

PART 4. POLICIES TO GUIDE OUR FUTURE DECISIONS

CHAPTER 4A. RESOURCE PROTECTION

- POLICY A-1.** Pursue land use planning and regulatory approaches that will minimize the fragmentation, degradation or destruction of working land, important wildlife habitat, wetlands, floodplains and significant natural communities.
- POLICY A-2.** Pursue land use planning and regulatory approaches that will protect water quality and prevent the degradation of water resources.
- POLICY A-3.** Preserve or restore naturally vegetated buffers along all our streams and rivers.
- POLICY A-4.** Support the work of the watershed organizations working in Moretown to enhance water quality, stabilize our rivers and streams, and restore riparian and aquatic habitat.
- POLICY A-5.** Pursue land use planning and regulatory approaches that will protect and enhance our working farm and forest land, rural character and scenic resources.
- POLICY A-6.** Support landowners and conservation organizations seeking to permanently conserve working lands or open space in Moretown through the donation, sale and/or purchase of property or development rights.
- POLICY A-7.** Maintain existing public land as a community resource.
- POLICY A-8.** Encourage the appropriate maintenance, preservation and use of historic structures.
- POLICY A-9.** Recognize and appreciate the role of historic structures and settlement patterns in creating our community's character and documenting our heritage.
- POLICY A-10.** Discourage demolishing and encourage preserving and reusing historic structures.
- POLICY A-11.** Support the goals and objectives identified in the *Mad River Valley Corridor Management Plan*.
- POLICY A-12.** Pursue land use planning and regulatory approaches that will protect scenic views by maintaining open land.
- POLICY A-13.** Discourage development, including energy projects, from taking high quality farmland out of agricultural production.

- POLICY A-14.** Pursue land use planning and regulatory mechanisms that will minimize and mitigate visual and ecological impacts resulting from development in high elevation areas, on ridgelines and on steep slopes.
- POLICY A-15.** Prohibit land disturbance and building on severely steep slopes (grades of 25% or more) except for limited modifications or construction necessary for development to occur outside the steep area.
- POLICY A-16.** Prohibit large-scale development, including electric transmission projects, that would involve:
- Significant land disturbance in areas with slopes of 25% or greater.
 - Clearing or development that would have a significant adverse impact on the scenic character of the Route 100B viewshed (based on the scenic assessment included in the *Mad River Valley Corridor Management Plan*).
- POLICY A-17.** Prohibit telecommunication and energy generation projects that would involve:
- Structures with heights greater than 125 feet.
 - Construction of project elements at elevations above 1,500 feet.
 - Significant land disturbance in areas with slopes of 25% or greater.
 - Operational noise levels above the then current World Health Organization standards.
 - Clearing or development that would have a significant adverse impact on the scenic character of the Route 100B viewshed (based on the scenic assessment included in the *Mad River Valley Corridor Management Plan*).
- POLICY A-18.** Support businesses that make sustainable economic use of our local resources including agricultural, forest, scenic and recreation resources.
- POLICY A-19.** Encourage compliance with state and local anti-idling laws and policies.

