

The Charlotte Town Plan expresses our vision for the future of Charlotte. In its vision for the future, the Charlotte Town Plan builds on the town's most valuable characteristics – its rural landscape, healthy environment, small-town character, history, and a long tradition of active participation by citizen volunteers in local government and community activities.

Charlotte shall continue to be a town that honors its community and agricultural heritage, adapts to present-day forces and factors, and provides for citizens to live in a traditional rural Vermont setting of village areas surrounded by countryside homes that are compatible with healthy natural areas and working landscapes. We will strive to provide a safe, clean and beautiful environment, including Lake Champlain. We also develop policies and standards that protect our natural and cultural features while encouraging entrepreneurial and traditional economic activities compatible with our values.

Goals

- To balance property owner rights to reasonably use their land in keeping with overall public health, safety, welfare and the goals of this Town Plan;
- To reinforce historic settlement patterns by focusing growth in our hamlets, and east and west villages, while conserving our Areas of High Public Value (see **Figure 1 below**);
- To maintain and enhance the integrity and continued viability of natural and cultural features with high public value, including land and active agricultural use, prime and statewide agricultural soils; steep slopes; flood hazard areas, surface and groundwater resources; shoreland buffers; special natural areas, wildlife habitats, water supply source protection areas, and other ecologically important natural areas; scenic views and vistas; historic districts, sites and structures; and conserved land;
- To recognize and protect the Town's natural and cultural resources through both regulatory and non-regulatory actions;
- To promote social, economic, cultural and racial diversity and sense of community through actions that encourage moderately priced and affordable housing, a sustainable agricultural economy, social, educational and commercial services, and environmentally-sound rural and small business enterprises;
- To promote access and appropriate use for open land and recreational resources;
- To plan for and prioritize capital improvements consistent with the fiscal ability of the Town;
- To promote community interaction, volunteerism, and spirit;

This Chapter lays out the policies and strategies which the Town will use to review and guide development proposals in all of Charlotte’s land use districts while also informing land use discussions and voluntary implementation activities in the next 8 years.

Charlotters value their connection to nature and rural quality of life including an active, outdoor lifestyle. Charlotters value their town as a highly scenic rural community that seeks to provide community services at a scale that complements their small rural and agricultural community. Similarly, smaller scale farm and forest enterprises, home occupations, commercial and light industrial enterprises are also valued and encouraged. Charlotte continues to promote its agrarian heritage with its abundance of excellent productive soils and proximity to the Burlington, NYC, and Boston markets. Charlotte continues to support efforts towards the realization of more active village centers and is in the midst of transition as the discussion regarding community water supply and wastewater disposal in these areas continues.

As was stated in the Introduction of the Plan, the following ‘Policies’ are intended to be used to review and guide Act 250 and public utility commission development permit applications, while ‘Strategies’ are meant to guide discussion and would require further action to be enacted. This could be undertaken by amending the Charlotte Land Use Regulations or via the work of a Town committee.

Land Use Context:

Recent changes in state law, particularly Act 181 (2024) and the HOME Act (2023), encourages the Town to update its approach to land use planning to align with new regional maps, housing targets, and equity goals. These changes reinforce Charlotte’s long-standing emphasis on compact development in the East and West Villages while strengthening protections for the community’s rural landscape.

2024 Act 181. The Vermont Legislature passed Act 181 in June 2024, modernizing Vermont’s planning framework for coordinating state, regional, and municipal land use. Act 181 requires Regional Planning Commissions to prepare new Regional Future Land Use (FLU) Maps, which will guide development patterns and determine Act 250’s new location-based jurisdiction. The CCRPC’s Regional FLU Map is in the process of being finalized and approved by both the CCRPC Board and the State Land Use Review Board (LURB). Once approved, Charlotte’s Town Plan should be reasonably consistent with this regional map.

Under Act 181, municipalities may choose to identify areas where certain residential developments may be exempt from Act 250 review. Charlotte has not opted into this “Tier 1B” exemption at this time. The Town recognizes, however, that most new development should be directed to its designated village centers.

Act 181 also revises the [state designation programs](#) in several ways that impact the content of the Charlotte Town Plan. The five state designation programs have been consolidated into two: centers and neighborhoods. The center area program will have three “steps” related to how much planning and investment has been done by the municipality for those areas. Charlotte’s village centers will continue to be considered centers, starting in the new program at Step 1 by default, which provides access to state planning grants and tax credits for historic preservation.

In order to qualify to be a “Step Two” center, the Town Plan must include a “goals for investment in the center” per 24 V.S.A. 5803. Qualifying as a Step Two center enables towns to access considerable state benefits related to state grant funding, private property owner relief from some state fees and the land gains tax, and the ability for Selectboards to set a speed limit less than 25 mph.

Act 181 also added a 15th state planning goal to 24 V.S.A. § 4302, which requires municipalities to advance the equitable distribution of environmental benefits and burdens in land use planning. For Charlotte, this means that decisions about where growth and conservation occur must take into account potential impacts on different groups of residents, including those historically underrepresented in planning decisions.

2023 HOME Act (Act 47). The Vermont Legislature also passed the Housing Opportunities Made for Everyone (HOME) Act during the 2023 session. This Act introduced municipal regulatory reforms and programs to support the construction and preservation of housing. The reforms focus on creating housing opportunities in existing settlement areas by allowing incremental, infill development in areas with adequate infrastructure that are already planned for growth. This Act also introduced the creation of municipal housing targets, which will be discussed further in the housing chapter. Charlotte’s specific targets for 2030 and 2050 for the “mid” scenario are 100 and 353 total new units respectively. However, it is worth noting here that the substantial majority of municipal housing targets must be accommodated in Charlotte’s Village Centers and Village Areas as mapped by CCRPC.

East and West Charlotte Villages. The 2024 East and West Charlotte Villages Project provided detailed recommendations for strengthening Charlotte’s two historic village centers as the primary focus of compact growth. Recommendations include enhancing walkability, supporting mixed-use development, ensuring wastewater capacity, and protecting surrounding rural landscapes. These recommendations are incorporated into Charlotte’s Future Land Use policies.

Key Planning Considerations:

Land Use may be defined as the framework for integrating the uses and values mentioned within this plan, which include compact development surrounded by countryside as a key planning consideration. As such, their associated key planning considerations should serve as a basis for Land Use Policies.

Land Use Policies:

1. Direct new residential and commercial development primarily into the West Charlotte Village and East Charlotte Village in order to create compact, walkable settlement patterns consistent with state planning goals and preserve habitat blocks and forested landscapes.
2. Discourage scattered residential subdivision in rural areas to protect agricultural soils, open space, and rural character.
3. Maintain strong protections for working lands, including farmland and forestland, by limiting non-farm development in these areas.

4. Provide education on nonmunicipal wastewater and infrastructure improvements in the villages to allow them to accommodate the substantial majority of Charlotte's future housing needs.
5. Ensure consistency with the CCRPC Regional FLU Map once it is finalized and approved by the State LURB.
6. Evaluate the potential benefits and tradeoffs of opting into Act 181's Tier 1B designation in the future, including the possible Act 250 exemption for certain developments. {COMMENT: Town must decide whether it wants to keep the door open for this policy choice.}
7. Continue to consider equity and environmental justice considerations in land use decision-making, evaluating how the distribution of growth and conservation affects different groups of residents. We will identify and preserve the important features of Charlotte that are treasured by residents including the working landscape, natural resources, water quality, scenic views and gravel roads, public access to Lake Champlain, historic and cultural resources and small town character.

**Figure 1.
Town of Charlotte
Areas of High Public Value (AHPV)**

- Land in active agricultural use
- Primary (prime & statewide) agricultural soils
- Steep slopes (equal to or in excess of 15%)
- Flood hazard areas
- Surface waters, wetlands and associated setback and buffer areas
- Shoreland setback and buffer areas
- Special natural areas (listed in the *Town Plan, Chapter 2 – Charlotte Today*)
- Wildlife habitat (*identified in the 2008 Charlotte Significant Wildlife Habitat Map Project*)¹:
 - Forest Habitat
 - Persistent Shrubland Habitat
 - Aquatic Habitat
 - Linkage Habitat and Connecting Corridors
- Water supply and ground water recharge areas
- Source Protection Areas (SPAs),
- Historic districts, sites and structures,
- Scenic views and vistas (as identified in *Charlotte Town Plan*), or
- Conserved lands

8. Non-agricultural commercial services will primarily be located within or near the village areas. Locations for light industrial development will be provided in the Commercial/Light Industrial District within the West Charlotte Village. Home occupations are encouraged by the Town. Agriculturally related businesses may be allowed in conjunction with active farms. Densities for proposed development will be reviewed with consideration of existing

settlement patterns, distance to and availability of Town services, physical capability of the land for development, the presence of significant *Areas of High Public Value*¹ (view **Figure 1 below**), the size of the parcel, and the need for affordable housing.

9. Charlotte's *Areas of High Public Value* (listed in **Figure 1**) are protected in various ways:

a. Development shall not be allowed on the following Areas of High Public Value.

Supporting policies can be found elsewhere in this plan:

- Conserved land, including Town Open Space Agreements (OSAs)
- Town Conservation District
- Surface waters and associated setback and buffer areas
- Wetlands and associated setback and buffer areas
- Shoreland setback and buffer areas

b. With guidance from the Charlotte Conservation Commission's "*Ecologist Site Assessment Protocol*",² the Areas of High Public Value below will be avoided and protected from negative impacts of development where possible. When avoidance is not possible, impacts will be minimized and mitigated. When impacts are not able to be sufficiently minimized and/or mitigated, development may not be allowed, but such lands may contribute density for development outside of the Areas of High Public Value, either on the same parcel or on other parcels.

- Land in active agricultural use
- Primary (prime & statewide) agricultural soils
- Steep slopes (equal to or in excess of 15%)
- Flood hazard / inundation areas
- Special natural areas (listed in the *Town Plan, Chapter 2 – Charlotte Today*)
- Wildlife habitat, including natural communities (*identified in the 2008 Charlotte Significant Wildlife Habitat Map Project*):
 - Forest Habitat
 - Persistent Shrubland Habitat
 - Aquatic Habitat
 - Linkage Habitat and Connecting Corridors
- Water supply and ground water recharge areas

What is Development?

Development includes many different activities, including construction of new structures, a change in what a building is used for, and installation of infrastructure, **including energy generation and transmission facilities**. See the Charlotte Land Use Regulations for the Town's full definition.

¹ ["Protocol for Assessment of Impacts of Proposed Development on Significant Wildlife Habitat in Charlotte, Vermont"](#), Charlotte Conservation Commission, March 2008.

² ["Protocol for Assessment of Impacts of Proposed Development on Significant Wildlife Habitat in Charlotte, Vermont"](#), Charlotte Conservation Commission, March 2008.

- Source Protection Areas (SPAs),
 - Historic districts, sites and structures,
 - Scenic views and vistas (as identified in *Charlotte Town Plan – “Charlotte Today”*)
- c. To protect and mitigate impacts to the Areas of High Public identified in 8(a) and 8(b), strategies such as the following may be required during development:
- Development / Implementation of a Forest Management Plan
 - Creation of Building Envelopes
 - No further subdivisions
 - Subdivision and Site Plan decision conditions for specific preservation of woodlands with stipulations to replant if a violation occurs
 - Requirement of a Master Plan
 - Requirement of an ecological study for the purpose of prevention or mitigation of impacts to wildlife habitats and/or natural areas
 - Screening: Vegetative, Geomorphic, or Fencing
 - Shielded and/or downward-directed lighting to protect the dark night sky
 - Curtailing hours of operation
 - Increasing the percentage of required open space in subdivisions as the prospective impact to Areas of High Public Value increases.

Land Use Strategies:

1. The Town will develop a framework for moving forward with the work completed by the Charlotte Wastewater Committee.
2. When proposing future land use regulations, the Planning Commission will consider the outcomes of the Charlotte East and West Villages Project.
3. The Town will consider the adoption of an Official Map for village areas, which enables the reservation of lands for drainage, streets, parks, schools and other public facilities. To foster the creation of “complete streets” (multi use) within the village areas, the Town should require the layout of infrastructure including roads to be in accordance with an Official Map.
4. The Town should consider establishing design guidelines for the existing village areas, which will be advisory only. The design guidelines could apply to site and building design and guide new development to protect the rural, historic character of the village areas.
5. The Town will reevaluate the adequacy of the commercial / light industrial district to incubate and attract entrepreneurial enterprises that will provide high quality local employment.

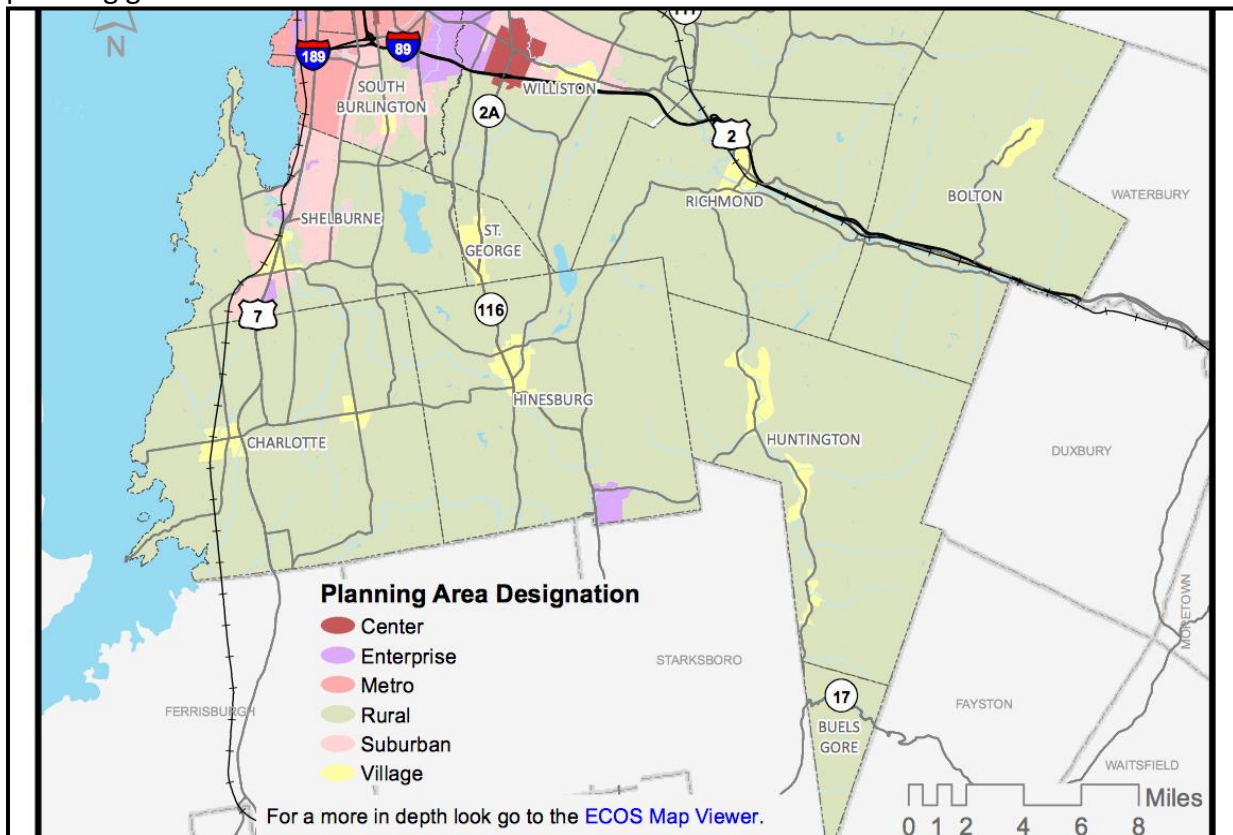
6. The Town will encourage through its regulations and policies the development of a more economically active town center with business services to fulfill local needs and moderately priced housing.
7. The Town will evaluate the need for more specific zoning districts or overlay districts within the currently defined rural area. These may include but not be limited to areas intended to protect the long-term viability of productive farmland in Charlotte; areas appropriate for low density, clustered residential development; and areas with significant, limited or irreplaceable natural or scenic resources.
8. The Town will explore an Open Space and Conservation Action Plan to aid in the identification of parcels or portions of parcels for nature-based economies, resource protection, and stewardship.

1.3 REGIONAL CONTEXT

The Act 181 of 2024 directed regional planning commissions to identify areas in each Vermont municipality according to a consistent land use categorization. Future Land Use area descriptions are designed to guide how land in the region will be used in the future, directing community and economic development investments, like tax credits, and determining where certain development is exempt from Act 250 permits. The regional FLU map is not a zoning map and does not replace existing municipal development regulations or state regulations.

Regional Plans

The 2018 Chittenden County Regional Plan - ECOS Regional Plan – identified two types of planning areas (broad land uses) in Charlotte: Village and Rural. An Enterprise Area and Suburban Area are identified in Shelburne on Charlotte’s northern border and lands in Hinesburg that are adjacent to Charlotte are identified as Rural. The ECOS Plan uses the Planning Areas concept to identify places that share similar existing features and future planning goals.



The 2026 Draft Chittenden County Regional Plan - ECOS Regional Plan³ – identified three broad land uses in Charlotte: Village, Enterprise Areas, and Rural. The ECOS Plan uses the Planning Areas concept to identify places that share similar existing features and future planning goals. Following are the descriptions for the Village, Enterprise, and Rural Areas from the ECOS Regional Plan:

³ Draft 2026 Chittenden County ECOS Plan, Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission. [ECOS Engagement - CCRPC](#)

Village Area: Existing neighborhoods and adjacent open lands generally within walking distance of a Center with local planning and zoning that support neighborhood residential and mixed-use. Will become State Designated Neighborhood and Eligible for Act 250 exemption.

