of Town. The worst flooding in Vermont and across the region since the Flood of 1927 occurred on August 28, 2011 as the result of Tropical Storm Irene. Approximately 5-8” of rain fell in the area, on ground that was already saturated, causing extensive flooding. Due to the flooding damage to roads and infrastructure to the north, east, south, and west, Stratton was one of the thirteen towns isolated after floodwaters dissipated. Several roads and bridges were severely damaged, particularly along Mountain Road, Stratton-Arlington Road, Penny Ave., and Canedy Road.

#### **Flood Hazard & River Corridor Areas in Stratton**

The Town of Stratton’s flood hazard areas include FEMA National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) inundation floodplain, as well as VT ANR river corridor areas. The FEMA floodplain includes the floodway as well as the floodplain needed for a 1% chance annual inundation event. The river corridor protection area includes the area needed for stream meanders and erosion caused by flood events. In these areas, the lateral movement of the stream and the associated erosion (fluvial erosion hazard - FEH) is more of the threat than inundation by floodwaters. The Town of Stratton may want to consider designating additional areas outside of these defined NFIP and FEH areas as prone to flood hazards.

#### **Local Flood Hazards**

Lands adjacent to Ball Mountain Brook and Wardsboro Brook, as well as their tributaries, are subject to periodic flooding. Minor to moderate flooding on the order of every few years is a natural event in a functioning floodplain. Floodplains and river corridor areas are thus unsuitable for development because of the high loss potential for life and property.

The Town of Stratton is vulnerable to flooding, especially along Ball Mountain Brook and Wardsboro Brook. The potential for flooding in Stratton is magnified by its mountainous terrain, which increases the velocity of runoff. Narrow valleys then channel water and transform small streams into raging bodies of water. Roads, such as Mountain Road, West Jamaica Road, and Stratton-Arlington Road can be damaged during large rain events because of the steeply sloping terrain above them.

### **THE FUTURE**

#### **Minimizing Flood Hazards**

In order to minimize the effects of flooding, Stratton should look to protect its flood storage areas, as well as work to minimize runoff. Upland headwater areas should be protected from significant development to maintain their runoff storage capacity. Fortunately for Stratton, most of its upland areas are part of the

Green Mountain National Forest. Minimizing stormwater runoff through protection and construction of wetlands and less impervious cover can help to lower flood peaks downstream. This will help to protect roadways and infrastructure downstream.

## **Promoting Flood Resilience in Stratton**

This plan identifies flood hazards as the Special Flood Hazard Areas (SFHAs) shown on the NFIP Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) and identifies fluvial erosion hazard areas as those shown on the ANR River Corridor maps. Further, this Plan designates both those identified areas as areas to be protected, including floodplains, river corridors, land adjacent to streams, wetlands, and upland forests, to reduce the risk of flood damage to infrastructure and improved property. In addition, this plan incorporates by reference the town's Local Hazard Mitigation Plan approved under 44 C.F.R. § 201.6. Finally, this plan recommends the policies and strategies below to protect the designated areas to mitigate risks to public safety, critical infrastructure, historic structures, and municipal investments.

## **Flood Hazard Regulation**

Stratton's Flood Hazard regulations set the development standards required by the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). They would be strengthened by adding additional river corridor protections (FEH zones).

Future more restrictive updates to the Stratton's Flood Hazard regulations would apply only to new development and new protection areas. Existing development would be grandfathered and could continue to operate within the area, until it suffers major damage or is substantially improved, at which point it has to come into compliance with flood regulations. Potential strategies to protect Flood Hazard Areas could cover a wide range of options, including the following:

- **Increase Development Standards** – Communities can choose to increase requirements for new developments in the floodplain, while still allowing all or most forms of development. Examples include limiting fill or impervious surface and encouraging stormwater controls, such as rain gardens, to minimize flood peaks.
- **Additional River Corridor Protection** – Communities can create an area that extends beyond the mapped flood hazard areas. Often this River Corridor protection uses fluvial erosion hazard data as part of its basis, but can also include simple setbacks from rivers and streams as a way to deter development in areas that may erode in the event of severe flooding. Other locally known areas that flood can be included in these protected areas, such as confluences and gravel deposition areas.