CHAPTER 4B. LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT

- POLICY B-1.** Pursue land use planning and regulatory approaches that will maintain the relatively slow rate of growth and change typical of a rural Vermont town, generally consistent with our recent average annual growth.
- POLICY B-2.** Pursue land use planning and regulatory approaches that will protect and build upon our historic settlement pattern, including maintaining Moretown village as the civic center of our community and establishing a better-integrated commercial and residential center in North Moretown.
- POLICY B-3.** Pursue planning and design strategies that focus on using land efficiently to reduce energy consumption such as:
- Compact development patterns rather than rural sprawl.
 - Pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use commercial centers rather than auto-oriented, single-use highway commercial strips.
- POLICY B-4.** Endorse the continued operation of Fairground Apartments as permanently affordable housing for low-income seniors and people with disabilities.
- POLICY B-5.** Endorse projects, programs and organizations that would preserve/create permanently affordable housing that is/would be compatible with our small town character.
- POLICY B-6.** Encourage affordable and senior housing to be developed in or near areas where residents would have greater access to transit and/or be able to walk to nearby destinations for basic goods and services.
- POLICY B-7.** Consider incentives within our zoning regulations for projects that will create affordable housing, senior housing, accessible housing, smaller homes and/or highly energy-efficient homes.
- POLICY B-8.** Continue to allow for a range of housing types to be built in Moretown while maintaining our small town character.
- POLICY B-9.** Encourage compact development residential patterns and building types that facilitate efficient use of land and preserve open space.
- POLICY B-10.** Pursue land use planning and regulatory approaches that will protect the scenic and rural character of the Route 100B corridor outside Moretown village.
- POLICY B-11.** Pursue land use planning and regulatory approaches that limit development in remote areas of town not accessible from Class 3 or better town roads or state highways.
- POLICY B-12.** Encourage economic development opportunities that will complement our rural character and quality of life.
- POLICY B-13.** Encourage new or expanded tourist-oriented businesses such as lodging, eateries, recreation, and artists and craftspeople.
- POLICY B-14.** Encourage new or expanded businesses that provide places for residents to shop and dine locally, particularly within Moretown village and North Moretown.

CHAPTER 4C. RESILIENCY, SUSTAINABILITY AND ADAPTATION

- POLICY C-1.** Support efforts to complete geomorphic assessments, assessments of all stream crossings (bridges and culverts) and river corridor (erosion hazard) delineations for all our rivers and major tributary streams.
- POLICY C-2.** Avoid locating new buildings, particularly residences, within flood and other known hazard areas.
- POLICY C-3.** Identify properties located in the flood hazard and fluvial erosion areas of Moretown.
- POLICY C-4.** Explore participation in the FEMA Community Rating System (CRS) in order to reduce the cost of flood insurance for property owners in Moretown and to expand the town's ability to access state and federal funding for flood mitigation and recovery.
- POLICY C-1.** Promote energy-efficient and environmentally sensitive site planning and building methods that take advantage of renewable energy including:
- Subdivisions and buildings located, oriented and designed for solar access.
 - Subdivision and site designs incorporating energy efficient landscaping and natural ventilation.
- POLICY C-2.** Encourage the generation of energy from renewable resources for on-site use.
- POLICY C-3.** Consider electric or alternative fuel options when purchasing new or replacement municipal vehicles and equipment.
- POLICY C-4.** Consider use of municipal/school land and buildings, or other shared sites, for community-scale solar energy generation, particularly projects are economically viable without significant subsidies or incentives.
- POLICY C-5.** Support the sustainable harvesting of timber and the conservation of forestlands in Moretown.
- POLICY C-6.** Support efforts to expand the economic viability of farm and forestry enterprises in the town and region.
- POLICY C-7.** Encourage new or expanded businesses that produce local and sustainable food, farm and forest products.
- POLICY C-8.** Support the continued operation and growth of the farmers' market.
- POLICY C-9.** Support efforts to increase purchases of local food and other farm/forest products by businesses and institutions in the town and region.
- POLICY C-10.** Support entrepreneurship and business creation by town residents.