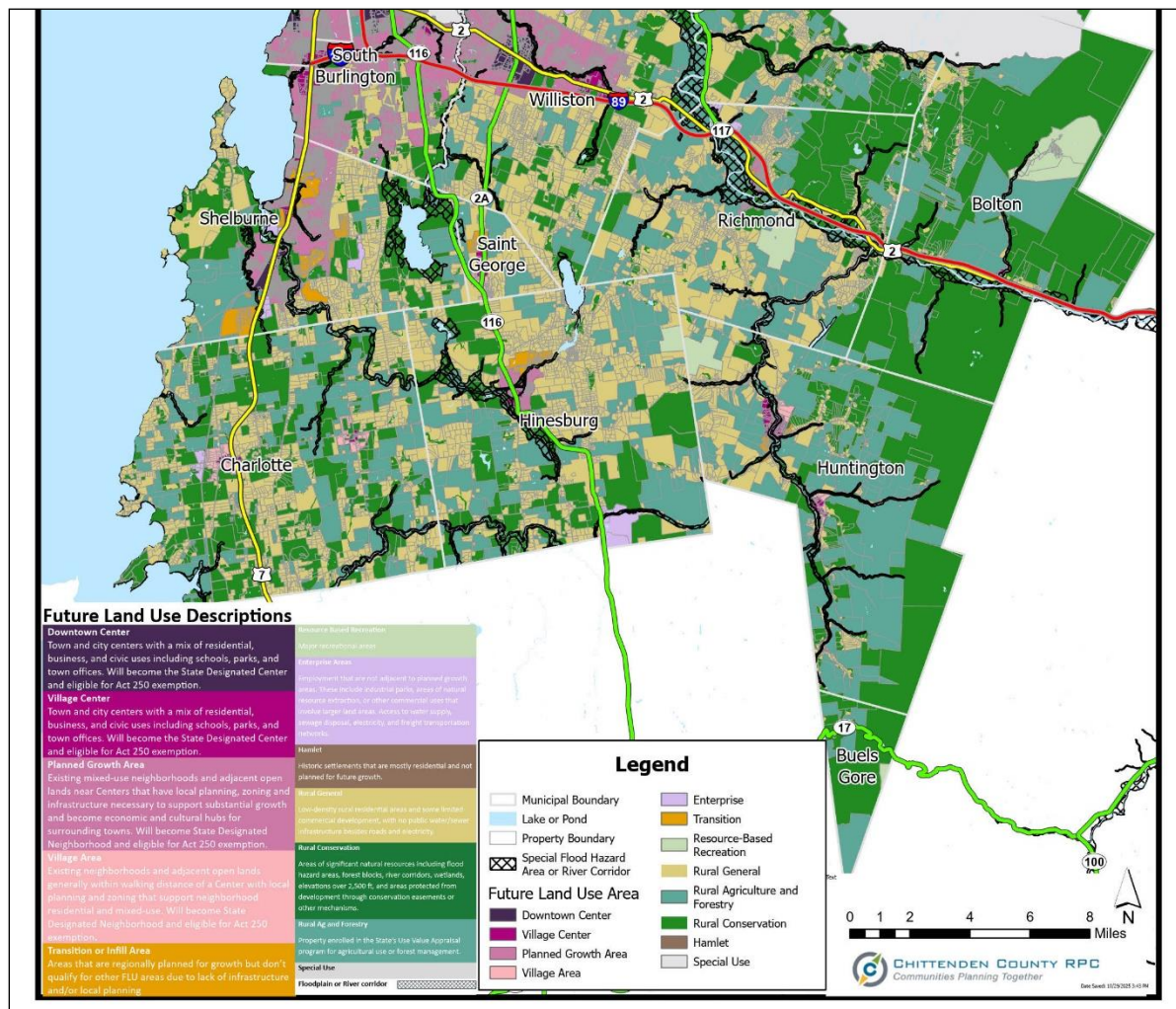
Village Center: Town and city centers with a mix of residential, business, and civic uses including schools, parks, and town offices. Will become the State Designated Center and eligible for Act 250 exemption.

Enterprise Areas: Locations of high economic activity and employment, which are not adjacent to Planned Growth Areas, such as industrial parks, resource extraction, airports, and rail facilities.

Rural General: Areas that promote the preservation of Vermont’s traditional working landscape and natural area features. Low-density residential and sometimes limited commercial development that is compatible with productive lands and natural areas.

Rural Conservation: Areas intended to be conserved often with regulations or State or non-profit purchase of property rights. These lands have significant ecological value, and require special protection due to their uniqueness, fragility, or ecological importance.

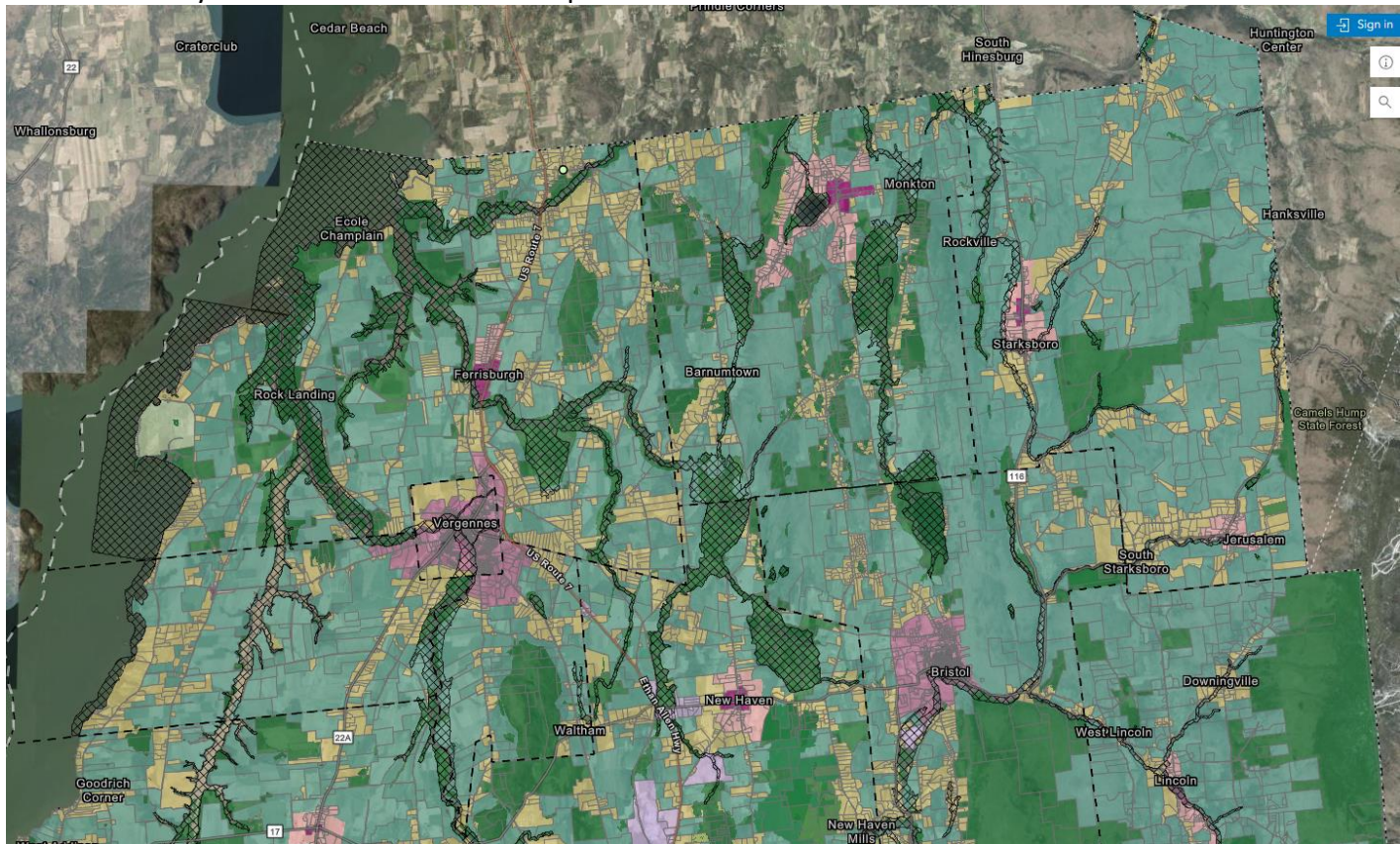
Rural Ag and Forestry: Blocks of forest or farmland that sustain resource industries, provide critical wildlife habitat and movement, outdoor recreation, flood storage, aquifer recharge, and scenic beauty; contribute to economy and quality of life.



The Charlotte Town Plan is compatible with both the 2018 and draft 2026 ECOS Plan (the regional plan for Chittenden County) and the municipal plans of all adjoining municipalities. ECOS Plan: The ECOS Plan is centered on strategies and goals that strive to be inclusive, strengthen the economy, improve water quality and natural resources, maintain working lands and significant habitats, improve health, facilitate access to education, and develop efficient finance and government. The Charlotte Town Plan works towards similar goals. At the time of adoption, the Charlotte Town Plan and Future Land Use map is compatible with both the 2018 and draft 2026 ECOS plan.

The *draft Future Land Use map for Addison County* identified the same broad categories of land uses in the towns of Ferrisburgh and Monkton immediately south of Charlotte. The Addison County Future Land Use map is shown below.

Addison County DRAFT Future Land Use Map ⁴



Neighboring Town Plans

Shelburne

Shelburne’s Town Plan (2019) identifies a Planned Residential Growth Area just north of the Charlotte border between the Vermont Railway and Route 7 (Wake Robin and Ridgefield

⁴ [Page 2 | ACRPC Act 181 Feedback App & Interactive map](#), ACRPC Draft Act 181 Future Land Use Map

Subdivision). Town sewer serves this area. The remaining areas adjacent to Charlotte are designated as Rural or Conservation on Shelburne's future land use map and in the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission ECOS Future Land Use Map, all abutting lands in Shelburne are designated as Rural Conservation, Rural Ag and Forestry, and Rural General.. Shelburne's policy is clear in discouraging development in the Rural areas in favor or encouraging in growth areas. The plan states that 'While some development is anticipated in the Rural Area, it should be limited, of low density, and should give very high priority to identifying and preventing undue adverse impacts to the area's scenic and natural features and resources.

Hinesburg

The Hinesburg Town Plan (2021) describes the area bordering Charlotte as Rural Agricultural. Protection of natural resources and land conservation is envisioned in this area and Hinesburg and Charlotte currently work together on resource related projects. In the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission ECOS Future Land Use Map, all abutting lands in Hinesburg are designated as Rural Conservation, Rural Ag and Forestry, and Rural General.

Monkton

All abutting lands in Monkton are designated as Rural Residential in the Monkton Town Plan (2024). Per the plan, this region houses medium and low-density residential areas, and all of Monkton's agricultural, forest and other open space land. In the Addison County Regional Planning Commission Future Land Use Map, all abutting lands in Monkton are designated as Rural Conservation, Rural Ag and Forestry, and Rural General.

Ferrisburgh

Ferrisburgh's Town Plan (draft 20125) identified the shoreline and the Lewis Creek corridor as areas requiring special protection. The land along the border with Charlotte is part of Rural, Mixed Use, Conservation, and Historic Village. The highway commercial character of the Route 7 corridor in Ferrisburgh at the town line, contrasts with Charlotte's rural designation and Route 7 protection strategies, however, the Ferrisburgh draft plan has the intent of to prevent strip commercial development along Route 7 and support well-defined centers with commercial and residential uses in North Ferrisburgh. In the Addison County Regional Planning Commission Future Land Use Map, all abutting lands in Ferrisburgh are Rural Conservation, Rural Ag and Forestry, and Rural General.

Proposed future land uses in Shelburne, Hinesburg, Monkton, and Ferrisburgh are generally consistent with those proposed in Charlotte. Future development should limit impacts to abutting Rural General, Rural Conservation, and Rural Ag and Forestry. Agricultural and resource protection and conservation efforts should continue to be coordinated across town boundaries.

Charlotte's landscape is a mosaic of uplands and lowlands, forest communities, the lake and its shoreline, stream corridors and wetland areas. Interactions of climate, geology, topography, hydrology and land use have shaped its natural resources and provided the essential clean air, water, soil and quality habitat for diverse species of plants and animals, land-based economies, extraordinary scenic beauty and related tourism. The Town Plan acknowledges these resources as having high public value that provide the basis for Charlotte's agrarian economy, quality of life and rural character.

Key Planning Considerations:

1. **Surface Water Quality** – Soil erosion is a significant factor influencing water quality. When soil from tilled fields, construction sites, gravel roads or severely eroding streambanks reach a stream, it often results in negative effects on water quality and aquatic habitat. In 2015, the Legislature enacted *Act 64 - An act related to improving the quality of State waters*. This Act outlines an 'all in' (all property owners) approach and includes requirements pertaining to stormwater runoff from roads and existing development, agricultural practices, tactical basin planning and forestry.
2. **Ground Water Quality** – Groundwater is found underground in porous rock strata and soils. It is a finite and vulnerable public resource, as it is the source of most of Charlotte's drinking water. The State has mapped some significant Ground Water Source Protection Areas for the community water supplies serving the Pineridge Water System, Lynrick Acres, and Wildwood West. The State has assisted the Town of Charlotte in performing ground water mapping for town planning purposes⁵. Only in this way can the Town rationally plan for development, and take measures to protect ground water quantity and quality for current and future residents.
3. **Habitat Fragmentation** - Fragmentation of forest blocks and barriers to wildlife movement caused by housing, commercial development, roads and utility corridors can result in the direct loss or inaccessibility of important habitat which can render the forest and other habitats unsuitable for some species of plants and animals. In 2016, *Act 171 - An act relating to timber harvesting* was passed. This legislation requires municipal plans to identify key "forest blocks" and "habitat connectors", and address a land development review policy that will minimize forest fragmentation and protect forest health and ecology.
4. **Invasive Species** – Exotic, invasive species are introduced either accidentally or intentionally into an ecosystem where they do not naturally occur. They proliferate and can aggressively replace native species and even alter natural communities.
5. **Biodiversity** – Extending as it does from the lakeshore through clayplain to the rolling foothills of the Green Mountains, Charlotte is possessed of high species and ecosystem

⁵ [Geology and Hydrogeology of Charlotte, Vermont](http://dec.vermont.gov/geological-survey/groundwater/town-gw/charlotte), Vermont Geological Survey, Department of Environmental Conservation, Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, Springston, G., Gale., Kim, J., Wright, S., Earle, H., Clark, A., and Smith, T., June 3, 2010, <http://dec.vermont.gov/geological-survey/groundwater/town-gw/charlotte>

biodiversity, whose conservation is our responsibility and challenge. Its northern cedar and clayplain forest communities are relatively rare in Vermont, and require custodial care.

6. **Climate Change** – Changes in weather patterns impact Vermont’s unique natural resources and quality of life. Warmer conditions and an overall increase in precipitation are expected to continue over the next 50 years. More frequent short-term droughts are also expected in the summer months resulting in reduced streamflows at that time. These warming temperatures and changing precipitation patterns affect snowpack and the timing and volume of streamflow. Plant and animal shifts/changes are already evident.
7. **Earth Resources** - In compliance with 24 V.S.A. §4302(c)(10), Charlotte recognizes the importance of local sand, gravel, and mineral deposits to the community and regional economy. Extraction of these resources will be managed to minimize environmental impacts, protect water quality, and avoid undue adverse impacts on adjacent land uses.

Natural Resource Policies:

1. Surface water and river corridor planning will be promoted recognizing the importance of streams, rivers, lakeshores, wetlands, and upland forests in fostering wildlife movement, improving water quality, stream stability and attenuating and moderating river corridor protection areas and flood events.
2. Important contiguous forest habitat should be maintained and conserved, and the subdivision or parcelization of that habitat will be discouraged during the land use development review process. Additionally, the Town will seek means to expand large patches of contiguous forests and protect corridors linking these areas through improved regulation, conservation, and outreach.
3. Charlotte’s wildlife habitats (i.e. *Significant Forest, Aquatic, and Shrubland Habitats*), including connecting corridors (i.e. *Significant Linkage Habitat*), and natural communities (i.e. *Special Natural Areas*) will be protected during development. Impacts to these identified *Areas of High Public Value* should be avoided or mitigated during development. Development will continue to be evaluated using the *Ecologist Site Assessment Protocol*.⁶
4. The town will ensure a diversity of habitats and landforms and will control and when possible eradicate invasive species on lands to minimize ecological and economic impacts to our native species and habitats, working forests and agricultural fields.
5. All Charlotte town plans will be reviewed and written within the framework of climate change adaptation. Our strategies are and will continue to be consistent with management actions recommended by the Agency of Natural Resources. The actions identified in the 2013 Climate Change Report include identifying and conserving natural areas that provide important ecosystem services (i.e. flood control, water filtration; carbon capture); capturing as much clean precipitation as is possible using low impact development; building streams

⁶ [“Protocol for Assessment of Impacts of Proposed Development on Significant Wildlife Habitat in Charlotte, Vermont”](#), *Charlotte Conservation Commission*, March 2008.

crossing (bridges, culverts) to accommodate sediment transport and connectivity; promoting riparian stability and filtering functions through appropriately sized stream, river, lake and wetland buffers; and monitoring pests and invasive species.

6. Require all development to be set back at least 100 feet from named streams, 50 feet from unnamed streams, and 150 feet from the LaPlatte River, Bingham Brook, which flows into Mud Hollow Brook before entering the LaPlatte, and the Bean Road Lewis Creek Tributary.
7. A 25-foot undisturbed vegetated buffer must be maintained along all streams and rivers.

No development shall take place on a wetland with a verified location or within 50 feet unless authorized by a permit from the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources or the Army Corps of Engineers.

8. Operation, stormwater management and erosion control and site reclamation plans shall be submitted for all new and expanded earth extraction and quarrying operations within Charlotte, to ensure that the proposed operation will not cause any hazard to public health and safety, or adversely affect neighboring properties, property values or public facilities and services, surface water and groundwater supplies, forest blocks and significant wildlife habitats, or other natural, cultural, and historic features.
9. The Town of Charlotte encourages solar development on former earth extraction sites, provided that the solar arrays and any associated clearing and infrastructure do not negatively impact the natural resources identified in this plan.