Future revisions to the Stratton Flood Hazard regulations will require input from the community regarding the level of regulation they believe is necessary to protect citizens and their buildings from severe flood hazard events. Communities have a broad range of flexibility in which to regulate flood hazard areas. A community, for example, could prohibit commercial development in the floodplain everywhere except a village, because in some communities such a restriction would be damaging to the village center.

## **Non-regulatory approaches**

Stratton could also pursue riparian easements as a way to protect floodplains from development and

preserve flood storage. The Vermont Land Trust and Vermont River Conservancy have worked in several towns in the region to develop river corridor easements along the Saxtons River and Whetstone Brook.

## Goals

1. To protect the citizens, property, and economy of Stratton and the quality of their streams as natural and recreational resources by using sound planning practices within designated Flood Hazard Areas and beyond.

## Planning Principles, Policies, and Strategies

1. Only agriculture, recreational and open space uses should be allowed in Stratton's floodplains and/or river corridors.
2. New development within the Town's 100-year NFIP floodplain and river corridors is prohibited, excluding properly designed outbuildings and renovations that meet the requirements for Flood Hazard regulation as stipulated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (and VT ANR).
3. Ensure that any new development creates "no adverse impact" through design and mitigation measures.
4. Reduce impervious cover that leads to flash flooding, and increase retention and infiltration of rain.
5. Lessen the conflict between roads and streams by moving the roads when possible, abandoning redundant bridges, or upsizing water crossings.
6. Adopt road and bridge standards to the 50 or 100 year storm level.
7. Work with the US Forest Service to address flooding on a watershed basis.
8. Reconnect floodplains and streams through berm removal or intentionally lowering streambanks.
9. Promote emergency planning for flood response.
10. Update and re-adopt the FEMA-approved Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) every five years to ensure access to FEMA programs and funding

## Recommendations

1. The Planning Commission should strengthen Stratton's Flood Hazard regulations to mitigate risks to public safety, critical infrastructure, historic structures, and municipal investments from inundation and erosion.
2. The Planning Commission or Selectboard should work with VTrans to improve the flood capabilities of state-owned infrastructure or Town infrastructure.
3. Work with Stratton's Emergency Coordinator and Selectboard to continue to develop emergency preparedness procedures.

4. Implement mitigation actions as identified in the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan, especially for flood-prone areas.

## PART 4

# HISTORY OF THE TOWN OF STRATTON

A detailed history of Stratton was published in two volumes in 1999 / 2000 by the Town. Some interesting facts from various sources mentioned in the History are as follows:

The Town of Stratton was chartered by Benning Wentworth, Governor of New Hampshire under King George III of Great Britain and Ireland, on July 30, 1761 in sixty-nine shares containing 23,040 acres. On October 28, 1799 Stratton Gore, a strip of land about 500 yards wide, across the entire southern border of Stratton, was annexed by the Town, and then the northeast corner of Somerset (approx. two miles by two miles) was annexed in 1859. In the nineteenth century, Stratton was well known in the region as the site of a speech given by Daniel Webster to about 15,000 people gathered for a Whig convention during the presidential campaign of William Henry Harrison on July 7 and 8, 1840.

Child's *Windham County Gazetteer*, published in 1884, describes Stratton this way, "The surface of the Town is irregular and mountainous, so much so, as to be in some places unfit for habitation. The cultivated farms are mostly in the eastern and southern portions, where there are tracts of arable land that well repay the toil of the husbandman." It is only in the eastern part of the Town that settlement occurred at any time including the present.