CHAPTER 4D. INFRASTRUCTURE AND TRANSPORTATION

- POLICY D-1.** Continue to maintain town roads and transportation infrastructure in a manner that is cost-effective over the long-term, improves safety for all roadway users, incorporates complete streets principles, and protects rural and scenic character.
- POLICY D-2.** Pursue land use planning and regulatory approaches that result in a pattern and density of development that can be supported by our existing transportation infrastructure without requiring costly upgrades or reducing the rural and scenic character of our road corridors.
- POLICY D-3.** Maintain our gravel roads and do not pave them unless it becomes necessary for cost-effective maintenance or to address a specific safety concern.
- POLICY D-4.** Follow maintenance practices on the town's rural and scenic roads as recommended in Appendix C of *Designating Scenic Roads – A Vermont Field Guide*, and in accordance with state guidelines and best practices.
- POLICY D-5.** Encourage land use patterns and transportation infrastructure that support alternative modes of travel including transit, carpooling, bicycling and walking.
- POLICY D-6.** Maintain town control of Class 4 roads and legal trails for sustainable recreational use.
- POLICY D-7.** Prohibit the extension of existing town roads, the upgrading of Class 4 roads or legal trails for year-round vehicular use, and the town taking over private roads except when such an action would have significant and broad public benefit.
- POLICY D-8.** Support more convenient access to transit, bicycle paths and carpooling for residents in all areas of town.
- POLICY D-9.** Advocate for the timely replacement of the state's bridge on Route 100B south of Moretown village, and for the new bridge to be designed and constructed to minimize flooding hazards, to serve as an attractive gateway to our community, to slow and calm traffic entering the village, and to safely accommodate all roadway users.
- POLICY D-10.** Support the intersection, pedestrian and access management improvements needed to accommodate future business growth and development in North Moretown at the Route 100 and Route 2 intersection, including consideration of reconstructing the intersection as a roundabout.
- POLICY D-11.** Support the availability of affordable broadband and cell phone service town wide that is upgraded as technology advances.

CHAPTER 4E. COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

- POLICY E-1.** Pursue land use planning and regulatory approaches that will result in a pattern, scale and rate of development that will not exceed our ability to provide town services and facilities in a cost-effective manner that is affordable for taxpayers.
- POLICY E-2.** Ensure that the cost of any new, expanded or upgraded infrastructure needed to serve new development is privately funded and not placed on taxpayers.
- POLICY E-3.** Seek smaller, simpler or less expensive solutions to meet infrastructure needs rather than building new or significantly expanding existing infrastructure.
- POLICY E-4.** Improve the energy efficiency of municipal buildings, vehicles and operations.
- POLICY E-5.** Support programs like the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program and the Weatherization Assistance Program that help low-income residents reduce their energy costs.
- POLICY E-6.** Maintain quality and cost-effective options for providing residents with emergency medical response and transport services.
- POLICY E-7.** Support efforts to regionalize the provision of community services and to share facilities, equipment and manpower with neighboring municipalities to reduce municipal expenditures.
- POLICY E-8.** Continue to support regional nonprofit organizations that provide important health, social welfare, educational, recreation and other community services to town residents.
- POLICY E-9.** Maintain existing public access and recreational areas in town.
- POLICY E-10.** Seek opportunities to expand public access to the Mad River, Winooski River, and other recreation resources in town.
- POLICY E-11.** Support the continued operation of Moretown Elementary School and its role as a center of community life, while urging state and school officials and administrators to pursue strategies that would stabilize or reduce education costs for town taxpayers.
- POLICY E-12.** Support programs in our schools that link students and local businesspeople, creating benefits for both.
- POLICY E-13.** Support efforts to offer affordable, quality childcare services for all Moretown families, including the continuation of childcare, pre-school, after-school and summer programs at Moretown Elementary School.

CHAPTER 4F. ADMINISTRATION AND GOVERNANCE

- POLICY F-1.** Provide opportunities for residents to have input at every stage of our town planning and decision-making processes, preferably going beyond minimum, statutory requirements and providing multiple avenues for people to participate.
- POLICY F-2.** Continue to have our town planning and decision-making processes occur in an open, public environment, and to use a variety of media to inform residents about town issues.
- POLICY F-3.** Continue to regularly review our town planning, policy and regulatory documents and update them when necessary to address changing circumstances.
- POLICY F-4.** Continue to participate in the National Flood Insurance Program.
- POLICY F-5.** Seek alternative funding strategies and mechanisms to reduce the municipal and educational property tax burden on Moretown landowners.
- POLICY F-6.** Support and publicize programs that reward energy conservation rather than consumption.
- POLICY F-7.** Support and publicize programs that assist building owners with energy audits, weatherization and other efficiency upgrades.
- POLICY F-8.** Increase residents' awareness of efficiency programs and incentives.
- POLICY F-9.** Require a host town agreement for any large-scale commercial or industrial enterprise proposing to locate or expand in Moretown.
- POLICY F-10.** Ensure that our zoning regulations and development review decisions are compatible with the policies expressed in this plan.
- POLICY F-11.** Provide a clear and straightforward permitting and regulatory review process for new and expanding development.