Natural Resources Strategies:

Water Quality

1. Protect lakes, ponds, rivers, streams and wetlands to maintain, and in some instances restore, their natural conditions. River Corridor Protection Areas and Special Flood Hazard/Inundation Areas will be examined to ensure that the Charlotte Land Use Regulations adequately protect them.
2. Work with Lewis Creek Association and CCC to assess and map seasonal streams and associated watersheds to increase the overall understanding and oversight of water quality conditions and the hydrologic systems in Town.
3. Evaluate riparian buffer and setback standards in the land use regulations and revise as necessary to incorporate new and best available science in the protection of natural resources and Areas of High Public Value.
4. Re-adopt the State approved 2013 "Vermont Town Road and Bridge Standards" and meet or exceed these codes and standards to help maintain safety and flood resiliency and to protect water quality and riparian corridors in close association with transportation corridors. Adopting these standards will enable the Town to be eligible for federally

declared disaster State share benefits, and maximum match benefits for Class 2 Town Highway grants, and Town Highway Structure improvement grants.

5. Endorse Vermont Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) and Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans) Act 110 standards as recommended minimums, and consider adopting more specific flood resiliency and water quality standards related to transportation infrastructure oversight, planning and management.
6. Work with CCRPC and VTANR in completing a road inventory and road stormwater management plan as is required under Act 64.
7. Evaluate current land use regulations and other town standards and ordinances relating to stormwater runoff and consider drafting local stormwater regulations that incorporate low impact design and Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI) design principles for attenuating stormwater flows to divert them from direct discharge into town right-of-way, streams, and eventually surface waters. Options should include, but not be limited to, the use of green infrastructure such as vegetated swales, infiltration trenches, raingardens, and constructed wetlands.
8. Provide education on nonmunicipal water supply and wastewater system for the East and West villages for the anticipated increase in development. Facilitate community dialogue to lead the effort.
9. Review zoning regulations to ensure protection of sand, gravel, and stone resources, as well as well-planned extraction in appropriate areas.

Fragmentation

1. Develop a procedure for updating resources when new data become available (e.g. through site assessments associated with land use development review).
 - a. Continue to update the Charlotte Significant Habitat Map and associated database in accordance with the procedure and review overall map accuracy at least every 10 years.
 - b. The Conservation Commission, the Planning Commission, and the Development Review Board will meet annually to review current trends, and land use development decisions over the previous year, which may have considered the protection of forest blocks and habitat connectors.
2. Encourage the protection, restoration, maintenance, and long-term stewardship of habitats and natural communities that support common, rare, threatened, and endangered species as identified by the Vermont Wildlife Diversity Program and the Charlotte Significant Habitat Map.

Invasive Species

1. Develop and recommend roadside mowing schedules to control the spread of invasive plant species. The Town will create no-mow zones to prevent the cutting of certain invasive plant populations, including Japanese Knotweed, as advised by the Conservation Commission.
2. Eliminate the use of plants identified as invasive in the State of Vermont for landscaping of Town-owned lands.⁷ Through education, encourage similar practices on private lands.
3. Support local groups to create and execute invasive management plans for AHPV's, Town-owned lands and rights-of-way (ROWs) to control invasive plant populations.
4. Consider means for funding work (including invasive species control) that restores and maintains significant ecosystem services and natural areas.

Climate Change

1. Protect groundwater resources, including groundwater recharge areas by regulating land use and development to avoid groundwater contamination and depletion.
2. Ensure project-specific wetland delineations required during subdivision review is sent to the Agency of Natural Resources. Identify stressors (i.e. non-permitted uses, invasive species, altered hydrology) to wetland values and functions, and develop conservation plans, require conditions for the Development Review Board decisions, and Open Space Agreements (OSA) to mitigate these effects.
3. Review existing natural resource maps in relation to climate change and the impacts thereon.
4. Review management practices on Town-owned lands and if necessary, establish management plans that protect the ecological functions of riparian areas associated with these lands.

General, Administrative, Education, Outreach, Funding

1. Develop procedures for updating and maintaining Charlotte-based GIS layers. Identify other clearinghouses for resource related information and work to ensure that the best, available data are used in all resource related work involving mapping and analysis.
2. Work with the Lewis Creek Association, Charlotte Conservation Commission, Charlotte Land Trust, and State and Federal agencies to assist landowners in protecting and restoring riparian and upland forest habitats on their properties.

⁷ The Nature Conservancy. "Invasive Plants in Vermont." 2015.

<http://www.nature.org/ourinitiatives/regions/northamerica/unitedstates/vermont/volunteer/invasives-in-vermont.xml>

3. Continue allocating a percentage of the Town tax rate for the Conservation Fund to protect significant natural and agricultural resources. Explore potential use of conservation fund for other conservation protection projects including stewardship activities.
4. Work with neighboring towns to protect large, undeveloped habitat blocks that span town borders.
5. Support the Charlotte Conservation Commission's role in: maintaining and updating databases and maps of natural resource information relevant to Charlotte; advising the Planning Commission and Selectboard on natural resource issues and development reviews; and promoting public understanding of local natural resources and ecosystem functions.
6. Public and private stewardship work and sustainable use of natural resources will be promoted by supporting education, field work and outreach programs of the Conservation Commission, Recreation Committee, Lewis Creek Association, Charlotte Tree Wardens, Charlotte Invasives Collaborative, Charlotte Central School, and other similarly qualified groups.
7. Research and support financial incentives and strategies that aid in the protection of *Areas of High Public Value* and will provide outreach on new and existing approaches such as Vermont's current use program, conservation easements, and purchase and lease options.

The Town of Charlotte has approximately 14 miles of shoreline⁸ and seven islands in Lake Champlain. The shoreland areas⁷ of Cedar Beach and Thompson's Point are among the most densely settled and earliest developed areas of town for residential uses including permanent, seasonal, and short-term rental occupants. Two significant transportation-related commercial enterprises operate adjacent to these residential areas: Charlotte-Essex Ferry and Point Bay Marina. Local, state and Federal first responders utilize Point Bay Marina for access to Lake Champlain. The natural communities along the lake include marshy wetlands, rock outcrops and promontories, stony and sandy beaches. Two named streams, Holmes Creek and Thorp Brook, intersect the shoreline and drain directly into Lake Champlain. These two streams comprise numerous tributaries which drain interior lands. Through the responsible management of areas in and along Lake Champlain, Charlotte will work to protect the aesthetic, recreational and natural systems into the future.

Key Planning Considerations:

1. Climate change will increase risks to the natural features of the lake and shoreline as well as the built environment.
2. Development pressure – Charlotte's Shoreline areas will continue to attract visitors and new residents to town leading to continued development and redevelopment pressure.
3. In addition to the Town of Charlotte, the State and Federal governments have jurisdiction over the water quality of Lake Champlain and the shoreland environment. Work in and around Class 2 wetlands, including those along the shorelines of Lake Champlain requires review and approval from the State of Vermont Agency of Natural Resources and the Army Corps of Engineers. The state of Vermont adopted the Shoreland Protection Act. It is important that the Town of Charlotte continue to coordinate its policies and regulations with that in mind.
4. Balance the economic advantages of businesses, the town beach, and lessees on Thompson's Point with necessary environmental stewardship in the shoreland area.
5. Ensure lakefront development, existing and proposed, continue to address water quality and water supply needs of residents. Thompson's Point community wastewater and water supply infrastructure could serve as model.

⁸ Shoreland area is defined as area 250 feet from the mean high water mark. - [The Vermont Shoreland Protection Act](#) (Summary), Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC). October, 2015.

1. Shoreland / Aesthetics / Flood Damage/ Shoreline Stabilization – In addition to water quality benefits afforded by maintaining a forested buffer and limiting / restricting development in the shoreline area, damage from flooding can also be minimized.
2. Public Access – Currently, primary access points to Lake Champlain in Charlotte include the Town Beach off of Lake Road and the Converse Bay Fishing Access off of Converse Bay Road. There are also a few, smaller access points off of Thompson’s Point; however, parking is limited and concerns related to leaseholder privacy have been raised.

Lake and Shoreline Policies:

1. The Town shall protect and reasonably restore the biological diversity and unique geological characteristics of the lake and shoreland using education, increasing public awareness, volunteer actions, and regulatory means.
2. The Town shall minimize degradation of lake water quality through its Land Use Regulations, access management, and non-regulatory means.
3. Ensure the Shoreland and Seasonal Home Management District land use regulations comply with the Shoreland Protection Act, streamline processes for property owners, and clarify administrative language. In environmentally sensitive districts, it is important that impact is evaluated in the LUR amendment process.
4. The Town will provide, protect and enhance opportunities for the public to enjoy the shoreland. This should be accomplished by consideration of the provision of public access by acquisition through purchase, donation, or other agreement, or by requiring the provision of public physical or visual access from uplands to the water.
5. Support the responsible use of trails and Lake Champlain access points.
6. Work in and around Class 2 wetlands, including those along the shorelines of Lake Champlain requires review and approval from the State of Vermont Agency of Natural Resources and the Army Corps of Engineers. The Town will work to increase community awareness about the positive benefits of these Areas of High Public Value.
7. Cutting vegetation, dredging, draining, filling and other land development activities in the Shoreland and Shoreland Seasonal Home Management Districts will be limited in order to protect the scenic beauty and environmental qualities of the lake and shoreline.
8. There will be no additional lots or dwelling units permitted in the Shoreland Seasonal Home Management District. Other structures will be evaluated in the context of total lot coverage and the addition of such structures shall not reduce scenic beauty, ecological qualities, or increase surface water runoff to the Lake.

9. The Town shall continue to evaluate and manage town implemented shoreline protection management practices that are coordinated with State regulations - most importantly the Shoreland Protection Act - to minimize duplication and inconsistencies.
10. Development within 150 feet of the *Mean Water Level* of Lake Champlain shall be reviewed to ensure it complies with applicable regulations.

Lake and Shoreline Strategies:

1. Land Use Regulations shall aim to preserve natural land cover along the shore to protect the natural systems for their environmental, recreational and scenic values.
2. Advisory design standards will be established to encourage man-made structures to blend into the natural landscape, including buildings and facilities within the Shoreland District whether visible from land or the Lake. Existing design standards for the Shoreland Seasonal Home Management District will be evaluated and revised as necessary, to blend into the natural landscape as well as the cultural and historic landscape of Thompson's Point.
3. Shoreline stabilization methods which can be vegetated and/or blend in with the natural surroundings in areas of erosion will be required.
4. The Selectboard shall name a subcommittee to inventory existing public access areas and shoreline, including existing site conditions. The subcommittee will complete an access management plan to be approved by the Town with recommended improvements to allow for fair and responsible access to the Lake and maintain the overall integrity of the shoreline vegetation. The plan shall show existing trails and water access on Thompson's Point available for public use.
5. The ferry docking facilities at McNeil Cove should be maintained and protected from private boat traffic and facilities.
6. The Selectboard should explore the feasibility of stabilizing the historic rock foundations of the Old Dock to save the dock from further deterioration.
7. The Selectboard will explore the possible future need to establish Mooring Management Areas for the Lake Champlain shoreline.
8. Stormwater management "best practices" should be applied to all development, regardless of whether a state stormwater permit is required. Low impact development (LID) methods of stormwater management should be considered during all development reviews, and required where site circumstances warrant.
9. Land use regulations will be reviewed and updated as necessary to be compliant with statutory requirements. Charlotte will also encourage the use of best management

practices for preexisting development as a means to prevent degradation of water quality and to protect habitat and the natural stability of shoreland.

10. The Selectboard will adopt consistent tree cutting and pruning standards in consultation with the Tree Warden, Thompsons Point Leaseholders Association, DRB, and Conservation Commission for the Seasonal Home Management District and the Shoreland District.

1.6 AGRICULTURE & FORESTRY

Agriculture has been a significant part of the landscape, rural character, and economy of the Town of Charlotte since the Town's early settlement. Loss of forestlands, farms and farmers would dramatically change the Town's rural character, which is strongly valued by current Charlotte residents. The preservation of working farms and natural areas is a clear, longstanding community priority, as is access to healthy, locally produced food.

Key Planning Considerations

1. Charlotte has an abundance of fertile soils well suited to agriculture and forestry. Of the Town's total land area (26,520 acres), 12.4% is classified by the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) as "Prime Farmland" (having the ideal availability and combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed fiber, forage, and oilseed crops)⁹. Another category of soil known as "Additional Farmland of Statewide Importance" (with similar, but limited characteristics)¹⁰ determined by the State of Vermont constitutes an additional 56.1% of Charlotte land area. In tandem, the two categories total some 68.5% of the Town.¹¹
2. The amount of land in active agricultural production has been observed to have decreased over the years, due to substantial changes in the farm economy, abandonment of pastures, marginal agricultural soils, and the conversion of farmland to residential subdivisions.
3. For the past 70 years, commodity dairy farming has been the primary form of agriculture in Charlotte. The number of dairy farms has continued to decline, however, from 16 in 1995 to 6 in 2016 and only 1 in 2024, due to low milk prices, high production costs, capital and labor shortages and other industry trends. Dairy farms have switched to raising cattle or other meat animals, shifted into crop or hay production, converted to estate farms, horse farms, or ceased production altogether.
4. Charlotte's agricultural base is diversifying into production of a variety of products for the local and regional wholesale and retail markets. The most recent data from the 2022 agricultural census found that there were 80 farming operations in Charlotte and the trend to smaller diversified farms is continuing. The Town's smaller farms produce sheep, beef, pork and poultry products, organic grains, vegetables, berries and flowers, nursery stock and orchard and vineyard products. Horse boarding, breeding, and training facilities are important recreational and agricultural services that rely on pasture and hayfields. The viability of these enterprises is enhanced by their proximity to the larger Chittenden County market.
5. New business models, including on-farm and farm-related businesses are critical to the economic viability of Charlotte farms. Local agricultural cooperatives, community supported

⁹ [Code of Federal Regulations 7CFR657](#), U.S. Government Publishing Office.

¹⁰ [Vermont Soil Fact Sheet- Detailed Definitions & Explanations](#), Vermont Important Farmland Classification, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

¹¹ Calculated from the NRCS County Soil Survey Data.

agriculture (CSAs), direct and online marketing operations, value-added production (e.g., specialty foods and commercial composting), farm equipment sales, supply and support services, farm cafes, and “rural or agricultural enterprises”¹² can benefit farms and keep them economically viable.

6. Historically, local farmers, through high local taxes, partially subsidized the rural character and open land enjoyed by all Charlotte residents. Farmers have indicated that without the state’s tax abatement (use value appraisal or current use) program, they could no longer afford to farm. High land values also affect the ability of new and existing farmers to access land, and / or to transfer farms from one generation to the next.
7. Charlotte residents currently have access to locally grown food through on-farm sales, farm stands, local stores, and local CSAs. As of 2025, there are no farmers’ markets or supermarkets within Charlotte, although Charlotte grown produce is available at the farmers’ markets and supermarkets of nearby towns.
8. Commercial forestry has been second to farming throughout Charlotte’s history. Only firewood, maple syrup and Christmas trees have important commercial value today, but many residents gather other woodland products for their own use. The shift from the larger acreage dairy farms to today’s mix of farms, many on smaller acreage, has been a factor in the growth of forested areas. Stone walls and wire fencing in forested areas around town are evidence of the reforestation of former farmland.
9. Charlotte’s forested land is an essential element of our landscape, particularly in a time of climate change. Forestland enhances wildlife habitat and linkage, protection of water quality and stream corridors, erosion control and other factors.
10. Protection of Charlotte’s forest and farm lands are major factors in maintaining Charlotte’s iconic landscape of the patchwork of fields and forests.

Forestry and Agriculture Policies

1. Agriculture is and shall remain one of the primary land use activities in Charlotte.
2. On farm economic activity is an important element in the success of many farms in Charlotte, particularly smaller diversified ones, and should be supported where also consistent with the rural nature of the town.
3. Healthy, locally produced food should be available for consumption by Charlotte residents, through local stores, farmstands, farmers’ markets, and other on-site operations.
4. Agricultural soils will be protected for agricultural use under town regulations according to the following priorities:

¹² NOFA-VT defines “rural enterprises” as activities on the farm that support the farm operation, but are not considered agriculture. <http://nofavt.org/resources/rural-enterprises-information>

- a. Prime (high potential) agricultural soils will be given priority for permanent conservation and protection;
 - b. Agricultural soils of statewide importance will be protected wherever feasible;
 - c. Low potential agricultural soil will be protected when they support an existing agricultural operation.
5. Charlotte's forest land is recognized as a key component of our landscape for scenic values, for personal and local scaled resource value, for wildlife habitat and corridors, for the protection of water resources and for forests' positive impacts in a time of climate change. Decisions on development and preservation of forest land will consider not only the perspective of Charlotte but also the land's value in strengthening the regional forest ecology.
 6. Where residential subdivisions and PRDs are proposed adjacent to farm operations, reasonable setbacks will be required for wells and residences from lot lines next to farm land. Buffers between new residences and active farming areas (e.g., farm roads, crop and pasture land) will be required as necessary to minimize conflicts between farming operations and residential and other nonfarm uses.
 7. Development, including renewable energy facilities, shall be sited, clustered and designed to avoid siting on prime agricultural soils, recognized view corridors (as identified in the *Charlotte Town Plan – "Charlotte Today"*), and minimize their encroachment upon soils of statewide significance and farmland currently in production. Off-site mitigation and/or site restoration that allows for the resumption of agricultural use shall be required for any facility that impacts primary agricultural soils or farmland currently in production.
 8. Sustainable, economically viable farming alternatives are important to the future of farming in Charlotte. Diverse agricultural enterprises, including dairying, livestock and hay production, horse boarding, riding and breeding, and specialty farms such as nurseries, orchards, vineyards, vegetable, flower and berry farms are encouraged.
 9. The production, processing, and marketing of food and fiber and other natural resources and agricultural products will be accommodated and promoted as important local industries.
 10. Charlotte views itself as a partner in the State's implementation of *Required Agricultural Practices (RAPs)* on local farms, and recognizes that their successful application relies upon a complaint-driven approach.
 11. Charlotte observes Vermont's "Right-to-Farm" laws, recognizing that reasonable agricultural practices, as defined by state policy, benefit farming operations and contribute to a working landscape, harmony with neighbors and community pride. New and potential residents should be aware of the importance of agriculture to the community, and should recognize that agricultural practices may create conditions, including noise and odors, that can impact neighboring properties and desired lifestyles.