McClellan's *Map of Windham County, Atlas Edition*, published in 1856, shows 68 homes, 4 sawmills, 4 schools, 1 blacksmith shop, 1 machine shop, 1 hotel, and 1 union church in the Town of Stratton at that time. By 1869 Beer's *Atlas of Windham County Vermont* shows 6 schools, 4 sawmills, 1 sawmill with shop, 1 sawmill with a chair shop, 1 sugar house, 1 blacksmith shop, 1 union church and 1 post office. The following businesses are listed: Rufus Lyman, manufacturer and dealer in plain lumber and eave spouting; A. H. Pike, manufacturer and dealer in "lumber, eave spouts, sap conductors & Shingles Planing and fitting to Order also Fitted Lumber Constr. on hand and under cover." Also listed is Lucius Smith, manufacturer and dealer in all kinds of "Building Lumber both Plain and Dressed, also lath, shingle, & Chair Stock". The population from the census of 1860 is given as 366 people.

Hamilton's *Windham County Gazetteer* lists the population from the 1880 census as 302. He reports that the Town "in 1882 had five school districts and four common schools employing two female teachers, to whom was paid an aggregate salary of \$303.12. There were seventy pupils attending common school, while the entire cost of the schools for the year ending October 31<sup>st</sup> was \$322.60..." The following businesses are reported: Joel F. Grout & Son's sawmill and chair stock factory in the western part of the Town, the original mill on the site having been built in 1835; R. Lyman and Son's saw mill with the capacity of turning out 5,000 feet of lumber per day, built in 1835; and Alexander H. Pike's sawmill manufacturing all kinds of lumber, shingles, and supplies with planning and matching, built in 1844.

*The Gazetteer* says, "Stratton is the only post office, it being located a little south of the center of the township. At the junction of this road and the Road from the northern part of the Town there is located a church, a hotel, and one dwelling. A little distance west of the stage line is a blacksmith shop and the post

office just mentioned, while just beyond the post office there is a cluster of about four houses. In the extreme southeastern part of Town there is a small hamlet called the Pike settlement, having been first settled by the Pike family, and has had members of that family there ever since.”

Esther Swift in *Vermont Place Names* reports that a post office opened in Stratton in 1838 and continued until 1843, closed for one year, and reopened in 1844. It closed for the last time in 1910.

She also says that the years between 1830 and 1880 were the “boom” years with timber harvesting the major activity; however, as the trees were cut the population declined. In the early years of the twentieth century the New England Power Company developed its hydroelectric system along the Deerfield River. The most northerly dam was constructed in Somerset, south of Stratton. The most northerly part of the lake that was formed is in Stratton. The New England Power Company acquired a large tract of land for this construction.

When the United States Department of Agriculture formed the Green Mountain National Forest it, too, began to acquire land in Stratton.

Eventually the forests regenerated and timber harvesting began again with paper companies buying large tracts of land. When the ski industry arrived in Stratton it brought with it residential and commercial growth as a second-home community.

Today the Town of Stratton is well known due to the Stratton Mountain Resort.



## **PART 5**

# **IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TOWN PLAN**

This Town Plan provides the framework for managing the growth of the Town of Stratton. The goals provide the long-term direction, while the policies may be either short- or long-term and address actions that need to be considered. The action items are the implementable strategies for reaching the goals and policies of the Plan, and for dealing with current problems.

Some of the goals and policies listed in the Stratton Town Plan of 2014 have been met; however, each of the items listed below should be considered by the Stratton Planning Commission, by itself or in conjunction with other Town boards.

### **Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations**

The Stratton Planning Commission has reviewed and evaluated the current zoning bylaws and subdivision regulations for compatibility with the Town Plan of 2014. Many changes that were needed have been made, including the addition of a Commercial-Residential Area, CR 3, at the intersection of Stratton-Arlington Road and West Jamaica Road. The Planning Commission will continue the process of updating the Town Plan and the land use regulations (Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations) implementing it.

### **Coordination with Neighboring Towns**

It is important that the Stratton Planning Commission work with the towns that surround Stratton to facilitate compatible growth in all these towns. It is especially important that Stratton work with the Towns of Winhall and Jamaica that border the Stratton Growth Area. The Planning Commission should monitor the impact of its growth center on the neighboring towns in terms of population growth, school costs, and housing.

### **Education**

The Town of Stratton should continue the review of its educational policies and methods of providing education for the people of Stratton.

### **Recreation**

The Town should continue to work toward greater recreational opportunities for townspeople.

