Bullet Points for Moretown Town Plan
Public Hearing Nov. 12, 2025
What is New and Notable in The Draft Plan

Ch. 1 Intro

The plan narrative is 101 pages. Appendix A contains the survey results, Appendix B includes Moretown's history, and Appendix C provides numerous maps.

The introduction highlights significant challenges to achieving its overarching goals. Firstly, Moretown's topography, brooks, and rivers impede development of a cohesive community and limit possibilities for the development of a municipal center. Secondly, responses to the Moretown 2024 Community Survey make clear that residents are very concerned about the growing cost of living. Thus, it is critical for the Town to pursue its vision in a manner that does not impose significant new financial burdens on its residents. Overarching goals are to:

1. Support population growth and development so as to preserves important natural resources and the town's essentially rural character.
2. Ensure that Moretown is an attractive community for people of all income levels and ages.

Ch. 2 Background

Chapter 2 provides readers a synopsis of Moretown's history, population and demographics, and history of flooding. All these trends are addressed in more detail in subsequent chapters. Geographic fragmentation has affected Moretown's development throughout its history. Advances in transportation and communication make it easier for residents to connect with each other, and with the world outside Moretown. The most recent advance is the expansion of broadband internet in parts of town, which COVID accelerated.

1. Moretown's population increased 6% from the 2010 Census to the 2020 Census.
2. Enrollment at Moretown Elementary School grew from 2016 through 2023. Few families with school-age children arriving during COVID have since moved away.
3. Moretown's population age 65+ accelerated from 2010 to 2020, presumably driven by the aging of the baby-boom generation. Based on Census projections, this share will continue to grow through 2050.
4. Housing statistics indicate that increases in housing prices in Moretown is driven partially by growth in families choosing to own and occupy their Moretown homes (107) relative to growth in the number of housing units available (57).
5. Education and income levels in Moretown were higher than statewide in 2016, and that gap has increased.
6. Moretown's low-income population is a smaller percentage than statewide and declined during the same period, yet household income of an estimated 12% of Moretown's population was below 200% of the federal poverty level in 2020.

Goals are similar to those in Chapter 1, calling for making the village and North Moretown more attractive for residents and businesses.

Chapter 3. Natural Features and Ecological Systems

Moretown's natural setting and ecology are the foundation for its history, community, economy and way of life. Chapter 3 describes Moretown's climate, air quality, terrain, geology, water and forest resources, habitats, and wildlife species. The chapter lists goals,

objectives, and strategies to:

1. Protect and preserve important natural resources
2. Prevent, minimize and/or mitigate impacts on natural resources from development
3. Maintain and improve the health and quality of Moretown's air, water wildlife, and land resources.

Ch. 4 Moretown Economy

In 2020, just over 1,000 Moretown residents were employed at least part-time, an estimated 60% of all residents. The number of workers represents a small increase since 2015, when an estimated 985 residents worked. A minority of employed residents work at a physical location in Moretown: this minority has increased substantially since 2015. The chapter lists goals, objectives, and strategies to:

1. Promote a sustainable and diverse local economy characterized by varied employment and entrepreneurial activity
2. Develop a community vision for Moretown's economic development
3. Encourage business growth that meets Moretown residents' and visitors' needs
4. Encourage mixed use development in North Moretown
5. Encourage business development in Moretown Village
6. Recognize the importance of self-employment and home-based employment in the Moretown economy
7. Encourage the development of sustainable land-based economic activities and support strategies to improve viability of agricultural and forestry operations.

Ch, 5 Housing

Housing costs are high and rising in Moretown. Building costs follow a similar curve. In the last twenty years, housing builds slowed in Moretown. Moretown's somewhat higher income levels haven't hastened the building of homes. There have been no developments like The Commons in 40 years. Mobile home ownership is down and the Fairgrounds in North Moretown is the only development for low income, elderly or disabled residents. The term "affordable housing" is regularly used to describe what Moretown lacks. There are fewer and fewer rental properties in Moretown as well. Housing stock in Moretown is aging. In the last 10 years short term rentals have expanded in Moretown eroding long term rental availability. These trends reflect those in communities across the state.
Ambitious goals for housing are to:

1. Expand housing in Moretown
2. Maintain the character and natural environment and also a sustainable rate of housing development, and increase housing for a wide range of income levels
3. Promote mixed used development in North Moretown and in the Village
4. Ensure subdivision regulations provide for development and maintain the integrity of the landscape.