12. Farm-related businesses and housing will be allowed on farm properties as permitted or conditional uses.
13. The town encourages forestland owners to have a forestry management plan for their land. Forest management plans should address the ecological functions of the property while providing for the sustainable extraction of forest products. Any new forest plantations in Charlotte should be established with species native to the Northeastern United States only.
14. Maple sugaring is a relatively low impact, sustainable industry that is supported in Charlotte.
15. Increased use of wood as a renewable energy source, particularly for firewood should be encouraged, using sustainable management procedures.

Forestry and Agriculture Strategies

1. Explore a Charlotte “Farm and Food Council” to create a directory of local farms and food outlets, to work with local farmers and businesses on agricultural development strategies, to access outside resources such as the UVM Extension Service and the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets, and to increase community awareness of and access to healthy, locally produced food (Partner with the Grange).
2. Inventory, track, and map farmland acreage, the number and type of farming operations, and farm ownership patterns in town (Conservation Commission, Charlotte Land Trust).
3. Explore establishing a farmers’ collaborative to help expand the market for local agricultural products and to increase access to healthy, locally grown food (Partner with the Grange).
4. Continue to support the efforts of the Charlotte Land Trust, the Vermont Land Trust, the Vermont Housing Conservation Board, and similar organizations to provide technical assistance, to develop master plans for farm properties, and to negotiate private, voluntary agreements for the protection and management of designated agricultural and natural resource lands (Conservation Commission, Charlotte Land Trust, Selectboard). In particular, the town supports and will work with the Charlotte Land Trust to:
 - Continue support for the Charlotte Conservation Fund as an essential tool for protecting the farm, forest and scenic lands in Town.
 - Provide technical assistance to farm and forest property owners to maximize the preservation of working land, natural resources, and rural character;
 - Collaborate on public outreach initiatives; and
 - Assist farmers in planning for the disposition of their property in conformance with the Charlotte Town Plan, e.g., by helping farmers and other large property owners to prepare master plans for their properties that maximize farmland, forest land, and natural resource protection, including soil health and water quality.

5. Update town land use regulations as needed to accommodate farm-related businesses on farm property in the Rural District – including but not limited to direct-marketing, value added production (such as cheese and wine), farm equipment sales, supply and support services, associated services, commercial on-farm composting facilities, methane digesters and services, and agri-tourism events and activities – with consideration given to the scale of the operation, frequency of events and the potential impacts on the community, community facilities and services, local traffic and neighboring properties (Development Review Board, Planning Commission, Selectboard).
6. Continue to pursue both regulatory and non-regulatory techniques (e.g., conservation easements, tax abatements, bylaw amendments) to implement agricultural development and farmland conservation objectives (Planning Commission, Conservation Commission, Farm and Food Council, Select board). These include, but are not limited to the following: preservation of largely contiguous tracts (“critical mass”) of productive farmland, preservation of the scenic characteristics of open farmland while promoting agricultural use, agricultural diversification and on-farm business development, including agri-tourism, value-added production, and direct marketing and sales, and the potential development of a local food hub or food incubator space as needed to support value-added production (e.g., specialty, frozen foods) and the aggregation, marketing and distribution of agricultural products.
7. Direct landowners to resources for forest management. This includes but is not limited to the State Agency of Natural Resources, Forestry Division *Required Management Practices for Maintaining Water Quality on Logging Jobs, 2016* and *Voluntary Harvesting Guidelines for Landowners in Vermont, 2015*; Vermont Family Forests and Vermont’s Use Value Appraisal Program.
8. Encourage landowners to band together cooperatively their small holdings into units of larger size that could support professional forestry services and increase opportunities for marketing.
9. Encourage landowners to plant native trees on their properties to enhance property values, protect soil and to create public benefit.

1.7 HISTORICAL & CULTURAL RESOURCES

In addition to its agricultural heritage, Charlotte residents have consistently sought to identify, protect and preserve other important cultural and historical features of Charlotte’s landscape and built environment including historic districts, sites and structures; traditional settlement patterns; and scenic views and vistas.

Key Planning Considerations

1. Recent changes in state law, particularly Act 181 (2024) and the HOME Act (2023), direct the Town to update its approach to land use planning to align with new regional maps, housing targets, and equity goals. These changes reinforce Charlotte’s long-standing emphasis on compact development in the East and West Villages while strengthening protections for the community’s rural landscape.
2. Many camps on Thompson’s Point have undergone renovations in the past 10 plus years. Design review requirements associated with development in this area are incomplete and often result in uncertainties encountered during the development review process.
3. The lack of outreach in the siting of new energy installations and the process for public notice and involvement associated with these facilities has led to drawn out permitting processes and local land use disputes in the past. Recent state legislation and changes to state regulations have increased a municipality’s ability to influence energy generation, and has stipulated minimum setback and screening requirements for these facilities. For more details on energy planning in Charlotte, including policies on energy facility siting, see Section 1.12: Energy.
4. Advisory design review guidelines, similar to those used for Thompson’s Point, have been suggested for other areas of town including village areas, Ferry Road / Ethan Allen Highway intersection, and Church Hill Road (which is part of the “Charlotte Center Historic District” listed in the *National Register for Historic Places*).
5. Adaptive reuse of eligible structures may be limited by existing development and potential land use conflicts. Subdivisions of land involving structures that may be considered for adaptive reuse should be designed to foster future uses.
6. A dark night sky is considered to be a part of Charlotte’s rural character and heritage. While still relatively undisturbed, Charlotte’s natural darkness at night, augmented by a brilliant array of stars, is beginning to be threatened by light pollution and glare.

Historical & Cultural Resources Policies

1. Development shall be sited and designed to be consistent with Charlotte’s traditional settlement pattern, including historic densities and scales of development, local road networks, and streetscapes, particularly within designated historic districts.

2. Development shall be sited and designed to avoid adverse impacts to Charlotte’s historic sites and structures, and historic architectural styles should be considered when developing within designated historic districts.
3. Changes to historic structures should maintain their historic integrity to the extent feasible. Adaptive reuse shall be allowed where appropriate to preserve structures that no longer serve their original function.
4. Development shall be sited and/or clustered to avoid undue adverse visual impacts to scenic resources and cultural *Areas of High Public Value*, including scenic views and vistas and recognized view corridors (as identified in the *Charlotte Town Plan – “Charlotte Today”*). Development shall be consistent with the scale and character of the area. Screening, buffer areas and/or landscaping may be required where appropriate to minimize visual impacts.
5. Utilities serving developments shall be located underground, unless the Development Review Board or Planning Commission finds that requiring utilities to be placed underground is not necessary due to the presence of above-ground utilities serving nearby contiguous properties and that the requirement would place an unfair financial burden on the applicant.
6. The dark night sky shall be protected through the design and control of lighting to prevent glare and light pollution. Cut-off fixtures, down casting and limiting levels of illumination are examples of techniques to be used to avoid new light pollution and reduce existing pollution.
7. The Tree Wardens shall continue to work cooperatively with the Road Commissioner and the utility companies to minimize the adverse effects of roadside cutting and pruning of trees.

Historical & Cultural Resources Strategies

1. Continue to inventory, catalogue and map Charlotte’s historic and cultural features.
2. Update land use regulations as needed to further protect Charlotte’s historic and scenic resources, including the consideration of adopting additional historic and/or design review overlay districts to protect the town’s traditional settlement pattern, cultural resources, and scenic landscape.
3. Adopt specific lighting standards under the town’s land use regulations and, at the same time, conduct public informational meetings to educate the public regarding strategies to avoid light pollution.
4. Improve upon the current scenic road inventory by recommending guidelines for development review and road maintenance.

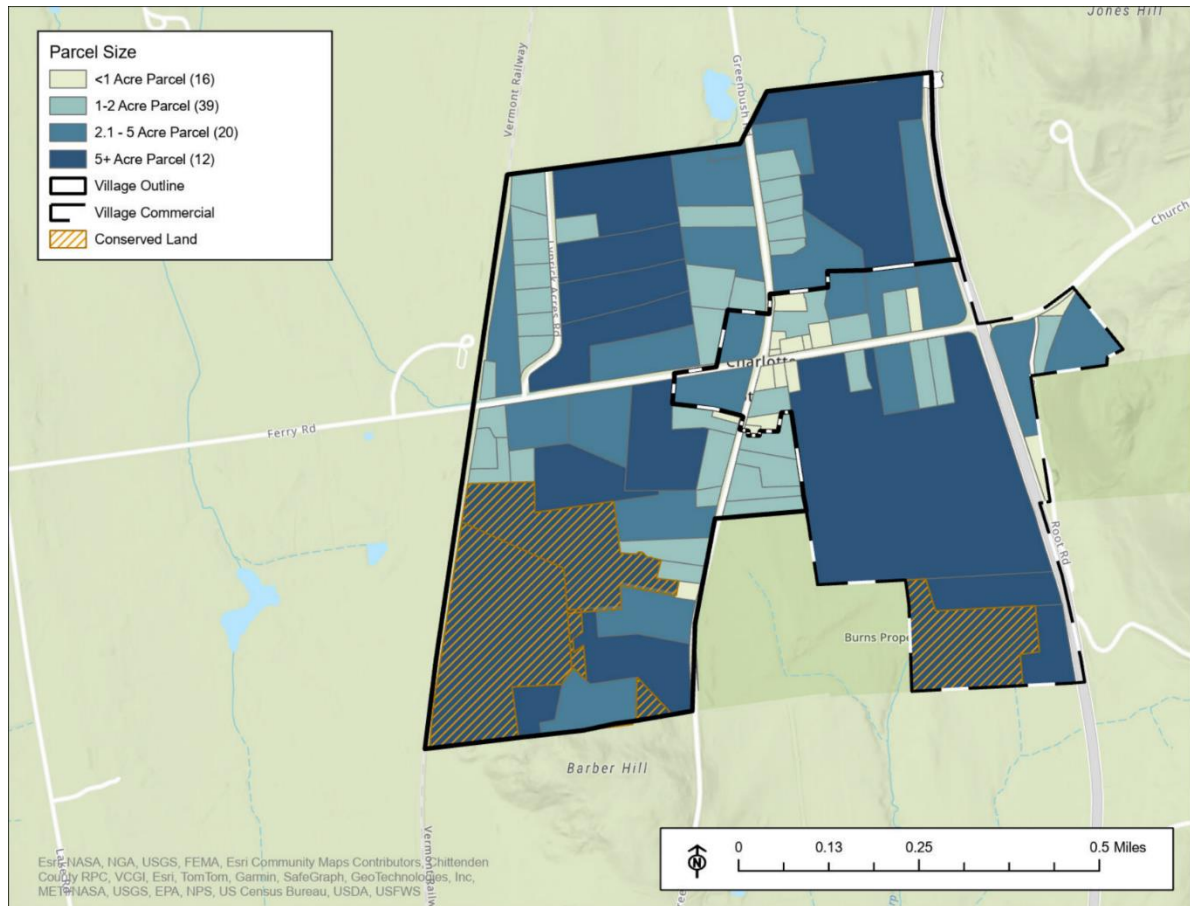


Figure 2 delineates West Charlotte Village based on the *East West Villages project*. The image illustrates both the *West Charlotte Village* and *West Charlotte Village Commercial District*. It is located around the intersection of Ferry Road and Greenbush Road. The area encompassed by the boundary comprises economic and civic assets (e.g. the Old Brick Store, post office, fire and rescue station, town offices, library, senior and children’s center). The East West Villages Project public input provided that the top declared goals of Charlotte citizens for the West Village were to; 1. Maintain historic village character, 2. Minimize traffic impact on safety and quiet, 3. Preserve views, and 4. Encourage multi-use, small-scale commercial/professional development.¹³

¹³ https://charlottetv.org/uploads/dm/5896/20241017Final_East_and_West_Villages_Report.pdf

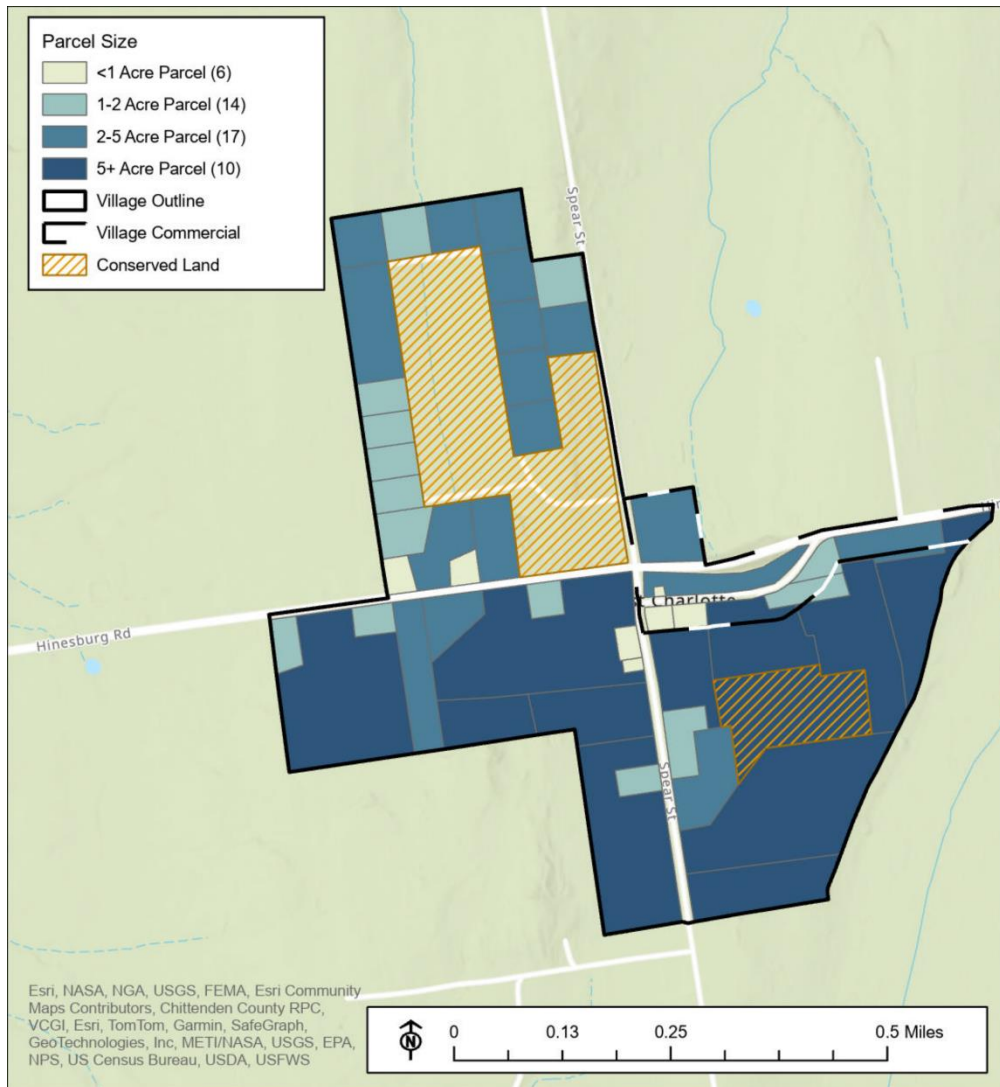


Figure 3 delineates the East Charlotte Village based on the *East West Villages project*. The image illustrates both the *West Charlotte Village* and *West Charlotte Village Commercial District*. It is located in the vicinity of the intersection of Spear Street and Hinesburg Road. Additionally a vision statement was crafted which was intended to emphasize the historic character of the Village:

“East Charlotte village is a small, friendly community with a unique identity, abundant natural resources, and distinct historic buildings that define and contribute to the Town of Charlotte. The retention of the historic and visual character of the village is of high importance to community members and provides a basis for guiding compatible future growth and development. Our neighborhoods are attractive, affordable, and carefully designed to be walkable and complement the distinct physical and cultural context of the village. Sustainable design and development are critical for maintaining our village for future generations. Our open spaces and landscape features are attractive and provide a variety of recreational activities. The surrounding agricultural lands also contribute to the beautiful scenery in East Charlotte Village and connect residents and visitors to our heritage.”

Population trends in Charlotte and Chittenden County have generally outpaced those of the state in the past 50 years. The age distribution of the county population differs slightly from that of the state in that the county has a smaller proportion of older persons as compared to younger persons. That being said, the population of the region, including Charlotte, is aging with the 65 and older age group expected to increase by 122% over the next 20 years.

Housing in Charlotte has been concentrated in the village settlements, clustered in summer camp communities, or located in a dispersed pattern in the surrounding countryside. It is this dispersed pattern that has become prevalent over the past 30 years. Subdivisions in rural areas have increased, while the village settlements have remained relatively unchanged. Significant concerns of water and septic capacity in the west village have been repeatedly raised by some in the village. While the dispersed pattern has offered a desirable lifestyle, it has the potential to reduce air quality, increase energy consumption and consume open space including viable farmland. It has also failed to provide adequate housing located more convenient to services and prospective public transportation to accommodate a diverse array of residents. Surveys continue to reinforce the importance of protecting Charlotte's rural character, natural resources and agricultural resources. Changes to the land use regulations have been made over the last 15 years to retain these characteristics by encouraging clustered, well-integrated housing and development.

Housing Targets

As discussed in the Land Use Section, in 2023, the Vermont Legislature adopted the HOME Act (Act 47), which created a new statutory requirement for Regional Planning Commissions to develop municipal housing targets. These targets, based on the Vermont Housing Needs Assessment, allocate the number of housing units each community should plan for in order to meet regional need by addressing the housing crisis.

[The State Housing Needs Assessment](#) was written by the Vermont Housing Finance Agency (VHFA) under contract with the state's Department of Housing and Community Development. The report provides both a "lower" scenario housing target and a "upper" scenario housing target for each region in the State. Both targets were calculated to "normalize vacancy rates, end houselessness, and replace homes lost from year-round housing stock due to disrepair and seasonal home use." A normalized vacancy rate is 6%. The "lower" scenario is based on a 0.8% average annual rate of housing growth which would address the above intentions, but provides little flexibility if population grows faster than expected. The "upper" scenario is based on a 1.6% average annual rate of housing growth which mirrors Vermont's growth rate in the 1980 to 1990 period. This scenario would increase Vermont's labor force, provide greater housing access, and decrease houselessness.