## PART 6

# COMPATIBILITY

### With Other Towns:

When Vermont's Growth Management Law, Act 200, was passed in 1988, Vermont set up a system for communities to work in concert with their neighbors, and with agencies of state government, to shape the future. As envisioned, decisions on local growth issues are to be made by the local communities; decisions of regional significance are to be made by the region's communities acting in concert. Town Plans are to be compatible with the regional plan and compatible with approved plans of other municipalities in the region.

**Winhall:** (Town Plan adopted 11/2/16) Winhall is located north of Stratton and can be accessed via Stratton Mountain Access Road and Pikes Falls Road. Along the northern border of Stratton, the Stratton Mountain Resort complex straddles the Towns of Winhall and Stratton, with each having roughly 50% of the total area. Much of the land use that abuts Stratton to the west of the Resort is classified as Forest District. This is National Forest Land which should be withheld from intensive development. The area on the eastern border between Winhall and Stratton is in the Recreation and Residential- Districts which encompass the Stratton Mountain Resort area. The Town Plans are compatible in these respects.

**Jamaica:** (Town Plan adopted 11/13/17) Jamaica is located northeast of Stratton and can be accessed via Pikes Falls Road or west Jamaica Road. Jamaica has three land use districts which abut Stratton; they are the Conservation District, the Rural Resource Area District, and the Residential Area District. Jamaica's Conservation and Rural Resource Area districts are meant to encourage continued use of lands for forestry, agriculture, wildlife, and recreation. Residential Area lands do not contain significant amounts of high value natural resource lands, have been able to accommodate moderate density development, and should be developed for residential, commercial, recreational or open space uses as long as they relate to the primarily residential character of the area. This is compatible with Stratton's abutting land use residential district which permits rural residential development and forest conservation, as well as agriculture. Stratton has encouraged property owners to preserve the Sage Hill bear travel corridor along Kidder Brook and 500+ acres owned by Meadowsend Timberland, LLC along the Jamaica border

**Wardsboro:** (Town Plan adopted 7/9/19) Wardsboro is located southeast of Stratton and can be accessed via VT Route 100, the Stratton-Arlington Road, or Canedy Road. One of the Stratton Conservation districts directly abuts Conservation lands in Wardsboro. Other land uses in the western portion of Wardsboro which directly abut Stratton are Rural Residential, Resource Residential, and Conservation. These districts are compatible with Stratton's Residential District, which permits rural residential development, as well as forestry conservation and agriculture, under the assumption that densities remain low and the areas abutting Wardsboro's Conservation area remain primarily for forestry conservation usage. In addition, approximately two-thirds of the Town of Wardsboro is located within the GMNF Proclamation Boundary. If Stratton were to allow for growing residential development along the areas of Wardsboro identified as Conservation there would be a potential incompatibility.

**Dover:** (Town Plan adopted 5/3/16) Dover lies to the south and southeast of Stratton and can be accessed via VT Route 100. The Route 100 corridor in Dover is classified as Productive Residential, allowing for

moderate density residential development. Stratton has a variety of land use classifications on the border including: Conservation, Public, and Commercial/Residential (a very small and already built out district). The Commercial/Residential area proposes to allow planned residential development and commercial uses as conditional uses. Depending on how development occurs in this area it may conflict with the Town of Dover's desire to restrict dense development so that it does not extend all the way up Route 100. While Planned Unit Development can conserve open space and natural resource areas by clustering building units, if the area sees rapid residential development in the years ahead, this may be incompatible growth. If however, the area abutting Dover is used more as a working landscape then the land use would not be in conflict. This is an area that Stratton and Dover should actively discuss.