A few specific objectives are:

1. Expand the Village designation, which could lead to grants and funds for water services.
2. Create a Development area in North Moretown.
3. Consider providing regulatory and/or financial incentives for housing developing housing for low and moderate income households.

4. Consider incentives for creation of affordable and workforce housing, senior and accessible housing, smaller homes, and highly energy-efficient homes.
5. Obtain an increased understanding of local housing needs for the elderly
6. Allow a range of housing types to be built in Moretown while maintaining the Town's character.
7. Promote development of accessory Dwelling Units (AUDs) where appropriate.
8. Support energy efficiency and weatherization programs.
9. Explore repurposing existing buildings.
10. Obtain an increased understanding of local housing needs for the elderly.

Ch. 6 Transportation

Most paved areas in Moretown are state highways. The Town Highway network has been significantly damaged in multiple floods, most recently July 2024, and work to repair roads and increase their resilience to flooding is continuing. That work is highlighted in the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan.
Objectives are to:

1. Increase Resiliency on the Town Highway Network
2. Incorporate Complete Streets principles in areas where appropriate – North Moretown and Moretown Village. Most paved areas in Moretown are state highways. Complete Streets considers the needs of everyone who uses the road. (pedestrians, bicycles, e-bikes, cars, trucks, elders, children, people with special needs, people going to school)
3. Incorporate traffic calming in the village and N. Moretown
4. Pursue traffic safety measures, particularly in N. Moretown
5. Incorporate options for public transportation – shared rides, GMTA, Free Wheelin' .

Ch. 7 Utilities, Facilities, and Services

Solid Waste: Moretown has been a member of the Mad River Resource Management Alliance since 1994. As of 2025, the Alliance included Fayston, Moretown, Waitsfield, Warren, and Waterbury. The Alliance maintains a current Solid Waste Implementation Plan (SWIP) on behalf of its members.
The landfill in Moretown stopped receiving waste in 2013 and a final cap was installed in 2018. A solid waste post-closure certification for the landfill was renewed in 2024 and is valid through 2029. The certification describes the roles and responsibilities for the owner, including the ongoing operation of a landfill gas collection system and leachate systems, financial assurance, maintenance activities, and environmental monitoring.
Electricity generation ceased at the landfill in December 2023 due to a lack of landfill gas. Excess landfill gas is currently being burned off via a flare.
In discussions with the current owner of the landfill, Waste Management, there are no plans at this time to re-open.

Utilities: Telecommunication coverage (cell and internet coverage) continues to improve throughout Moretown. The Town will support efforts to install high speed internet for all areas of Moretown.
Several utilities provide electric service in Moretown. These include GMP, which serves the northern part of town along the Route 2 corridor and much of the Route 100B corridor, including Moretown Village. A small area in the southeast corner of town is served by the Town of Northfield Electric Department. Washington Electric Co-op (WEC) serves the remainder of town.

Water and Wastewater: The Town Plan encourages Moretown to continue to explore public drinking water and wastewater disposal systems. Moretown has no public wastewater service. North Moretown has some public water provided from the Edward Farrar Water District, based in Waterbury. Surveys of Moretown residents show a significant interest for more services in the village, yet without an adequate wastewater treatment system those wishes cannot be met.
An extensive study considered adding an in-ground wastewater system for Moretown Village. The project could move ahead if a disposal site becomes available for purchase. Currently being considered is a partnership with Waterbury and Duxbury to bring wastewater services to North Moretown. This would allow possible expansion of residential housing and commercial businesses.
Developing a drinking water system for the Village has been suggested but not yet investigated. A drinking water system could provide some flexibility for siting individual septic systems when older systems fail.