CCRPC established targets for each municipality in Chittenden County based on the Regional Housing Targets as determined by the State Housing Need Assessment:

Figure 4: Regional Housing Targets

Target Year	Target Scenario	New Units
2030 Chittenden County Regional Housing Target	Low	7,301
	Mid	8,919
	High	10,537
2050 Chittenden County Regional Housing Target	Low	15,783
	Mid	31,595
	High	47,407

CCRPC worked with its Planning Advisory Committee for over a year to develop a method to assign housing targets to each city and town. Housing targets consider factors like infrastructure, historic growth rates, and land available for development. Rural towns, like Charlotte, received just 3.8% of the regional housing target and are encouraged to promote village development and protect working lands. When assigning housing targets by municipality, CCRPC developed a “middle” target between the “lower” and “upper” scenarios given the wide range between the VHFA-developed scenarios in 2050. The “middle” target represents a 1.2% average annual rate of housing growth which will also help grow the workforce and provide greater housing access.

For Charlotte, the 2030 housing target ranges from 82 (low) to 118 (high) new units, **with a mid-level target of 100 units**. By 2050, the target expands to between 176 and 530 units, **with a mid-level target of 353 units**. These numbers represent a substantial increase compared to Charlotte’s historic rate of housing growth: from 2000 to 2023, the Town added just 143 units (an average of 6 units per year). Meeting the mid 2050 target will require nearly doubling the pace of housing construction to approximately 14 units per year, compared to the historic average of 6. **Thus meeting the low 2050 housing target is more realistic with 7 units per year compared to the historic average of 6 and will be the target Charlotte supports through this town plan.**

As described, housing needs in Chittenden County is great. These targets are intended to capture the magnitude of the challenge, which provides an opportunity for municipalities to undertake the planning, public outreach, and infrastructure planning and investment required to meet the need. Challenges such as an aging workforce, high materials and labor costs, high interest rates, tariff uncertainty and lack of sufficient public infrastructure (e.g. water, wastewater, public transit) will continue to be factors that impact achievement of the targets. State investment and regional coordination will be needed to overcome challenges and efficiently use limited resources. However, collaborative planning processes can help direct the policy and investment changes needed.

The targets are intended to guide municipal planning and zoning updates to ensure that enough housing is built across the region. The substantial majority of Charlotte’s future housing growth is expected to occur within areas planned for growth, including the East and West Charlotte Villages, consistent with Act 181 and the Regional Future Land Use Map.

Key Planning Considerations:

1. Our regional population is aging. The number of individuals aged 65 and older in Chittenden County is projected to increase by 122% over the next 20 years. The next fastest growing age group is those aged 30-44. This age group is projected to increase by 22% over the next 20 years.
2. Broad diversity in housing will continue to be necessary to support the required tax base to keep Charlotte financially sound. This must include opportunities for more affordable and senior housing.¹⁴
3. Over the past twenty years, the development of new homes has occurred primarily in rural areas.
4. The quality of education provided by the Charlotte Central School is critical to the continued evolution of the Town's population, financial health of the Town, support of property values and is a key driver for young families selecting Charlotte as a place to live.

Housing Policies:

1. The Town recognizes the need for safe, sanitary, energy efficient, affordable, and senior housing in locations convenient to public and community facilities and services, and will encourage such development to meet the Town's goal of promoting diversity in Charlotte.
2. The rate and pattern of residential growth shall remain compatible with Charlotte's rural character, determined by the district density regulations. The Town will work to direct the majority of future growth into the village areas, existing and new community settlement areas, and hamlets so as to preserve the *Areas of High Public Value* within the rural areas.
 - a. Housing in rural areas should maximize open space by clustering development and using conservation agreements when applicable.

¹⁴ In general, housing for which the occupant(s) is/are paying no more than 30 percent of his or her income for gross housing costs, including utilities is considered affordable housing. In the context of this plan, Charlotte further defines affordable housing as that affordable to low or moderate-income households. Households whose incomes are less than 80 percent of the median income for the area are considered low-income families. Households whose incomes are between 81 and 95 percent of the median income for the area are considered moderate-income families (Source: United States Department of Housing and Urban Development).

Senior or elderly housing is defined as housing which is specifically designed and intended for occupancy by at least one person who is 55 years of age or older. In accordance with the federal Fair Housing Act, elderly housing includes housing that: (1) is specifically designed for and occupied by elderly persons under a federal or state housing program; (2) is to be occupied by a person 62 years or older; or (3) at least 80% of the dwelling units are to be occupied by at least one (1) person who is 55 years or older, in adherence to adopted policies to house persons who are 55 years or older.

- b. Project densities will be determined by zoning regulations, the physical site conditions, the existing pattern of development, the proximity of Town highways and Areas of High Public Value.
 - c. Development in the village districts should be encouraged. Such development should consider planned improvements and capital expenditures and allow for the adequate provision of services.
 - d. New development in the village areas should provide strong visual, vehicular and pedestrian connections to the existing settlement and infrastructure.
3. The Town recognizes the importance of and will strongly encourage adaptive reuse of existing buildings as a means of providing affordable and market rate housing. This will result in the preservation of structures that might otherwise fall into disrepair and be demolished.

Housing Strategies:

1. The Planning Commission will further explore work to promote the use of non-contiguous PRDs as a means to increase project densities in desired locations and protect rural open space areas.
2. Evaluate strategies for the possible development in existing villages, including the analysis of existing and planned facilities (e.g. wastewater, water supply, runoff, highway access, and Complete Streets).
3. Reappoint members to an Affordable / Senior Housing Committee. This group will work with the Planning Commission in evaluating land use regulation incentives for the creation of affordable / senior housing. (Selectboard)
 - a. Work with regional organizations in educating citizens about available resources including in home services. (Affordable Housing Committee)
 - b. Work with the Planning Commission in identifying locations for potential projects and project partners. (Affordable Housing Committee)
4. Encourage development review applicants to consider affordable or senior housing when presenting their subdivision proposals at Sketch Plan Review and provide information about the Affordable Housing Trust Fund. (Development Review Board)
5. Establish an annual meeting between the Planning Commission and the Affordable / Senior Housing Committee to assess the Town's progress in meeting housing needs. (Planning Commission)
6. Encourage the preservation and reuse of existing buildings through the application of density bonuses and / or flexibility in other dimensional requirements of Charlotte's Land Use Regulations. (Planning Commission)

7. Continue to waive permit fees for affordable housing units. (Selectboard)

1.9 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The long-range success of economic development projects generally hinges on an area's competitive advantages, market characteristics and community values. Smart economic development recognizes that prosperity both depends on and drives quality of life. The economy in Charlotte is inextricably linked to agriculture, the environment, sustainability, and tourism. Those factors combine for a unique mix of business and residential interests that create a distinctive sense of purpose and community that Charlotte residents value.

Economic development promotes complementary business initiatives to support our agricultural enterprises, provide products and services to residents and visitors, contributing to increased productivity and economic health in Charlotte, while maintaining the Town's distinctive character. Therefore the challenge is to position the community for a productive and prosperous future by sustaining a strong economy despite a shrinking tax base, crumbling infrastructure, an aging population, and a large inventory of premium-priced real estate.

This chapter intendeds to provide specific recommendations to address these challenges while preserving Charlotte's character and values, and to align closely to the following the goals stated in Section 1.1 ("Vision and Goals"):

1. To balance property owner rights to reasonably use their land in keeping with overall public health, safety, welfare and the goals of this Town Plan;
2. To reinforce historic settlement patterns by focusing commercial activity and residential development in our villages;
3. To promote social, economic, cultural and racial diversity, and sense of community through actions that encourage moderately priced and affordable housing, a sustainable agricultural economy, social, educational and commercial services, and environmentally-sound rural and small business enterprises;
4. To plan for and prioritize capital improvements consistent with the fiscal ability of the Town;

Additionally, the economic development chapter is guided by the following principles:

1. Prosperity and productivity will drive quality of life for the Charlotte community;
2. Maintaining our Town's prosperity and dynamism in a time of economic flux and demographic change requires additional effort and focus on economic development;
3. A distinctive combination of engaged commercial activity with agricultural and residential interests consistent with Charlotte's history and values will serve as the engine of our Town's prosperity and dynamism;

4. Restarting Charlotte's economic engine in a way that respects our unique history and community would revitalize it and translate to positive benefits for current and future residents alike;

Key Planning Considerations:

1. Agriculture in Charlotte contributes significantly to the overall economy in indirect ways, ranging from wholesale trade to preserving our physical and cultural landscape and to maintaining Charlotte's vibrant community life. Yet, it contributes little to the job/wage base in Charlotte and the Town cannot rely on agriculture alone to meet its wide-ranging economic needs.
2. The state-owned property that houses the inactive commuter rail station on the proposed route for the Charlotte Town Link Trail is one of the only available, undeveloped parcels in the Commercial/Light Industrial district. Careful consideration of its zoning status should be made to ensure that it is utilized to further Charlotte's economic development objectives.
3. Community-scale economic activity and variety in housing options are critical to the sustainability of Charlotte's institutions:
 - a. The Charlotte Central School, the Charlotte Library, Charlotte Volunteer Fire & Rescue, other public entities and our local businesses depend on economic activity and a diverse citizenry.
 - b. CVFRS must now rely on paid service providers in order to deliver its vital services to our community because there are not enough volunteers to fill those positions. This is in large part due to so many Charlotters commuting to other communities for work.
4. Accurate data on business activity at the local level has not been available, making it difficult to identify with certainty economic development trends.
5. Charlotte's economy is inextricably linked to that of its neighbors. The Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC) is currently undertaking an update to the Chittenden County ECOS Plan,¹⁵ which features a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy.
6. Preservation of Charlotte's natural, cultural, and historic resources is essential to the maintenance of key industries including agriculture, real estate, tourism, and construction. Water and wastewater rights and use, solid waste management, stormwater management, and transportation all have a substantial effect on the Town.

¹⁵ [2013 Chittenden County ECOS Plan](#), *op. cit.*

7. The Charlotte Library is an evolving resource and community space for our town and their families.

Economic Development Policies:

8. The Town promotes the protection and enhancement of agriculture and other traditional industries, and supports local job creation. Compatible, entrepreneurial enterprises operated as home occupations will also be supported that do not detract from the character of the area in which they are located.
9. The Town encourages the retention and creation of businesses and non-profit organizations that provide the services and community resources that reflect the values and aspirations of its residents.
10. The Town supports concentration of additional moderate-cost residential development in and adjacent to the villages with pedestrian access to basic commercial services.
11. The Town will encourage the provision of adequate infrastructure that is supportive of a healthy economy and environment.
12. The Town will advocate for the safe and responsible use of the railway and associated facilities.

Economic Development Strategies:

1. Partner with the Grange to understand how to best support local farms and food outlets, to work with local farmers on agricultural development strategies, to access outside resources such as the UVM Extension Service and the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets, and to increase community awareness of and access to healthy, locally produced food.
2. Support strategic planning efforts of the library to expand their services, to continue to play an incredibly important role providing a sense of place, fostering inclusive community engagement, providing afterschool programming for working families, providing access to online career resources and computer training resources, and offering business planning workshops and trainings, telecommuting space, wi-fi access, computer loans, and printer services.
3. Support the development of nonmunicipal community based water and wastewater systems in West Charlotte Village. Develop a framework for moving forward with the work completed by the Charlotte Wastewater Committees of 2010-2011¹⁶, 2015-2016¹⁷, and the 2017 committee, which provided recommendations for the adoption of municipal sewer

¹⁶ Charlotte Wastewater Committee. "[Final Report on Potential Community Wastewater Service to the West Charlotte Village](#)", Town of Charlotte, September 10, 2011.

¹⁷ Charlotte Wastewater Committee. "[Final Report on Expanding Community Wastewater Service in the West Charlotte Village](#)", Town of Charlotte, July 16, 2016.

allocation and use ordinances for additional capacity to serve non-municipal properties. This framework should continue its mission.

4. Review environmental assessments completed for the state owned property near the railway (north of Ferry Road) and determine if more information is needed. This information will be used when considering zoning alternatives or acquisition as part of the Land Use Regulation process update.
5. Evaluate the Charlotte Land Use Regulations and determine if there are opportunities for improvement in the regulatory and permitting process. Examples would include consideration of changes in use category and / or establishment of clear and non-redundant review standards.
6. Evaluate the Charlotte Land Use Regulations to consider the creation of an overlay district to nurture small-scale agriculture in appropriate locations within the Rural Residential District.
7. Support development of non-traditional work environments (such as co-working hubs, for example) to attract young working professionals.

1.10 UTILITIES, FACILITIES, & SERVICES

Town government and many locally supported nonprofit groups rely heavily on volunteer time and community financial support to provide the facilities, infrastructure, services and programs needed to serve local residents and enhance community life. As a rural community, Charlotte's capacity to accommodate new growth and development and adapt to changing circumstances, is limited by available community resources, supporting infrastructure, and the town's tax base. That said, because of the generosity of its residents, the town has been able to provide and continues to support truly exceptional facilities, programs and services that help make for a strong and vibrant community.

Key Planning Considerations:

1. Charlotte's population is aging. Additional health care, emergency response, transportation and in-home support services will be needed to assist an aging population. Senior housing options are also needed for local residents that want to downsize or need additional care, but want to remain part of the community. Additional cemetery space may also be needed.
2. Possible school redistricting impact on Charlotte student populations.
3. Additional water supply and wastewater infrastructure is needed in the West Charlotte Village. As documented in the 2011 "Final Report on Potential Community Wastewater Service to the West Charlotte Village" issued by the Charlotte Wastewater Committee, there is sufficient in-ground capacity available to expand the existing wastewater system to address inadequate or failed onsite systems, and to accommodate limited new development in West Charlotte Village. Water supply in the West Village is also a key planning consideration because there have been ongoing concerns expressed from residents of the Village regarding consistent water supply.
4. Greater community responsiveness will be needed to adapt to changing community needs, and a changing environment. Charlotte, as a relatively undeveloped rural town with a long history of active, volunteer governance, is better suited than many communities to adapt to a changing climate, including anticipated increases in severe storm events. Nevertheless, ongoing efforts will be needed to plan for, mitigate and respond to natural and manmade hazards, to strengthen community networks and emergency response services, to increase the energy efficiency of public buildings, and to update municipal facility and infrastructure standards to accommodate changing environmental conditions.
5. Changing community needs, and additional demands on local government, may require some changes in local governance. The town and town-supported organizations, including fire and rescue services, depend heavily on volunteers and the local property tax base to support needed facilities, equipment and services. As a rural community with an aging population, reliance on volunteers to provide critical services will become increasingly difficult – especially as the demand for those services increases.
6. As a town facility, the Charlotte Library is poised to support the current and future generation of readers to providing additional resources and information to Charlotte's aging

population, to fostering resilience in our community, the library is a key player in the future of our town.

Utilities, Facilities, and Services Policies:

1. The Town will, within its means, continue to plan for, finance and provide public facilities and services necessary to meet existing and anticipated community needs, in an efficient and cost-effective manner. These include town government, highway, fire and rescue, police, educational, library, recreational and senior services and facilities, water and wastewater systems and solid waste management, and other planned facilities and services supported by the Charlotte community.
2. Public investments in land, facilities and infrastructure shall reinforce the traditional pattern and character of development in Charlotte, consisting of compact villages, including West and East Charlotte, hamlets and historic summer communities on Thompson's Point and Cedar Beach – separated by rural countryside, including large blocks of productive farm and forest land and undeveloped lakeshore.
3. Public investment in land, facilities and infrastructure will be planned and designed to minimize development pressure on and adverse impacts to Areas of High Public Value, including prime and statewide agricultural soils, steep slopes, surface and groundwater resources, shoreland buffers, wildlife habitat and other ecologically important natural areas, scenic views and vistas, historic districts, sites and structures, land in active agriculture, and conserved land.
4. In-place upgrades of existing facilities, including power transmission lines, distribution lines and substations, is generally preferred and will be required unless the impacts of proposed in-place upgrades exceed the impacts from siting upgrades in new locations and corridors.

Utilities, Facilities, and Services Strategies:

Recreation

1. The Town of Charlotte will continue to develop, maintain and enhance recreational facilities and programs for local residents and visitors, in association with the state and other organizations that have facilities and programs that serve the community.
2. Public access to noncommercial outdoor recreational opportunities, including walking and hiking trails, recreation paths, municipal and state parks and conserved lands, and to Lake Champlain, will continue to be identified, developed, managed and protected.
 - a. The Trail Committee, in association with the Planning Commission, will continue to plan for, develop and maintain an interconnected, town-wide network of trails and public byways.
 - b. The Conservation Commission will work with the Trails Committee and the Recreation Commission in evaluating the suitability of sites for recreation and shoreline access, and access to conserved land.

3. In village areas, pedestrian pathways to serve development shall be incorporated in subdivision or site plan design to where feasible, and connect to existing and other planned public pedestrian pathways as expressed elsewhere in this plan (see Map 5B).
4. Outdoor recreational facilities, including trails, shall be sited, designed and managed to complement and incorporate their natural settings, and to minimize adverse environmental and ecological impacts. Trails should follow and/or incorporate local topography and landscape features in their design.

Education

5. The Town will work closely with the Champlain Valley School District (CVSD) School Board to monitor the educational needs of the town's children and adults and the condition and level of use of local school facilities and to address existing and anticipated needs in a cost-effective manner that maximizes the community's benefits.
6. The Charlotte Library will continue to foster programs in partnership with Charlotte Central School, the Charlotte Children's Center, and other educational groups. Provide after-school and vacation sessions for children of all ages.
7. The Charlotte Library will continue to seek participation in "*Connected Learning*", an educational method that advocates that optimal learning is achieved across multiple settings utilizing various networks (e.g. school, home, library, community centers, and other institutions).¹⁸
8. The Charlotte Library will provide health information the community, continue to enhance its collection, and promote health education to the community using the Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Minnesota model; "*Public Libraries of Health*".
9. The Charlotte Library serve as a resource for emergency planning and preparation as part of the Charlotte Emergency Management Team.
10. The Charlotte Library will be available and functional as a cooling and warming center during weather emergencies and power outages.
11. The Charlotte Library prioritizes continuity of Sustainable Librarianship with an emphasis on community resilience: supporting environmentally sound, economically feasible and socially equitable practices and policies for our town.
12. The Library will collaborate with the Charlotte Senior Center and Charlotte Historical Society on programs, such as; one-on-one tech sessions, reading and discussion groups, and hosting of local historical events and authors.