**Somerset:** Somerset does not have a Town Plan

**Sunderland:** (8/20/18) The Town of Sunderland is in the jurisdiction of the Bennington County Regional Commission and lies west of Stratton. The area of land which borders Stratton is a part of the Green Mountain National Forest and is maintained by the Forest Service. The land uses are compatible since they cover a large area of conservation. Combined, this creates a large area of unfragmented land. This is in line with Stratton's Town Plan Policy under Natural and Historic Features of "Natural areas are places of unique scientific or educational value. These places are not necessarily scenic or historically significant, but rather, they are primarily ecological reserves whose unique qualities distinguish them from the general landscape. Unique natural areas should be protected from uses that would have an adverse impact on them"

## **With the Windham Regional Plan**

The Windham Regional Plan is intended to provide guidelines for the planning and coordination of development which will allow for a shared vision of the region's future that provides for a high quality of life, defined as a composite of our economic, social, cultural, and ecological well-being. For the most part The Stratton Town Plan is compatible with the land use and development goals of the Regional Plan

There is one exception between the proposed land use plan and the Windham Regional Plan. The *Commercial-Residential 2* land in the southeast portion of Stratton allows for planned unit development and denser development in general. CR 2 consists of a group of seven lots, totaling 12.29 acres, the largest of which is the Triple Tree Lodging. There are currently eight structures in this small district. The designation is there to reflect what already exists there. This is in contrast with the Regional Plan which identifies the land use a *Productive Rural*. Productive Rural lands are "low density and very low density residential areas containing land-based resources that, when in productive use, contribute to the working landscape and have significant economic value". This density issue is similar to the one between the land use differences as spelled out in the Dover and Stratton Town Plans. Stratton Town officials should work actively with neighbors and with the Windham Regional Commission to assure that future development is in line with regional goals and policies.

## PART 7

# DEFINITIONS

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**ACT:** This refers to the Vermont Planning and Development Act, 24 Vermont Statutes Annotated, Chapter 117, in effect as of July 1, 1990.

**AGRICULTURAL USE:** Land used for raising livestock, and / or for agricultural or forestry products. This includes farm structures for the storage of agricultural equipment, or for accessory use, such as the sale of agricultural products raised on the property.

**ANIMAL HABITAT:** The place where an animal naturally lives. It provides food, cover, water, and space.

**AQUIFER:** Water-bearing stratum of permeable rock, sand and gravel.

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL DIGS:** Site of a study of material remains of past human life and activities.

**BUILDING:** A structure having a roof supported by columns or walls and intended for the shelter or enclosure of persons or animals.

**BYLAWS:** Zoning regulations, subdivision regulations, or an official map adopted under the authority of 24 V.S.A., Chapter 117.

**CLUSTER DEVELOPMENT:** Site planning that provides for residential or commercial units on lots which are smaller in size than required by Zoning, but when added to their proportionate area of common land available to them, will equal or exceed in size requirements of the district(s) in which they are located.

**COMMERCIAL ANIMALS:** Animals kept, used, or raised for profit, such as those kept in kennels, or riding / boarding stables. This does not include animals used for wool, meat, or food products.

**DEER WINTERING YARDS:** An area used perennially by white-tailed deer in winter. It is characterized by soft wood growth on a south facing slope with available browse and water.

**DENSITY OF DEVELOPMENT:** The density of development in a residential site is the number of dwelling units per acre. Historically from the time of its first zoning ordinance, Stratton has used gross land area in determining density of development, by: (a) gross land area, and (b) net land area. In the method Stratton uses (Gross Land Area) the density of development is defined by using all the land area included in the site or that portion of the site being donated to a particular use. In the case of the Net Land Area method, the entire site, less specified undevelopable land such as roads and parks, is used.

**DEVELOPMENT:** A change or modification of Use of lands or structures, such as: the division of a parcel into two or more parcels; Or, the construction, reconstruction, conversion, structural alteration, relocation, or enlargement of any building or structure; Or any mining, excavation, or landfill.

**ELEMENT:** Component of a plan.

**FLOOD HAZARD AREA:** Areas of special flood hazard and river corridors as defined in Title 10.

- 10 V.S.A. §752 Definitions (3): "*Flood hazard area*" shall have the same meaning as "*area of special flood hazard*" under 44 C.F.R. § 59.1. "*Area of special flood hazard* is the land in the [flood plain](#) within a [community](#) subject to a 1 percent or greater chance of flooding in any given year."
- 10 V.S.A. §752 Definitions (11): "*River corridor*" means the land area adjacent to a river that is required to accommodate the dimensions, slope, planform, and buffer of the naturally stable channel and that is necessary for the natural maintenance or natural restoration of a dynamic equilibrium condition, as that term is defined in section 1422 of this title, and for minimization of fluvial erosion hazards, as delineated by the Agency of Natural Resources in accordance with river corridor protection procedures.