CHAPTER 4G. REGIONAL COORDINATION AND COOPERATION

- POLICY G-1.** Continue active participation in the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission in order to improve regional coordination and cooperation and to advocate for our town's interests in regional and state planning and decision-making.
- POLICY G-2.** Continue active participation in the Mad River Resource Management Alliance as a means of efficiently providing solid waste planning as required by state law and ensuring residents have convenient and affordable access to solid waste services and facilities.
- POLICY G-3.** Provide neighboring towns with an opportunity to comment when our plans or decisions have the potential to have impacts beyond town boundaries.
- POLICY G-4.** Participate in regional and state energy programs and partnerships.
- POLICY G-5.** Support the provision of alternative fuel and electric vehicle infrastructure throughout the region.
- POLICY G-6.** Support the efforts of local, regional and state organizations and agencies to expand trail systems and improve road corridors to safely accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists in Moretown.
- POLICY G-7.** Participate in regional and state transportation planning programs and partnerships.
- POLICY G-8.** Be actively involved in the planning and design of any state transportation projects in Moretown and advocate for such projects to be compatible with the policies expressed in this plan, particularly the preservation of our rural and scenic character.
- POLICY G-9.** Participate in regional and state economic development programs and partnerships.

PART 5. ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE OUR VISION AND GOALS

CHAPTER 5A. CONSERVING OUR RESOURCES AND MAINTAINING RURAL CHARACTER

- ACTION A-1.** Complete the Phase 2 geomorphic assessment for the Mad River and its tributaries.
- ACTION A-2.** Initiate a public process to assess whether to revise our flood hazard regulations to include erosion hazard areas once the state releases river corridor maps for the rivers and tributary streams in town.
- ACTION A-3.** Revise our zoning regulations to increase the minimum setback and buffer requirement from rivers and streams to at least 50 feet, and incorporate more specific standards with regard to the removal of natural vegetation from riparian buffers.
- ACTION A-4.** Partner with conservation organizations and state agencies to inventory and study wildlife habitat and travel corridors in Moretown to provide the information needed to better protect these resources.
- ACTION A-5.** Conduct a scenic resource inventory on town roads similar to the scenic assessment completed along the Route 100B corridor as part of the Scenic Byway designation.
- ACTION A-6.** Adopt management guidelines to protect the scenic character of town roads, including maintaining our gravel roads.
- ACTION A-7.** Revise our zoning regulations to include specific standards for outdoor lighting, including requiring use of fully-shielded light fixtures.
- ACTION A-8.** Incorporate specific provisions into our zoning regulations and adopt a policy for town roads that would prohibit installation of streetlights in the rural areas of town except where lighting in a specific location is necessary for public safety, and that would require use of downcast, shielded and energy-efficient fixtures.
- ACTION A-9.** Incorporate specific provisions into our zoning regulations to minimize disturbance and establish responsible development practices in areas with moderately to severely steep slopes, particularly addressing erosion control and stormwater management best practices.
- ACTION A-10.** Revise our zoning regulations to establish minimum standards for erosion control and stormwater management, especially for smaller sites and projects that are exempt from state permitting.
- ACTION A-11.** Incorporate provisions for protecting groundwater resources into our zoning regulations, particularly specific standards for how land within mapped source water protection areas for community water supplies may be used in order to prevent the contamination of drinking water.
- ACTION A-12.** Maintain and abide by the resource extraction provisions within our zoning regulations in order to ensure: that any future extraction operations will be responsibly planned, carried out and reclaimed; and that extraction will not reduce quality of life or environmental health.