Social Facilities & Services

¹⁸ American Library Association (ALA): *Libraries Transform*, "Trends", 2015, <http://www.ilovelibraries.org/librariestransform/trends>

13. The Town will, within its means, continue to support and provide access to social and cultural facilities, organizations, and events that serve the needs of Charlotte residents and highlight and celebrate the Charlotte community.
 - a. The Town will continue to fund, through annual appropriations, those organizations that provide needed family, social and health services for Charlotte residents, as approved by Charlotte voters.
 - b. The Town will continue to advocate for affordable childcare services to meet the needs of local families, including after school and early education programs offered through the Charlotte Central School.
 - c. The Town will continue to monitor the availability of childcare services in association with the update of the town plan; and ensure that home-based childcare facilities are adequately accommodated under the land use regulations.¹⁹
 - d. The Town will work with the Charlotte Senior Center to survey local residents, to identify additional resources, programs and housing options that may benefit Charlotte's aging population, including their desire and ability to age in place.
 - e. The Town, in partnership with the Grange, will continue to plan for and host events that celebrate community history, diversity and volunteerism.
14. The Selectboard will work with the Senior Center in developing a parking plan. The plan will help to identify areas for additional parking including opportunities for shared parking with other uses in the West Charlotte Village.
15. The Town supports the ongoing communication between / among the Senior Center, Charlotte Central School and Library in an effort to pool resources and provide compatible services within the community.

Public Safety

16. The Town will continue to support the Charlotte Volunteer Fire and Rescue Services, Inc. (CVFRS). Major capital improvement projects and equipment purchases for CVFRS will be programmed through the Fire and Rescue capital budget and program.
 - a. The Selectboard and the Emergency Management coordinator will continue to work with the CVFRS to plan for and strategically locate fire ponds and dry hydrants needed to improve local fire protection.
 - b. The Planning Commission, in association with the Selectboard, Road Commissioner and CVFRS, will update standards for the creation, maintenance and repair of private roads, driveways, fire-protection ponds and dry hydrants.
 - c. The Planning Commission will update municipal bylaws as necessary to ensure that private roads, driveways, fire ponds, dry hydrants or other fire protection measures

¹⁹ 24 V.S.A. § 4412 (5) and 33 V.S.A. § 3502

- necessary to serve new development, as recommended by CVFRS, are paid for and installed by the developer.
17. The Town will continue to contract for policing services to enforce town traffic ordinances and improve safety on town highways.
 - a. The Selectboard will continue to sponsor traffic studies to establish enforceable speed limits under the town's traffic ordinance.
 18. The Selectboard will continue to contract with neighboring or state police departments to provide limited crime response, reporting and investigation services, as available funding permits.
 19. The Town will continue to update the E911 database and map in a timely manner and will encourage the immediate installation of newly assigned and appropriately designed 911 numbers (addresses).
 20. The Town will work to strengthen community resiliency in response to natural and manmade hazards and the anticipated effects of changing climate.
 - a. The Selectboard and Planning Commission, with the assistance of the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission and local emergency service providers,²⁰ will continue to plan for and regularly update its hazards mitigation plan for FEMA-approval, and its emergency response and operation plans.
 - b. The Selectboard and Planning Commission will implement recommendations included in Charlotte's All Hazards Mitigation Plan²¹ as resources allow.
 - c. The Town will study, based on available information, the potential effects of rising lake levels on the Charlotte shoreline, and shoreland property owners.
 - d. The Town will continue to limit and regulate new development within known hazard areas, including mapped flood hazard areas to ensure community participation in the National Flood Insurance Program.
 - e. The Selectboard will continue updating the town's road standards, including local culvert and bridge standards, as necessary to improve infrastructure resilience to flooding, compatibility with stream morphology and aquatic organism passage, and to qualify for available state program incentives.
 - f. The Planning Commission will update the town's flood hazard area bylaws as necessary to meet any new National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) requirements, and to qualify for state and federal program incentives for improved infrastructure resilience.

²⁰ [2017 Chittenden County, Vermont Multi-Jurisdictional All-Hazards Mitigation Plan](#), Approved by FEMA Region One, effective March 6, 2017.

²¹ [Town of Charlotte, Vermont 2017 All-Hazards Mitigation Plan](#), The Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission and the Town of Charlotte, Vermont, 2017

- g. The Planning Commission will consider regulations to limit development within River Corridor Protection Areas identified on maps provided by the State, and as recommended in the Town's most recently adopted All-Hazards Mitigation Plan.
- h. The Charlotte Library will seek to serve as an up-to-date information resource for preparation and planning for natural and manmade hazards and the effects of climate change through its work with the American Library Association (ALA), Sustainability Roundtable.²²

Solid Waste Management

21. The Town will continue to participate as an active member of the Chittenden Solid Waste District (CSWD) to meet its municipal responsibilities for the sustainable management of materials (aka solid waste) under Vermont statute.

- a. The Town will seek to reduce overall waste production and better its recovery and disposal processes, taking into consideration lowest carbon footprint vis-à-vis transportation (hauling), energy and cost. Promotion of local soil health will be a factor in the Town's approach to organics (food waste) management.
- b. The Town will continue to support its Policy Regarding Waste Management at Town Facilities as adopted in 2014.

"The Town of Charlotte is dedicated to making all events in public spaces as waste free as possible by collecting in three streams: compost, recycling and trash. All events held in public spaces will adhere to these expectations. All town lease and facility use agreements will guide event planners through three-stream separation management."

Universal Recycling waste stations and signs are available for use at any event held in a public space.

Wastewater & Potable Water

22. The Town will develop a framework for moving forward with the work completed by the Charlotte Wastewater Committee in 2010-2011, and 2016.

- a. This framework should include the establishment / reestablishment of a Wastewater Advisory Committee made up of one or more members of the Selectboard, Planning Commission, Development Review Board, Community Development Group; village residents; and at least 1 non-village resident.
- b. If the Advisory Committee decides to move forward based on need, then a town-wide education and outreach campaign should be initiated. This campaign should include alternatives to a public system including private, community systems. A consultant could evaluate alternatives and the evaluation could be funded through a

²² American Library Association (ALA), Sustainability Round Table (SustainRT), 2017, <http://www.ala.org/sustainrt/> and <http://www.ilovelibres.org/librariestransform/trends/>

- grant. A reassessment should consider any information on potential health concerns and current use constraints.
23. All development outside of municipal infrastructure service areas shall be served by privately owned systems and maintained onsite, or via community potable water supplies and wastewater systems.
 24. All new or expanded drilled wells will be required to demonstrate there will be an adequate supply of potable water to serve their purpose.
 25. Private water and sewer utility lines may cross town roads only with Selectboard approval, and only if the development served meets applicable goals and policies of the Charlotte Town Plan or the lines are necessary to serve a failed system for which no physically feasible alternatives exist. The Selectboard will require permits and licensing agreements or similar legal agreements for utility lines that cross town rights-of-way.
 26. Land development shall be restricted and regulated within designated Source Protection Areas (SPAs) serving community water supply systems.
 - a. The Planning Commission will evaluate the approach to protect other groundwater resources under the land use regulations, including recharge areas identified on groundwater maps developed for the town in 2010²³ (also view Map 5 “*Public Water Supply Source Protection Areas*”).
 27. All new development will be designed to conserve water, through site planning and development techniques that maximize onsite stormwater retention and infiltration, and through the use of low-flow fixtures.
 - a. Low flow fixtures shall be included in the development and construction of all new, renovated or expanded public buildings and facilities.
 - b. The Planning Commission will review and update the land use regulations as necessary to incorporate “Low Impact Development” (LID) standards that maximize onsite stormwater retention and infiltration thereby limiting the need for more capital intensive stormwater collection and treatment facilities.
 - c. The Town will seek State funding to prepare a storm water master plan for the Town of Charlotte.

Telecommunications Facilities & Services

28. The Town of Charlotte supports new and relocated telecommunications facilities and services that are consistent with land use regulations, and are necessary to provide adequate wireless and high speed internet coverage for Charlotte residents, businesses and emergency response services.

²³ [Geology and Hydrogeology of Charlotte, Vermont](#), *op. cit.*

29. Radio frequency interference and emissions from telecommunications facilities, while currently subject to FCC jurisdiction, should not be allowed to adversely affect public health and safety or interfere with existing telecommunications equipment and signals.
30. New and relocated telecommunications facilities shall be sited to avoid where physically feasible, or to otherwise minimize adverse visual and physical impacts to areas of high public value, electrical and signal interference, and potential health impacts to the occupants of residences, schools and other public facilities in the vicinity of the facility.
31. New telecommunications towers shall be designed to allow for the co-location of additional telecommunications equipment. New equipment shall be co-located on existing towers wherever physically feasible, unless it is determined by the regulatory board that a new tower would have less adverse impact on areas of high public value or existing uses in the vicinity of the facility.
32. New and relocated telecommunications towers in locations that are highly visible from public vantage points shall be sited and designed to minimize their visibility and to avoid the need for nighttime lighting.

Utility Lines

33. New or replacement electrical, telephone, cable or other utility lines, shall be located underground to protect scenic views and vistas and recognized view corridors (as identified in the *Charlotte Town Plan – “Charlotte Today”*), increase reliability, and potentially reduce long-term maintenance costs.
 - a. The Town will continue to require underground utility lines feeding and within subdivisions.
 - b. The co-location of utility lines and infrastructure is encouraged, as is utilization of existing rights-of-way.
34. The Town supports improvements to the power grid to adequately support existing uses and planned future growth.
 - a. The height of utility poles will not be increased unless necessitated by technical requirements (e.g. to avoid interference).

Town Governance

35. The Town will retain a primarily volunteer form of government.
 - a. The Selectboard will continue to evaluate the need for additional staffing and contracted services as necessary to meet the Town’s obligations under state law, and to the Charlotte community.
 - b. The Selectboard will seek to maintain a constant effective tax rate, adjusted for reappraisals and inflations, consistent with past practice.

Town Land & Facilities

36. The Town will continue to manage and maintain existing public and community facilities, including town-owned land and buildings, in a cost-effective, ecologically sound and energy-efficient manner.
- a. The Selectboard will oversee and ensure the timely implementation of a master plan for the Burn's Property, as required under its agreements with the Vermont Land Trust, and to incorporate the recommendations of the 2011 Wastewater Committee for the upgrade and expansion of the municipal wastewater system.
 - b. The Town will prepare a land management plan for Thompson's Point to inform annual management strategies for resources such as AHPV, recreation, wastewater and scenic views.

Additional strategies on Town Land and Facilities can be found in Section 1.12 – Energy.

Roads

37. The Town will continue to require that new roads be developed as private roads so as to reduce the cost of town provided road services.
38. The Town will reevaluate the above policies as they relate to village area development. Complete Streets, which include accommodation for pedestrians, cyclists, equestrian, and other modes of travel are desired in these areas.
39. The Town will support the inclusion of appropriate improvements for pedestrians and cyclists whenever projects are undertaken for major paved roads (e.g. Route 7, Spear Street, Hinesburg Road, Church Hill Road, and Mount Philo Road), such as the Route 7 pedestrian underpass of the “Charlotte Town Link Trail” constructed in 2017. Furthermore, the Charlotte Conservation Commission has recommended that northern Route 7 underpass be developed to connect the Galbreath property on the eastern side of US 7 to the Charlotte Park and Wildlife Refuge and trail system on the western side, whenever the opportunity may arise in the future.
40. The Town will continue to be a member of the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission and will actively participate on the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC), Clean Water Advisory Committee (CWAC), and the Planning Advisory Committee (PAC).

Cemeteries

41. The Town Cemetery Commission will conduct a survey of existing locations for human burial and memorial and will assess future needs. This information will be used to review planning related concerns including zoning and long-term maintenance.

Charlotte is located within commuting distance of the cities of Burlington and South Burlington as well as areas in and around Middlebury. The town is bisected by 6.5 miles of US Route 7, a major north / south arterial highway and also contains approximately 74 miles of State Class 2 and 3 highways which serve as connectors to other regional arterial systems and as transporters of traffic within town. The remaining roads in Charlotte are private roads or Class 4 highways which provide access to adjacent land as their primary function. In addition to auto traffic, Charlotte's road network serves agricultural vehicles, bicycles, pedestrians, and equestrians. The larger transportation system includes a ferry route, a railroad, and sections of both on and off road routes for pedestrian, equestrian, bicycle, agriculture and / or snow mobile use. The Town encourages multi-modal forms of transportation while acknowledging that the most extensive portion of its transportation system is designed for use by automobile related traffic.

Key Planning Considerations:

1. The section of US Route 7 in proximity to the intersection of Ferry Road (F5) and Church Hill Road has been listed as a State High Crash Location (HCL) since the early 2000s.
2. Transportation energy is included in the State of Vermont's energy goal of obtaining 90% of energy from renewable sources by 2050. To meet this goal, a shift away from fossil fuels for powering both light-duty and heavy-duty vehicles will be necessary. The LEAP model (described in Section 1.12 – Energy) anticipates that by 2050, electric vehicles need to increase to 89% of the light duty vehicle fleet, and 96% of energy used by heavy duty vehicles needs to come from biodiesel.
3. Transportation energy is also included in the State of Vermont's energy goal of using 26.3% less energy for light-duty vehicles by 2050. Transportation energy use can be reduced by increasing opportunities for public transit or carpooling, as well as by siting future development that is easily accessible by walking or bicycling, rather than necessitating a car.
4. In 2011, the legislature passed Act 34: *An act relating to a transportation policy that considers all users:*

The purpose of this bill is to ensure that the needs of all users of Vermont's transportation system— including motorists, bicyclists, public transportation users, and pedestrians of all ages and abilities—are considered in all state and municipally managed transportation projects and project phases, including planning, development, construction, and maintenance, except in the case of projects or project components involving unpaved highways. These "complete streets" principles shall be integral to the transportation policy of Vermont.

Accommodating a wide variety of users on major and minor collector roads can be challenging, which necessitates thoughtful consideration as to design.

- 5.

6. Town residents have voiced concerns through a number of forums about excessive speeds of motor vehicles on Town highways. Adjusted Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) and speed data (e.g. 85th percentile, average, and pace speeds) for roads in Charlotte has been collected for most roads in the Town over time, which creates a comprehensive baseline of traffic information. For roadway improvements that involve traffic calming elements, this baseline data may prove useful for comparison to traffic data collected post-construction, indicating project efficacy.
7. Substandard design, development, and maintenance of road rights-of-way, bridges, and culverts can contribute to an increase in repair and maintenance costs over time and can also result in environmental concerns related to water quality, control of invasive species, fragmentation of wildlife habitat and working lands, and inundation and erosion hazards.
8. The Town of Charlotte has not adopted a capital budget and program which would aid in the scheduling of capital expenditures, including road construction and maintenance over time.
9. The Trail Vision Map will need to be updated once the Town Link Trail is completed in 2027, currently the town's Trails Committee web page has the most up to date trail information..

Transportation Policies:

Scenic Roads

1. The function of Route 7 as the main north-south corridor in the Town and a regional arterial highway shall be protected through the limitation of access points and the control of land use along the highway. The Route 7 corridor shall be protected as a scenic travel corridor.
2. Designated scenic roads (see Map 5A) will be maintained and only altered by the Town in accordance with "*The Vermont Backroad*",²⁴ a 1974 manual prepared for the Scenery Preservation Council, the Agency of Transportation, and the Ottauquechee Regional Planning Commission and / or as required by the State of Vermont.
3. Designated scenic roads inventory should be reviewed and updated with each Town Plan revision in accordance with guidelines and recommendations by the Scenery Preservation Council.

Expansions, Improvements, and Maintenance

4. Expansion of Route 7 to increase its capacity by the addition of new lanes shall only occur when the need has been clearly demonstrated, when all reasonable alternatives have been carefully examined, and when such improvements have been prepared within the context of the Chittenden County Long Range Transportation Plan for the Route 7 Corridor. Any improvements to the corridor shall make safety provisions for agricultural, bicycle, and pedestrian travel along the route and at intersections.

²⁴ "[The Vermont Backroad: A Guide for the Protection, Conservation, and Enhancement of Its Scenic Quality](#)", prepared by Northeast Environmental Design, Robert F. Longfield, Jr., Principal, Woodstock, Vermont, March 1974

5. Improvements to Route 7 shall consider east west travel connectivity needs and not adversely affect Areas of High Public Value.
6. Alternative regional arterial highways will not be considered within Town boundaries due to the potential for adverse impacts to Areas of High Public Value and the disruption to existing land use patterns.
7. Town highways will be upgraded according to a Town capital budget and program. Improvements to Town highways required by new development and not programmed by the Town will be the responsibility of developers. Conversion of gravel roads to paved roads will be discouraged unless there are compelling reasons to make the change.
8. The Town will not accept new roads for public ownership unless there is significant public input and identified benefit to do so to support land use policies of compact growth.
9. The Town will continue to elect a privatized road commissioner.
10. The Town, with the help of the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC) and the State of Vermont, will continue to monitor the intersection of US Route 7 and Ferry Road (F5) and Church Hill Road to ensure that safety issues are rectified. The Town recognized that actual improvements or modification to the intersection are the responsibility of the State. In addition, the Town will control land development in the vicinity to minimize traffic congestion and safety problems at this location that inappropriate land uses might cause. The Town will work to make sure that pedestrian and bicycle safety will be given appropriate attention when improvements are considered for this intersection.
11. The Town will maintain road and driveway standards for use in the development of new public and private roadways or the expansion of existing roadways.
12. The Town will advocate for the safe and responsible use of the railway and associated facilities.
13. The Town will continue to be a member of the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission and actively participate on the Transportation Advisory Committee and the Clean Water Advisory Committee.

Public Transit, Active Transportation, and Reduced Fossil Fuel Use

14. The town supports public transit, carpooling, and ridesharing opportunities for residents and those commuting into and through Charlotte.
15. The Town supports the development of park-and-ride facilities within the Town but only at appropriate locations that have been examined by the Town and the CCRPC for their appropriateness and have been found acceptable. The Town supports the incorporation of electric vehicle charging stations and solar facilities at these locations.
16. The Town will incorporate appropriate accommodations for bicyclists and pedestrians when improving Class 2 and Class 3 Town highways, based on the number of anticipated walkers,

bicyclists and other users; the AADT of the highway; the existing road widths; the posted speed limits and the surrounding land use and environmental conditions.