**FLOODWAY:** The channel of a river or other water course, including the adjacent land area that must be reserved in order to discharge the base flood without cumulatively increasing the water surface elevation more than one foot.

**FLOODWAY FRINGE:** The remaining portion of the hazard area excluding the floodway.

**GROWTH CENTER:** Portions of a town or towns where a concentration of development exists, where there is space available for future growth and development, and where services, facilities and utilities are available.

**HISTORIC SITE:** Any site or structure, district, or archaeological landmark which has been officially included in the National Register of Historic Places, and / or the State Register of Historic Places, or which is established by testimony of the Vermont Advisory Commission on Historic Preservation as being historically significant (10 VSA 600.9): and those identified by the Town.

**INFRASTRUCTURE:** The basic facilities, equipment, and installations needed for the growth and functionality of a municipality.

**INTENSIVE DEVELOPMENT:** Intensive development is development at a density greater than one dwelling unit per two acres, determined by using the gross land area method.

**LEGISLATIVE BODY:** Selectboard, in the case of a town.

**Mixed Use Development:** A single building containing more than one type of use or a single development of more than one building and use, where the different types of land use are in close proximity, planned as a unified complimentary whole, and functionally integrated to the use of shared vehicular and pedestrian access and parking areas.

**MOBILE HOME:** A trailer used as a permanent dwelling connected to utilities, and designed without a permanent foundation.

**MOBILE HOME PARK:** An area set aside for mobile homes.

**MOTOR VEHICLE:** An automotive vehicle not operated on rails; one with rubber tires for use on highways.

**MUNICIPALITY:** A town.

**NATURAL AREA:** Areas characterized by native plants, animals, and significant physical features. These areas may have ecological, educational, scientific, scenic, and / or contemplative value.

**PERSON:** An individual corporation, partnership, association, or any other incorporated or unincorporated organization or group.

**TOWN PLAN:** A plan adopted under Section 4385 of Title 24, V.S.A. Chapter 117.

**PLANNING COMMISSION:** Specifically, this is a Planning Commission for a municipality, created under subchapter 2 of Title 24, V.S.A. Chapter 117.

**PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT (PUD):** An area of land, controlled by a landowner, to be developed as a single entity for multiple dwelling or commercial units and / or industrial uses, where individual units may not comply with the regulations established under the provisions of the Zoning Bylaws, but when taken as a whole, the development shall comply with the Zoning Bylaws.

**PREFABRICATED HOUSE:** A house which has standard parts that have been fabricated in a factory, so that construction consists of assemblage of these parts.

**PUBLIC ROAD:** Public way or proposed public way for vehicular traffic, which affords the principal means of access to abutting properties.

**RENEWABLE ENERGY SOURCE:** Energy available for collection or conversion from direct sunlight, wind, running water, organically derived from fuels including wood, agricultural sources, waste materials, and waste heat.

**RURAL TOWN:** A town having a population of less than 2,500 persons as indicated by the latest Census.

**SHALL:** An action is mandated.

**SHOULD:** An action is encouraged.

**STRUCTURE:** An assembly of material for occupancy or use, including, but not limited to, a building, mobile home, trailer, billboard, sign, wall, or fence, except a wall or fence on an operating farm.

**WETLAND:** An area that is inundated by surface or ground water with frequency sufficient to support vegetation or aquatic life that depend on saturated or seasonally saturated soil conditions for growth and reproduction. Such areas include, but are not limited to, marshes, sloughs, potholes, fens, bogs, ponds, river and lake overflows and mudflats, but excluding areas that grow food or crops in connection with farming activities.

**PART 8**

**MAPS**

Existing Land Use

Transportation and Community Facilities

Significant Habitats

Proposed Land Use