Education: The Town Plan encourages Moretown to stay informed regarding plans of the Harwood Union Unified School Districts for current and future space needs and alternatives to meeting them. Ongoing building and maintenance needs are very high in Vermont, as are education property taxes. Potential for schools to be closed and students moved into new districts are significant. The closing of Moretown Elementary School is considered as a potential solution. Surveys show that Moretown residents have a high affinity with Moretown School. The school has a solid enrollment and programs and services that serve students well, including an expansive outdoor program.
Harwood Union High School also enjoys a high level of support and has significant issues with forgone maintenance issues. The Central Vermont Career Center serves Moretown students with many high quality vocational and trade programs. A vote was held on building a new technical education center on November 4.
Higher education within the area is varied, with public programs at CCV. Norwich University adds a strong presence from the private side.
Child Care can be had near Moretown at Neck of the Woods. However, there are very few local providers for early childcare. Goals for this chapter are:

1. Maintain community services and facilities in a manner that reinforces Moretown's land use policies, does not overburden taxpayers, and minimizes tax rate fluctuations
2. Increase cooperation with neighboring towns, the Central Vermont region, and the State
3. Foster cooperative partnerships with neighboring towns to better address issues of mutual concern and enhance efficiency through cost sharing.

Ch. 8 Energy

The energy chapter updates data and refines content from the Moretown Draft Enhanced Energy Plan (2019):

1. Moretown's 2035 and 2050 clean transportation, weatherization, heat pump and renewable energy targets were updated to reflect latest state Comprehensive Energy Plan goals (2022) as provided by CVRPC (2025)
2. Renewable energy generation sources and percentages as provided by the Vermont Department of Public Service (2024)
3. References the same maps contained in the 2019 energy plan appendix
4. Simplifies the goals/objectives/strategies section (8.8) and integrates with content from related land use and transportation sections of the Plan.

9. Historic and Cultural Resources

We have a wealth of community resources to build a sustainable future for Moretown.

Chapter 9 describes Moretown's historical and current farming, forestry, and mineral extraction enterprises; public and privately conserved lands; groundwater status; Archeological and Historic Resources; Rural and Scenic Character, which is ranked highly by residents; and recreation resources including the town forest, rivers, and trails. The chapter lists goals, objectives, and strategies to:

1. sustain a high quality of life for residents and visitors,
2. preserve Moretown's historic structures,
3. provide recreational opportunities for all ages in all seasons, and
4. protect scenic views.

Ch. 10 Flood Resilience and Hazard Mitigation

Major floods occur periodically in Moretown on the Mad and Winooski rivers. There was major flooding of one or both rivers in 1927, 1938, 1976, 1998, 2011, 2023, and 2024.
Current estimates to repair damage to town highways from the July 2023 flood is $4.7 million. Ninety percent of the cost should be paid by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and 8percent by the State. The anticipated cost for the Town is approximately $95,000. The estimate for Town Highway repairs associated with the July 2024 flood is $4.3 million. Many of these repairs have not yet been completed. As of Spring 2025, the Town's cost share is anticipated to be about $640,000, which equates to 15 percent of the cost, with the remainder potentially to be paid by FEMA and the State. Whether or not FEMA delivers on that assistance is unknowable at this time.

The plan addresses floodplain management, river corridors, resilience and erosion control. The revised Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (2025) goes into detail on anticipated risks from natural disasters. Goals are to:

1. Reduce impacts to existing and future development and highway infrastructure from future flooding and fluvial erosion
2. Continue Hazard Mitigation Planning and Implementation efforts
3. Maintain updated hazard-related mitigation plans
4. Implement priority actions identified in the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan.

Ch. 11 Land Use

Seven land use planning areas are defined by watershed boundaries and historic development in Moretown Village. These areas have had no significant land use changes since the last town plan was written in 2015. Constraints for development remain essentially unchanged - flood hazard zones, river corridors, steep slopes, and limitations for wastewater treatment

Residents continue to support commercial and residential development along Route 2 in North Moretown which would be facilitated by extension of wastewater service from Waterbury. Town goals for land use are to maintain development in compact settlements, the Town's rural, scenic and historic character, and the integrity of high-value natural lands.

The Town seeks to make it easier to build housing, both as infill in the village and North Moretown, and in areas that could support housing without encroaching on preserve areas or flood hazard areas.

The Town also seeks limited expansion of recreational land use compatible with Town goals and values.

Future land use may be influenced by a Future Land Use Map being prepared by the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission in consultation with the Town, by changes to Act 250 permitting, and by anticipated state regulation of the Winooski and Mad River corridors. The primary goal is to:

1. Maintain and enhance Moretown's compact settlement patterns, natural resources, open space and sense of community as well as provide appropriate locations for residential, recreational and commercial uses.