17. The Town will maintain its covered bridges as transportation facilities and will seek to protect these bridges from damage, destruction or excessive or incompatible use because they are a significant part of the character of the community and its heritage.
18. The Town supports the use of appropriate roads and trails to be available for uses such as bicycling, equestrian, and walking for transportation.

Transportation Strategies:

1. The Town will review and update, as necessary, the following ordinances and standards and will consider their incorporation into the Charlotte Land Use Regulations where applicable.
 - a. The Town will continue to implement the 2013 "Vermont Town Road and Bridge Standards" on all new and existing roads as applicable.
 - b. The Town will redevelop the current "Recommended Standards for Development and Homes, 1997" policy for private roads and driveways in consultation with the Fire Department, Road Commissioner, and the Planning Commission to update the ordinance and to include private roads.
 - c. The Town will redevelop the current "Highway Access Permit Policy and Procedure" into a municipal ordinance.
2. New private developments shall be required to establish adequate maintenance funds or other mechanisms to ensure compliance with the Town's roadway and driveway standards (*see item 1. above*). The Town will reserve the right to make improvements where needed and charge the development directly for the repairs.
3. **The Selectboard will adopt a Capital Budget and Program, which will include transportation and stormwater control infrastructure, as well as other town structures and capital equipment. A Capital Improvements Program will allow for the scheduled maintenance of town roads as needed and will prevent budget and tax rate fluctuations associated with large single expenditures.**
4. In the event that acquisition of municipally owned vehicles is considered, prioritize electric or biodiesel vehicles as feasible.
5. The Town will work with the State of Vermont / CCRPC to collect data on automobile, bicycle and pedestrian crashes; safety issues; and traffic volumes and speeds on Town roads on a routine basis.
6. The Town will consider the creation of park-and-ride lots at appropriate locations in the West Charlotte and East Charlotte villages, which might also serve as transit stops.

7. The Town will promote road development and maintenance regimes with guidance from the Vermont Better Roads Manual (as most recently updated).²⁵
8. The Town, with the help of the Trails Committee and Charlotte Energy & Climate Action Committee, will review and update and expand the Trail Vision Map (see Map 10) into a town-wide walking, equestrian and bicycling master plan to provide guidance on where, when and how bicycling, equestrian and walking opportunities for on-road and off-road transportation will be expanded and upgraded.
9. The Planning Commission will, where appropriate, consider provisions for sidewalks or trails and user amenities for new development in village districts.
10. The Town will support the implementation of bike lanes to accommodate bicycle commuters, where feasible.
11. The Selectboard shall review posted speed limits and consider adjusting them in accordance with State guidelines to promote safety.
12. The Town will work with the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission to develop village parking plans.
13. Railroad crossings on Town roads should be gated crossings with bicycle safe surfaces to ensure traffic, pedestrian and bicycle safety, and will include adequate mitigation of other potential adverse impacts from railroad activity, including pollution and hazardous conditions.
14. The Town shall be proactive with regard to the prevention of further development of additional rail sidings used for storage of railcars, or an alternate railyard site. The storage of railcars represents an intensification of an industrial use amidst primarily residential and agricultural uses, and is not compatible with this Plan. The current use of the siding as a de-facto railyard is not desired along the line, due to moving of cars, scenery degradation, pollution and potential hazardous conditions.
15. The Planning Commission and Charlotte Energy & Climate Action Committee will explore the addition of electric vehicle charging stations in Charlotte, either on municipal property or at other popular locations, in partnership with the Vermont Agency of Transportation and Drive Electric Vermont.
16. The Planning Commission and Charlotte Energy & Climate Action Committee will work with the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission, Green Mountain Transit, and the Vermont Agency of Transportation in exploring opportunities for ridesharing, park-n-ride facilities, bus stops, bicycle and pedestrian amenities, and other measures to reduce energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions in transportation.

²⁵ [Vermont Better Backroads Manual](http://vtrans.vermont.gov/highway/better-roads), George D. Aiken & Northern Vermont Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Councils, November 1995 / Updated 2002, 2009.
<http://vtrans.vermont.gov/highway/better-roads>

17. The Charlotte Energy & Climate Action Committee will work with the Champlain Valley School District to improve bus ridership and carpooling percentages and analyze the potential for use of biofuels or other means to reduce the environmental impact of school transportation.
18. The Charlotte Energy & Climate Action Committee will promote the Go Vermont webpage, which provides rideshare, vanpool, public transit and park-and-ride options.

The Town Plan seeks to guide local policy as it relates to energy demand and potential generation. Charlotte seeks to minimize energy use and greenhouse gas emissions within the Town while ensuring a secure energy future through conservation, improvements in efficiency and an increase in renewable energy use and production. The Town of Charlotte intends to adopt a Town Plan that:

- includes an energy element that has the same components as described in 24 V.S.A. § 4348a(a)(3)
- is consistent with state energy policy in the manner described in 24 V.S.A. § 4302(f)(1)
- meets all standards for issuing a determination of energy compliance.

Further details regarding the current planning framework for regions and municipalities are described in the Energy Section of Part 2, Charlotte Today. Upon adoption of the above-mentioned amendment/revisions to the energy-related portions of the Town Plan, the Town shall seek to have the Town Plan certified by the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission for an affirmative determination of energy compliance.

Key Planning Considerations:

1. The following state legislation govern a municipality's ability to influence energy generation.
 - In 2015, Act 56 stipulated minimum setbacks for solar electric generation facilities, and empowered municipalities to adopt solar screening bylaws that applied the same screening provisions to solar generation facilities as apply to other commercial development in the municipality. In 2015, the Charlotte Town Plan and Land Use Regulations were amended to include some direction regarding the siting of energy projects, see guidance below.

Figure 5: Guidance for Planning Renewable Energy Projects

Guidance for Planning Renewable Energy Projects

Careful planning of energy generation projects, particularly larger projects, will often incorporate several of the following characteristics:

- Roof-mounted systems; where feasible
- Active engagement with neighboring property owners early in the planning stages;
- Systems located in close proximity to, or screened by, existing large-scale commercial, industrial or agricultural buildings;
- Proximity to existing hedgerows, evergreen vegetation, berms, hills, or other topographical features that naturally minimize the aesthetic impact of the proposed solar project;
- Reuse of former brownfields or otherwise impacted property, which otherwise complies with the setback requirements of these regulations.

Projects that have NOT been carefully planned often fail to consider the following:

- Natural screening;
- Placement within topography that causes the project to be highly visible against the skyline, or a dominant feature when viewed from public, historic or scenic places, and common vantage points like roads, neighborhoods or within a significant viewshed. Significant viewsheds within the Town of Charlotte include the Town's scenic roads and vistas (Town Plan Map 9);
- A location that requires clear-cutting or fragmentation of the working landscape;
- Disruption of wildlife habitat including core habitat areas, migratory routes, and travel corridors.

- In 2016, Act 174 established a process for “enhanced energy planning,” which encourages municipalities to write plans that meet the Department of Public Service’s “Energy Planning Standards for Municipal Plans.” If a plan meets the standards for enhanced energy planning outlined in 24 V.S.A. §4352, it will gain an affirmative determination of energy compliance. A plan with an affirmative determination gains “substantial deference” in Public Utility Commission proceedings, meaning that a land conservation measure or specific policy (e.g. development restriction) shall be applied in accordance with its terms unless there is a clear and convincing demonstration that other factors affecting the general good of the State outweigh the application of the measure or policy. This is a higher standard of review than a municipal plan’s policies would otherwise receive.
- The [Vermont Net Metering Rules](#) provide financial benefits to electricity generation projects on “preferred sites,” as well as allowing for projects on those sites to be

- larger than those built elsewhere. Preferred sites include pre-existing structures, parking lot canopies, previously developed land, brownfields, landfills, gravel pits, Superfund sites, sites on the same parcel as a customer taking 50% or more of the output, and town designated sites. Towns can designate sites as preferred sites either by identifying them specifically in a duly adopted town plan, or by submitting a joint letter of support from the municipal planning commission, municipal legislative body and regional planning commission.
2. The State of Vermont has promulgated a Comprehensive Energy Plan (CEP) that sets ambitious statewide energy goals. These goals also apply to Charlotte:
 - Reduce greenhouse gas emissions by:
 - 26% from 2006 levels by 2025;
 - 40% from 1990 levels by 2030;
 - 80% from 1990 levels by 2050.
 - Obtain 90% of all energy across all sectors from renewable sources by 2050, with interim goals of 25% renewable by 2025 and 45% renewable by 2035.
 - In the transportation sector, meet 10% of energy needs from renewable sources by 2025, and 45% by 2035.
 - In the thermal sector, meet 30% of energy needs from renewable sources by 2025, and 70% by 2042.
 - In the electric sector, meet 100% of energy needs from carbon-free resources by 2032, with at least 75% from renewable sources.
 3. As in the rest of Vermont, much of the energy used in Charlotte currently comes from fossil fuels. However, this will have to change if Charlotte wishes to meet the goals of the State Comprehensive Energy Plan (see the Energy section of **Chapter 2 - Charlotte Today: Community Profile** for more details). The following changes are anticipated to be the most likely pathway to meet these goals, given current technologies.
 - **Weatherization and Efficiency Upgrade Targets:** 68% of commercial and industrial establishments and 68% of residences will need to be weatherized by 2050. 110 commercial establishments and 1,204 residences will need to have completed projects that increase electric efficiency.
 - **Heating Fuel Switching Targets:** by 2050, 93% of residences and will use heat pumps instead of delivered fossil fuels, and residences using wood heat will decrease to 5% (note that homes may use multiple heating sources). In the commercial sector, modeling anticipates installation of 1,724 mini-split heat pumps (or an equivalent capacity in other systems such as centrally-ducted heat pumps), while the percent of establishments using wood heat will increase to 12% to displace fossil fuels.

- **Transportation Fuels Target:** Total transportation energy use for light-duty vehicles will decrease by 26.3%. Electric vehicles will increase to 98% of the light duty vehicle fleet, and the non-electric transportation fuels will increase from 8% to 10% biofuel (ethanol) blend (also discussed in Section 1.11 – Transportation).
4. To be “energy compliant”, the Charlotte Town Plan must be consistent with the goals of the *Vermont Comprehensive Energy Plan* and must plan to accommodate enough renewable energy generation to meet the municipal generation targets set by the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission. The target set for Charlotte is to generate additional annual output 39,333 MWh of electricity within Charlotte per year by 2050 (about 1,573.32 MWh of new generation each year). This is a total addition of approximately 4x the amount of generation currently located in the town.
- These targets can be met with any renewable technology. For example, if they were met with current solar panels technology only, meeting the targets would require 48 acres to 104 acres of solar panels by 2050, or 0.2% to 0.4% of Charlotte’s total land area.
 - There are many mixes of generation types and sizes that could meet this target, such as the following examples:
 - One example for meeting the target includes the following combination of solar systems:
 - 15 additional mid-size commercial ground mounted of 2MW each
 - 60 additional large net-metered sites of 500kW each
 - 200 additional small net-metered sites of 150kW each
 - 299 additional large net-metered rooftop systems of 100kW each
 - 1,996 small net-metered rooftop systems of 15kW each

5. Climate change and more frequent intense weather events have increased our focus on the link between energy planning and a secure future.
6. The average cost of energy inputs continues to rise, and fuel price fluctuations increase financial insecurity for Charlotte citizens who struggle to pay their energy bills, especially in the winter. Energy efficiency and conservation efforts such as improved insulation and weatherization of new and existing structures often have a dramatic impact on reducing fuel consumption and household bills.
7. There is a growing awareness of the complementary relationship between energy independence and a strong economy. Energy efficiency investments in Vermont continue to provide significant positive net impacts to the state’s economy and the renewable energy sector continues to grow. Life-cycle assessment is an additional important planning consideration and tool.
8. Siting renewable energy projects requires a careful balance between the local and regional public benefit of local generation, the appropriate use of land and the impacts on individuals, communities and natural resources directly impacted by siting. Early communications and outreach can help to achieve an appropriate balance for new renewable energy projects.
9. According to the Comprehensive Energy Plan (CEP), transportation fuel accounts for the largest portion (35%) of Vermont’s total energy consumption and almost half (47%) of the state’s greenhouse gas emissions.²⁶

Energy Policies

1. In keeping with the state energy plan, the Town will seek to minimize energy use in private, public and commercial buildings and work toward ‘zero net energy’ use in all sectors by 2050²⁷.
2. Energy Planning - CECAC suggests energy planning be a part of all relevant town projects and initiatives and that town staff, Selectboard and commissions engage CECAC to assist with recommendations for most cost- and energy-efficient options, including particular attention to equitable energy planning.

Net Zero Energy Building

A building that uses only as much energy as it produces through on-site renewable energy in a single year

²⁶ State of Vermont, Department of Public Service, “*2016 Vermont Comprehensive Energy Plan*”, Chapter 8. Transportation, p. 135, http://publicservice.vermont.gov/publications-resources/publications/energy_plan/2016_plan

²⁷ A building that uses only as much energy as it produces through on-site renewable energy in a single year. Source: Efficiency Vermont.

3. The Town will support efforts to reduce the use of greenhouse gas emitting transportation fuels and create opportunities for active transportation, as well as the increased use of high occupancy vehicles including public transportation when possible.
4. The town will support state legislation and regulations aimed at improving energy conservation and efficiency in buildings.
5. Charlotte will encourage greater use of renewables within municipal buildings and support local production of biofuels, small-scale wind, solar, and other renewable energy generation by local residents and businesses.

Siting Policies

6. The Town of Charlotte’s first priority is decreasing energy use and thereby increasing system capacity through state, utility and municipally-supported conservation and efficiency programs. However, new generation will also be necessary to meet Charlotte’s energy goals. Charlotte will support the following types of energy development in order of priority. All generation facilities discussed below must comply with the development restrictions discussed in Policy 9 (below).

- Individual and small-scale renewable energy projects and rooftop systems of any size
- New community-scale renewable energy projects located on preferred sites as defined in the State of Vermont’s Net Metering Rules and shown on the map titled “Existing Renewable Energy Sites & Preferred Sites.”
- New community-scale renewable energy projects.
- Utility-scale renewable energy projects as needed to meet the Town of Charlotte’s generation goals

7. To ensure that renewable energy generation development in Charlotte meets the standards established in this plan, the Town will seek opportunities for early involvement in the planning / permitting process and will encourage outreach to and among neighbors. The Town will actively encourage and support the development of renewable energy that complements the working landscape and avoids undue adverse impacts to the view sheds of the neighboring properties and Areas of High Public Value.

Individual or Small-Scale

Projects with a capacity up to 150 kW

Community Scale

Projects with a capacity between 150 kW and 1 MW

Utility Scale or Large Scale

Projects with a capacity over 1 MW

Preferred Sites

Existing structures, parking lots, previously developed sites, brownfields, landfills, disturbed portions of gravel pits and quarries, or site identified in a joint letter from the planning commission, select board and Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (See Vermont’s Net Metering Rule 5.100, effective July 1, 2017 for more information)

8. The development of renewable energy generation facilities shall be evaluated with the same standards applied to other development in Charlotte, i.e. the policies applied to Areas of High Public Value elsewhere in this plan.
 - a. State Known and Possible Constraints on renewable energy generation (shown in the maps titled “State Known Constraints” and “State Possible Constraints,” should be avoided or impacts minimized in the manner described in the 2018 ECOS Regional Plan.
 - i. State Known Constraints: FEMA Floodways, DEC River Corridors, National Wilderness Areas, State-significant Natural Communities, Rare, Threatened, and Endangered Species, Vernal Pools (confirmed), Class 1 and 2 wetlands (VSWI and advisory layers)
 - ii. State Possible Constraints: Agricultural Soils + Hydric Soils, Act 250 Agricultural Soil Mitigation Areas, FEMA Special Flood Hazard Areas, VT Conservation Design Highest Priority elements (Interior Forest Blocks, Connectivity Blocks, Physical Landscape Blocks, Surface Water and Riparian Areas, Protected Lands (State fee lands and private conservation lands), Deer Wintering Areas, Vernal Pools (potential and probable)
 - b. Local Possible Constraints: Areas of High Public Value as listed in Chapter 1.2, Figure 1 are considered local possible constraints to development. Where impacts to these constraints cannot be avoided, any impacts shall be minimized by following the development review standards in the Charlotte Land Use Regulations and the “Ecological Site Assessment Protocol” as evaluated by the Town of Charlotte.
 - c. The size and configuration of energy generation and transmission projects shall follow the specific use standards outlined in the Charlotte Land Use Regulations to the extent allowed under state law.
9. Policies of the Utilities, Facilities and Services section of the Town Plan, regarding the location and appearance of utility lines and poles, shall also be applied to utility lines and poles related to renewable energy generation facilities.

Energy Strategies for Conservation, Efficiency, and Generation

1. The Charlotte Energy & Climate Action Committee will work with the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission to monitor and communicate goals for town total and per capita energy use and identify additional strategies to meet or improve upon these goals.
2. The Selectboard will provide town employees with the necessary equipment and training to facilitate conference calls, webinars, and other virtual meetings and information sharing.
3. The Town will implement the strategies for public transportation, ridesharing, walking and biking discussed in Section 1.11 – Transportation.