CHAPTER 5B. FOSTERING APPROPRIATE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

- ACTION B-1.** Develop growth management strategies to address the cumulative impacts of development that would be implemented if the rate of growth increases above historic averages.
- POLICY B-2.** Review the state's river corridor mapping when it becomes available and consider expanding our flood hazard regulations to include any additional mapped areas.
- POLICY B-3.** Incorporate guidelines for passive solar siting, landscaping and building design and energy efficiency into our zoning regulations.
- POLICY B-4.** Revise the parking standards within our zoning regulations to prevent construction of excess parking, incentivize shared parking and access, and ensure parking areas are located, designed and landscaped to enhance rather than detract from the character of the property.
- ACTION B-5.** Update the provisions for accessory dwelling units within our zoning regulations to fully comply with state law and continue to provide flexibility for size and occupancy of accessory dwelling units.
- ACTION B-6.** Enact a PACE (Property Assessed Clean Energy) District to provide homeowners access to capital for energy improvements in collaboration with the Moretown Energy Group.
- ACTION B-7.** Establish an energy resources section on the town website to assist property owners with researching and assessing their options for conservation, efficiency and renewable generation in collaboration with the Moretown Energy Group.
- ACTION B-8.** Adjust the areas of town zoned for moderate to high density residential development based on the land use recommendations made in this plan, availability and capability of land, proximity to infrastructure, and natural hazards and constraints.
- POLICY B-9.** Adjust the areas of town zoned for commercial, industrial and mixed uses based on the land use recommendations made in this plan, existing development patterns, availability and capability of land, proximity to infrastructure, and natural hazards and constraints.
- POLICY B-10.** Incorporate specific standards for building and site design in our zoning regulations within Moretown village and North Moretown based on the recommendations made in this plan that will result in a high-quality, pedestrian-friendly and attractive built environment.
- POLICY B-11.** Incorporate performance standards for nonresidential uses into our zoning regulations to protect our rural character and quality of life for nearby residents.
- POLICY B-12.** Revise our zoning regulations to better protect rural character and open space as recommended in this plan.
- POLICY B-13.** Incorporate specific standards in our zoning regulations to address rural enterprises such as farm- and forest-based tourism, farm- and forest-based education, direct marketing of farm and forest products, manufacturing of value-added farm and forest products, and processing of farm and forest products as recommended in this plan.

CHAPTER 5C. PARTICIPATING EFFECTIVELY AT THE STATE AND REGIONAL LEVEL

- ACTION C-1.** Participate in the state’s Act 250 permitting process for development projects in or affecting Moretown to ensure that decisions will be compatible with the policies expressed in this plan and will protect the overall health of our environment, economy and community.
- ACTION C-2.** Participate in the state’s Section 248 permitting process for energy generation and transmission projects in or affecting Moretown and seek to ensure that decisions will be compatible with the policies expressed in this plan and will protect the overall health of our environment, economy and community.
- ACTION C-3.** Revise our flood hazard area regulations as needed to remain consistent with the state’s model regulations.
- ACTION C-4.** Participate in Mad River Valley initiatives related to housing, economic development, recreation, watershed conservation and the local food system.
- ACTION C-5.** Coordinate transportation planning and improvements at the local, regional and state level, including through active participation in the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission’s Transportation Advisory Committee.
- ACTION C-6.** Work with the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation to update the survey of historic sites and structures in Moretown.
- ACTION C-7.** Seek state Village Center designation for Moretown village, which among other benefits would make owners of income-producing property eligible for tax credits when they invest in building improvements.