4. The Development Review Board will stress the importance of energy efficient design in the context of Subdivision and Site Plan design. Charlotte's Zoning Administrator will continue to inform anyone building in Charlotte of the Vermont Residential Building Energy Standards.
5. The Town will support the Charlotte Energy & Climate Action Committee's efforts to encourage greater energy efficiency among existing residences and businesses and the use of energy audits and building performance certification where appropriate, so that at least 25% of existing homes and businesses and 50% of new homes and businesses should meet the requirements of the Vermont Stretch Energy Code by 2025.
6. The Charlotte Energy & Climate Action Committee will promote the Vermont Low Income Weatherization Program, which provides weatherization assistance to low income Vermonters and those who receive Supplemental Security Income or Seasonal Fuel Assistance.
7. The Planning Commission will update the Outdoor Lighting Section of the Land Use Regulations to include specific energy efficiency standards for outdoor lighting.
8. The Charlotte Energy & Climate Action Committee will pursue a variety of funding sources to continue the "Energy Shelf" program at the Charlotte Food Shelf. This Ongoing project of the CECAC has evolved into a partnership with the Charlotte Library, and at the recommendation of a project consultant, with an emphasis on equity, is now called the Charlotte Weatherization Program. Through this program, CECAC offers DIY weatherization materials free of charge to low- and moderate-income Charlotters, as well as guidance for larger scale weatherization funding and programs. The expansion of the Charlotte Library of Things could also be mentioned - emphasizing the equitable sharing of resources.
9. The Town of Charlotte and the Charlotte Energy & Climate Action Committee will continue to work together to coordinate energy audits of public buildings, hire contractors to complete efficiency upgrades, and enroll public buildings in energy certification programs as appropriate.
10. The Charlotte Energy & Climate Action Committee will work with partners including Efficiency Vermont and local manufacturers to provide education on advanced wood heating systems and promote wood stove change-out programs.
11. The Charlotte Energy & Climate Action Committee will work with energy utility partners including Green Mountain Power to provide education on the installation and use of cold climate heat pumps for heating.
12. In keeping with the updated statutory goals of the Comprehensive Energy Plan (CEP), the Vermont Climate Action Plan, and the renewable energy generation goals set in the *2026 Chittenden County ECOS Plan*, Charlotte will strive to meet 25% of its energy use from renewable sources by 2025, 45% by 2035, and 90% by 2050, and to generate an annual output of 48,762 MWh of electricity within Charlotte by 2050 (including 9,332.47 MWh of existing generation).

13. The Planning Commission and the Charlotte Energy & Climate Action Committee will analyze town-owned lands for potential renewable energy generation projects. This analysis will include factors related to environmental constraints and aesthetic concerns as well as resource potential. If town-owned land is determined to be appropriate for renewable energy generation, the town will consider identifying it as a “preferred site” for generation.
14. The Town Selectboard and Planning Commission will assess impacts to Areas of High Public Value from proposed energy projects and will participate in PUC proceedings if warranted.
15. Sites planned for or intended to accommodate planned energy facility development, including the location of existing and planned commercial and net-metered generation facilities and utility corridors, are to be shown on site development and subdivision plans reviewed by the town.
16. The Charlotte Energy & Climate Action Committee will review and where appropriate recommend the implementation of financial incentives such as a modified permit fee structure to encourage residents and businesses to undertake more weatherization renovations and energy efficient building.
17. The Town will support local organizations in their efforts to implement and meet the Town’s energy efficiency, conservation, sustainability and production goals.
18. The Town, through its Charlotte Energy & Climate Action Committee, will educate citizens (including other volunteer Boards and Committees) regarding energy related matters. This will include organizing public information sessions on energy conservation strategies, emerging technologies and policy discussions.
19. Charlotte will explore the adoption of a solar screening bylaw (per Act 56 of 2015) to require screening for ground-mounted solar panels similar to the screening required for commercial development in Charlotte.

A strategy to implement plan objectives is a required component of any Vermont municipal plan.

“Any municipality that has adopted and has in effect a plan and has created a planning commission under this chapter may implement the plan by adopting, amending and enforcing any or all of the regulatory and nonregulatory tools provided for in this chapter. All such regulatory and nonregulatory tools shall be in conformance with the plan, shall be adopted for the purposes set forth in section 4302 of this title, and shall be in accord with the policies set forth therein.” (24 V.S.A. § 4401)

Furthermore, ‘conformance with the plan’ by definition of State statute includes all of the following criteria (according to 24 V.S.A. § 4303);

1. *Makes progress toward attaining, or at least does not interfere with, the goals and policies contained in the municipal plan.*
2. *Provides for proposed future land uses, densities, and intensities of development contained in the municipal plan.*
3. *Carries out, as applicable, any specific proposals for community facilities, or other proposed actions contained in the municipal plan.*

The following table lists the actionable strategies within each section of this Chapter and proposes their estimated timeline and the municipal party or cooperating entities responsible for undertaking the task **(view listing of the parties at the end of table)***.

Strategy	Responsible Municipal Party and / or Cooperating Entities	Timeframe (Anticipated Completion)	Status
Develop a framework for moving forward with the work completed by the Charlotte Wastewater Committees.	SB, PC	Ongoing	In progress
Review Land Use Regulations	PC, SB	Ongoing	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The outcomes of the East and West Villages Report will be considered by the Planning Commission when proposing future land use regulations. 	PC	2025-2026	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advisory design guidelines – including Thompson’s Point, Historic Districts, Villages, US Route 7 / Ferry Road, seawalls. 	PC	Ongoing	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate if need additional overlay districts 	PC	2026	

Strategy	Responsible Municipal Party and / or Cooperating Entities	Timeframe (Anticipated Completion)	Status
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Riparian buffer and setback standards 	PC, CC	Ongoing	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update regulations to accommodate farm related-businesses with due consideration to potential impacts on the community. 	PC	2026	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stormwater management best management practices for existing & new project development. Incorporation of "Low Impact Development" (LID) standards and Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI) design principles for attenuating stormwater flow, maximize onsite stormwater retention and infiltration, and prevention of direct discharge into town right-of-way, streams, and surface waters. 	PC	Ongoing	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flood hazard areas 	PC, CC		Complete
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adequate water supply / no interference / public notice 	SB, PC	Ongoing	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recharge areas 	SB, PC	2026	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review local environmental studies/assessments completed when reviewing updates to the Land Use regulations (particularly with the State-owned property abutting the rail line and Ferry Road). 	SB, PC, CC	Ongoing	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For village areas, pedestrian pathways to serve development shall be incorporated in subdivision or site plan design where feasible, to connect to existing and planned public pedestrian pathways 	SB, PC, DRB	2026	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider the creation of an overlay district to nurture small-scale agriculture in appropriate locations within the Rural Residential District 	SB, PC	2026	

Strategy	Responsible Municipal Party and / or Cooperating Entities	Timeframe (Anticipated Completion)	Status
Consider the adoption of an Official Map for village areas which enables the reservation of lands for drainage, streets, parks, schools, and other public facilities. This map would be influenced by the 2026 town vote of whether to opt into Tier 1b status or not.	PC, SB	2026	
During development review, <i>Areas of High Public Value</i> will be identified and prioritized based on the qualities and relative values of each resource. This analysis will use the “Ecologist Site Assessment Protocol” for each site under review, and will also consider resources in the broader context as appropriate (e.g. Preservation of forest blocks - Act 171). Land development projects will be designed to complement existing land uses.	PC, DRB, CC	Ongoing	
Complete an Open Space and Conservation Action Plan and work with organizations to ensure protection of identified resources.	PC, CC, CLT	Ongoing	
Complete a road inventory and road stormwater management plan	SB, RC, CCRPC, VTANR	2026	
Continue updating / maintaining the Significant Wildlife Habitat Map and annually review land use trends, emphasizing the protection of forest blocks and habitat connectors as per Act 171 of 2016.	PC, CC, CCRPC	2025-2028	
The Planning Commission, Conservation Commission, and Development Review Board will meet annually to review land use development decisions over the previous year, which may have considered the protection of forest blocks.	PC, DRB, CC	Ongoing	
Update Private Road and Driveway Development Standards (or Development Standards)	SB, PC, RC, CVFRS	2026	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include stormwater management options, management recommendations like roadside 	SB, PC, CC	Ongoing	

mowing to control spread of invasive species, etc.			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporate B71 and A76 standards as appropriate 	SB, PC	2019	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fire ponds and dry hydrants 	SB, PC, CC, CVFRS	2019	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flood resiliency 	SB, PC, CC	2019	
Develop procedures for updating and maintaining Charlotte-based GIS layers. Identify other clearinghouses for resource related information and ensure that the best available data are used in all resource related work and development review that involves mapping and analysis.	Staff, TW, CCRPC, VCGI	Ongoing	
Inventory existing public access areas and develop an access management plan which outlines recommended improvements (if any). A timeline for the completion of these improvements will be included in the plan, which will be updated at least every five years.	SB, PC, CC, TrC	2027	
Monitor the possible future need to establish Mooring Management Areas for the Lake Champlain shoreline.	SB	Ongoing	
Provide education on nonmunicipal water supply and wastewater system for the East and West villages for the anticipated increase in development. Facilitate community dialogue to lead the effort.	PC	Ongoing	
Review zoning regulations to ensure protection of sand, gravel, and stone resources, as well as well-planned extraction in appropriate areas.	PC	2026	
Inventory and track farmland acreage, the number and type of farming operations and farm ownership patterns in town; create registry.	CC, CLT	Ongoing	Map completed by the Grange & CLT 2022-2024
Continue to inventory, catalogue and map historical and cultural resources.	CC, PC, Staff	Ongoing	
Strategy	Responsible Municipal Party and / or Cooperating Entities	Timeframe (Anticipated Completion)	Status

<p>Adopt specific lighting standards under the town’s land use regulations and, at the same time, conduct public informational meetings to educate the public regarding strategies to avoid light pollution.</p>	<p>PC, SB, CECAC</p>	<p>2027</p>	
<p>Review and improve upon (if possible) the current scenic road inventories and the classification methodology (undertaken by Larry Hamilton in 1999) and re-evaluate other potential scenic roads (Mt. Philo - north, Greenbush -north, Hinesburg Rd., et al.) by recommending for possible addition to the scenic road map, which will serve as guidance for development review and roadside maintenance.</p>	<p>SB, PC, Staff, RC</p>	<p>2027</p>	
<p>Complete a build out analysis of areas in and around existing villages. The analysis will be completed in the context of existing and planned facilities (e.g. septic). Land use regulations will be evaluated and revised, if appropriate, to encourage village densities that are greater than those in surrounding rural areas.</p>	<p>PC, CCRPC</p>	<p>2026</p>	<p>Began in 2023 with the Charlotte East and West Villages Project and is ongoing.</p>
<p>Reappoint members to an Affordable / Senior Housing Committee. This group will work with the Planning Commission in evaluating land use regulation incentives for the creation of affordable / senior housing. Establish an annual meeting between the Planning Commission and the Affordable / Senior Housing Committee to assess the Town’s progress in meeting housing needs.</p>	<p>SB, PC, ASHC, Staff, CECAC</p>	<p>2026</p>	
<p>Encourage development review applicants to consider affordable or senior housing when presenting their subdivision proposals at Sketch Plan Review and provide information about the Affordable Housing Trust Fund.</p>	<p>DRB, Staff</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	
<p>Review environmental assessments completed for the state owned property near the railway (north of Ferry Road) and determine if more information is needed. This information will be used when considering zoning alternatives as part of the Land Use Regulation process update.</p>	<p>SB, PC, Staff</p>	<p>2026-2027</p>	

Strategy	Responsible Municipal Party and / or Cooperating Entities	Timeframe (Anticipated Completion)	Status
Continue to support and provide access to social and cultural facilities, organizations, and events that serve the needs of Charlotte residents and highlight and celebrate the Charlotte community. See Utilities, Facilities, and Services Strategies .	SB, PC, SC, Library	Ongoing	
Strategy	Responsible Municipal Party and / or Cooperating Entities	Timeframe (Anticipated Completion)	Status
Work with the Senior Center and the Library in the development of a parking plan. The plan will help to identify areas for additional parking including opportunities for shared parking with other uses in the West Charlotte Village.	SB, PC, SC, Library	2025-2027	
Regularly update the hazards mitigation plan for FEMA-approval, and the emergency response and operation plans.	CVFRS, SB	Ongoing	
Oversee and ensure the timely implementation of the master plan for the Burn’s Property.	SB	Ongoing	
Evaluate options for energy efficiency in town buildings.	SB, CECAC	Ongoing	
Develop a capital budget and 5-year capital improvement program (CIP), for Selectboard consideration and adoption, that identifies and schedules planned capital improvements in relation to existing debt service and available sources of funding.	PC, SB	Ongoing	
In the event that acquisition of municipally owned vehicles is considered, prioritize electric or biodiesel vehicles as feasible.	SB	Ongoing	
Strategy	Responsible Municipal Party and / or Cooperating Entities	Timeframe (Anticipated Completion)	Status
Explore the addition of electric vehicle charging stations in Charlotte, either on municipal property or at other popular locations, in partnership with the Vermont Agency of Transportation and Drive Electric Vermont. First two public charging stations installed at Charlotte Town Hall in July 2020.	PC, CECAC	Ongoing	

Support the inclusion of appropriate accommodations for pedestrians and cyclists whenever improvements to major paved roads (e.g. Route 7, Spear Street, Hinesburg Road (Church Hill Road), Mount Philo Road, etc.) are undertaken.	SB, PC, TrC	Ongoing	
Conduct a survey of existing locations for human burial and memorial and will assess future needs. This information will be used to review planning related concerns including zoning and long-term maintenance.	CeC	Ongoing	
Promote the Go Vermont webpage, which provides rideshare, vanpool, public transit and park-and-ride options.	CECAC	Ongoing	
Work with the State of Vermont / CCRPC to collect data on automobile, bicycle and pedestrian crashes; safety issues; and traffic volumes and speeds on Town roads on a routine basis.	SB, PC, Staff, CCRPC, VTrans	Ongoing	
Review posted speed limits and consider adjusting them in accordance with State guidelines to promote safety.	SB	2026	
Appoint an Economic Development Committee	SB	TBD	
Strategy	Responsible Municipal Party and / or Cooperating Entities	Timeframe (Anticipated Completion)	Status
Work with the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission to monitor and communicate goals for town total and per capita energy use and identify additional strategies to meet or improve upon these goals.	CECAC	Ongoing	
Provide town employees with the necessary equipment and training to facilitate conference calls, webinars, and other virtual meetings and information sharing.	SB	Ongoing	
Stress the importance of energy efficient design in the context of Subdivision and Site Plan design. Charlotte’s Zoning Administrator will continue to educate anyone building in Charlotte about the Vermont Residential Building Energy Standards.	DRB, ZA	Ongoing	

The Town will support the Charlotte Energy & Climate Action Committee’s efforts to encourage greater energy efficiency among existing residences and businesses and the use of energy audits and building performance certification where appropriate, so that at least 25% of existing homes and businesses and 50% of new homes and businesses shall meet the requirements of the Vermont Stretch Energy Code.	CECAC, SB, EVT (Efficiency Vermont)	Ongoing	
The Charlotte Energy & Climate Action Committee will promote the Vermont Low Income Weatherization Program, which provides weatherization assistance to low income Vermonters and those who receive Supplemental Security Income or Seasonal Fuel Assistance.	CECAC, SB, Champlain Valley Weatherization	Ongoing	
The Planning Commission will update the Outdoor Lighting Section of the Land Use Regulations to include specific energy efficiency standards for outdoor lighting.	PC, CECAC	2026	
Strategy	Responsible Municipal Party and / or Cooperating Entities	Timeframe (Anticipated Completion)	Status
Pursue a variety of funding sources to continue the “Energy Shelf” program at the Charlotte Food Shelf.	CECAC	Ongoing	
Continue to work together to coordinate energy audits of public buildings, hire contractors to complete efficiency upgrades, and enroll public buildings in energy certification programs as appropriate.	CECAC, SB, Town Staff	Ongoing	
Work with partners including Efficiency Vermont and local manufacturers to provide education on advanced wood heating systems and promote wood stove change-out programs.	CECAC, EVT (Efficiency Vermont)	Ongoing	
Work with energy utility partners including Green Mountain Power to provide education on the installation and use of cold climate heat pumps for heating.	CECAC, Green Mountain Power	Ongoing	

<p>In keeping with the updated statutory goals of the CEP and the renewable energy generation goals set in the <i>2026 Chittenden County CECACOS Plan</i>, Charlotte will strive to meet 25% of its energy use from renewable sources by 2025, 45% by 2035, and 90% by 2050, and to generate an annual output of an additional 7,548 MWh to 16,031 MWh of electricity within Charlotte by 2050.</p>	<p>CECAC, SB, CCRPC, Green Mountain Power</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	
<p>Analyze town-owned lands for potential renewable energy generation projects. This analysis will include factors related to environmental constraints and aesthetic concerns as well as resource potential. If town-owned land is determined to be appropriate for renewable energy generation, the town will consider identifying it as a “preferred site” for generation.</p>	<p>PC, CECAC, CC</p>	<p>2025</p>	
<p>Strategy</p>	<p>Responsible Municipal Party and / or Cooperating Entities</p>	<p>Timeframe (Anticipated Completion)</p>	<p>Status</p>
<p>Assess impacts to Areas of High Public Value from proposed energy projects and will participate in PUC proceedings if warranted.</p>	<p>SB, PC</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	
<p>Sites planned for or intended to accommodate planned energy facility development, including the location of existing and planned commercial and net-metered generation facilities and utility corridors, are to be shown on site development and subdivision plans reviewed by the town.</p>	<p>DRB</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	
<p>The Charlotte Energy & Climate Action Committee will review and where appropriate recommend the implementation of financial incentives such as a modified permit fee structure to encourage residents and businesses to undertake more weatherization renovations and energy efficient building.</p>	<p>CECAC, PC, SB</p>	<p>2023</p>	
<p>Support local organizations in their efforts to implement efforts to meet the Town’s</p>	<p>CECAC, CC, SB</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	

energy efficiency, conservation, sustainability and production goals.			
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Listing of Cooperating Entities

- ASHC** – Affordable / Senior Housing Committee,
- CC** – Conservation Commission,
- CCDG** – Charlotte Community Dev Group,
- CCRPC** – Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission
- CeC** – Cemetery Commission
- CLT** – Charlotte Land Trust
- CSWD** – Chittenden Solid Waste District
- CVFRS** – Charlotte Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service
- DRB** –Development Review Board
- CECAC** – Charlotte Energy & Climate Action Committee
- EVT** – Efficiency Vermont
- PC** – Planning Commission
- RC** – Road Commissioner
- ReC** – Recreation Commission
- SB** – Selectboard
- TrC** – Trails Committee
- TW** – Tree Warden
- VTrans** – Vermont Agency of Transportation
- ZA** – Zoning Administrator