CHAPTER 5D. IMPROVING OUR INFRASTRUCTURE, FACILITIES AND SERVICES

- ACTION D-8.** Fully implement the sidewalk plan for Moretown village and call upon the state to construct planned pedestrian and bicycle improvements in North Moretown.
- ACTION D-9.** Work with VTrans to improve the safety of the Route 100B and Moretown Mountain Road intersection and implement the recommendations of the 2009 road safety audit.
- ACTION D-10.** Revise our zoning regulations to incorporate access management provisions for both new and previously developed sites, particularly along the state highway corridors.
- ACTION D-11.** Identify demand and potential locations for park-and-ride lots in Moretown.
- ACTION D-12.** Establish a flood resources section on the town website to assist property owners with finding information about flood mapping, insurance, regulations, mitigation and recovery.
- ACTION D-13.** Revise our zoning regulations to incorporate specific standards for meeting emergency service needs including adequate access for emergency vehicles, pull-offs, turnarounds, provision of water for firefighting, etc.
- ACTION D-14.** Request that the Selectboard periodically hold a meeting of first responders, emergency management chairperson, highway department, town health officer, planning commission and the zoning administrator to discuss current status and trends such as demand for emergency services and availability of volunteers, disaster response and hazard mitigation planning, and development activity to aid the town with planning to meet emergency response needs. Incorporate recommendations into the town's *Hazard Mitigation Plan* as appropriate.
- ACTION D-15.** Request that the School Board hold an annual meeting of school administrators, school board members, the planning commission and the zoning administrator to review statistics such as school enrollment, education costs, demographic, and residential permits to aid the town and school with pursuing policies that will support and enhance the viability of our elementary school.
- ACTION D-16.** Incorporate provisions within our zoning regulations to specifically authorize consideration of the impact of proposed development on public facilities, services and infrastructure during the review and permitting process, and to establish mechanisms that would require developers to pay any costs of new, expanded or upgraded facilities, services or infrastructure.
- ACTION D-17.** Seek grant funding to conduct a study to inventory and assess the capability of soils on undeveloped land in and around Moretown village to accommodate shared or community wastewater systems.

- ACTION D-18.** Provide information to residents about testing private drinking water supplies and maintaining private septic systems through the town website, and to landowners who apply for a zoning permit.
- ACTION D-19.** Prioritize and implement the improvements recommended in the previously completed municipal building energy audits, and incorporate major projects into our capital budget and program.
- ACTION D-20.** Prepare a street and municipal lighting plan that would offer prioritized recommendations for:
- Removing unneeded lights.
 - Placing lights on timers.
 - Using solar activated lights.
 - Upgrading inefficient fixtures.
 - Replacing, modifying or adjusting fixtures to minimize light pollution and sky glow.
 - Locating lights where needed for public safety.
- ACTION D-21.** Assess the feasibility of using existing town land or buildings for a net-metered community solar system to provide electricity to municipal/school facilities and potentially to participating private partners depending on the potential capacity of the system.
- ACTION D-22.** Implement the policies and projects recommended in the Forest Management Plan for the land behind Moretown Elementary School.
- ACTION D-23.** Maintain a list of local businesses and services (including home businesses) on the town website.

CHAPTER 5E. BUILDING CAPACITY FOR GOOD LOCAL GOVERNANCE

- ACTION E-1. Maintain a current capital budget and program that is compatible with the policies expressed in this plan.
- ACTION E-2. Regularly review the town's adopted financial policies and update as necessary to meet the town's needs and follow best practices recommended by the Vermont League of Cities and Towns.
- ACTION E-3. Revise the municipal purchasing policy to consider the life-cycle cost of purchases.
- ACTION E-4. Revise the municipal purchasing policy to include buy-local provisions.
- ACTION E-5. Prepare a cost-benefit analysis and calculate the payback period for major municipal projects and purchases.
- ACTION E-6. Adopt and follow a long-term policy and plan for maintaining town roads.
- ACTION E-7. Adopt minimum road standards for both town and private roads based on recommended state standards.
- ACTION E-8. Revise our zoning regulations with clear standards and processes that will create greater certainty and consistency in decisions, and reduce delays in permitting and development review.
- ACTION E-9. Establish a system for maintaining and adequately safeguarding town land use permitting records in both paper and electronic format, and for tracking permit data and development trends consistently over time in order to provide a foundation for future town planning and decision-making.
- ACTION E-10. Regularly review our *Emergency Operations Plan*, *Hazard Mitigation Plan* and *Rapid Response Plan* and update them as needed.
- ACTION E-11. Adopt rules of procedure for all town boards and committees.
- ACTION E-12. Adopt a policy setting annual training requirements for those serving on various town boards (Selectboard, Planning Commission, Development Review Board, etc.).
- ACTION E-13. Post information about development applications and decisions on the town website.
- ACTION E-14. Post adopted town ordinances, bylaws, rules of procedure, and policies on the town website.