

Montgomery Planning Commission Minutes

Special Meeting

Public Safety Building

October 24th, 2023, 6:00 p.m.

Present: Peter Locher, Alissa Hardy, Joe Sherman & Gwen S.

Guest(s): Emily Klofft (Regional Planning)

Meeting called to order at 6:06pm

1. Additions / Deletions to the Agenda

One commission member resigned, open/ interim spot on commission

2. Approval of the October 12th 2023 Meeting Minutes

Joe motioned to approve as written, Alissa 2nd - All in favor, Approved 3-0

3. Open Seat on Planning Commision

- A. Open seat leaves an interim spot until March. In March a public vote would determine final candidate for filling the position
- B. PC discussed perhaps not spending time on filling the interim spot as the Town Plan is taking up a significant amount of time & is due in February.
- C. Bringing in a new member would require them to play a lot of catch up
- D. PC moved to table the interim position for now & proceed as a 4 some, pending the comments of the select board

4. Review of grant applications due Nov. 1st 2023

- A. Charlie signed, Peter to complete rest of application steps for posting

- B. Emily noted Regional Planning would determine grant awardees approx. December
- C. PC reviewed application documents, see attachment A
 - a. PC discussed changing application wording from Option - to study possible area/ applicability of Neighborhood Designation areas (NDA)
 - b. Typically NDAs also have access to town water/ wastewater, which is a pending project in Montgomery
 - c. Alissa made motion to use Regional Planning as agent/ consultant for the grant
 - i. Discussion: Joe noted it may be worth working with consultants for expertise /other experiences in other towns for wider vision. PC discussed good experiences working with Regional Planning and agreed Regional Planning would keep the project progressing, especially if we can work with Emily - who has become familiar with the needs and challenges of Montgomery.
 - ii. Peter 2nd, Alissa's motion, all in favor, motion passed 3-0

5. Continue Discussion of Town Plan Update

See Attachment B - unformatted version of current town plan draft, formatted version will be reviewed in November

- A. Minor comments:
 - a. Pg.4 review of vision: Alissa suggests replacing one of the "thrives" with a different word
 - b. Pg. 5 planning process - Emily noted a summary of planning event was added as an attachment
 - c. Goals and policies, comments & items from previous meeting minutes were added
 - d. Pg. 10 reviewed suggested edit to housing goal reviewed. PC liked Emily's suggested goal wording. Minor typo noted at bottom of page
 - e. Pg. 16 - natural resources #7, perhaps move to land use to have any new development maintain a natural strip to rivers/streams
 - f. Pg. 16 - ridgelines, Emily noted they need to be added by next meeting, perhaps they can be listed as an appendix. Wind turbines, cell towers, development can be restricted, but not all productive uses of the land. Development in ridgelines/ scenic areas can somewhat be controlled with bylaw updates ie. building heights & specific protection areas.
 - g. Add to implementation section a table that reflects timing meanings of short/medium/ongoing

B. Review policies & goals for energy chapter

- a. Pg. 14 energy policies and goals, look good
- b. Add to energy section of implementation table timing & responsibilities
- c. Pg. 19 energy implementon missing timing & responsibility - to be filled in completely - #42 short , #41 ongoing, #40 ongoing, #43 short (Emily noted with the current MERP Assessments - Municipal Energy Resilience Program - Montgomery is a priority community) #45 short, #46 ongoing, #44 ongoing, #47 change to maintain new one owned by town & ongoing, #48 road commissioner, #49 planning commission & short, #50 & #51 selectboard, #52 ongoing. Emily to complete table for next draft

C. Discuss future development area(s)

- a. Jumping to land use Pg. 55 - other pages have been largely reviewed in previous meetings
- b. Studying the potential for neighborhood designation area(s) should be added to plan, to match modernization grant
- c. Pg. 61 to add box(s) showing study area(s) near villages
 - i. These study areas will represent locations under consideration from changing the zoning from rural residential to village zoning. If future changes to the zoning designations/ maps are made, a minor future amendment to the plan can be made, simply to update zoning maps in town plan
 - ii. Discussion of village study area(s) & rural residential study area(s):
 - 1. Old hamlet areas: Four corners on west hill rd, hutchins & hectorville, hutchins bridge rd, making these areas village zoning study areas may be in conflict when there is not currently village zoning to expand from
 - 2. Lower land between 242 and hazens notch road and south of 242, as well as between 118 & black falls, as well as east side of 118 between both existing villages, as well as hutchins may be areas to study
 - 3. PC determined the East side of 118, connecting the two existing village areas, extending from Black Falls rd southward to Rte 58 - would be an ideal study area.

D. Review Appendix A

- A. Allissa noted, Appendix A groups previously thought no longer active in last meeting - are still active & shall remain in Appendix A. With exception to the Montgomery Town Association, this group is no longer active and shall be removed.
- B. Adding to Appendix A may be the following groups:
 - a. Montgomery Smiles & Community Orchard

E. Collection of scenic areas to list within plan

- 1. Scenic areas to list in plan still need to be collected
 - 2. Emily noted they need to be listed/ developed by the Nov. 14th meeting to be included in the Town Plan
 - 3. PC members to take note of scenic areas around town between now and then & develop a list.
 - 4. Joe to reach out to local conservation groups/ members who may have scenic areas to add to list
 - 5. List may describe locations as GPS coordinates and direction of gaze, or photo & location of photo taken
- ii. Discuss warning schedule for new town plan
- 1. November meeting shall be final draft review w/ formatting
 - 2. After any changes noted in the November meeting, PC shall hold a public hearing for public review of the draft plan. This hearing will have a 30 & 15 day warnings. Neighboring communities, regional planning and the state shall have 30 day warning & public will have a 15 day warning. Alissa noted we should offer a zoom meeting link for those that would like to attend remotely.
 - 3. After the PC hearing, minor edits may be made & the draft is then brought to the select board.
 - 4. The select board must wait 30 days before holding their own public hearing. They must also warn their meeting with a min. of 15 days.
 - 5. Any select board changes are then finalized
 - 6. Town plan expires Feb. 15th 2024

6. Public comment

None

7. Other Business

None

Motion to adjourn,
8:15pm Peter motion to adjourn Joe 2nd - All in favor 3-0
Meeting adjourned.

Attachments:

1. Attachment A: Bylaw Modernization Grant Application Items
2. Attachment B: Current Draft Copy of Town Plan

Bylaw Modernization Grant

The average home purchase price in Montgomery has more than doubled in the last four years. At the same time, there has also been increasing awareness that much of Montgomery's existing housing stock is located in or adjacent to floodplains and river corridors, making it at risk in future flood events. In the midst of these events, there has been significant work to expand public wastewater service to the Villages, a project that could result in more housing growth. There is a need to complete an in-depth review of Montgomery's bylaws around housing to ensure that the bylaws are supporting needed growth. This project proposes to review and update the zoning bylaws to support housing choice and affordability.

The proposed project has two main focus areas, identifying areas to expand the village zoning districts and clarifying regulations around short-term rentals. The first step of the project will be to conduct a constraints analysis of existing development constraints in and adjacent to the Village Districts. Based on this analysis and desired build-out pattern, the consultant and Planning Commission will work to determine what additional area, if any, is necessary to permit further housing growth in Montgomery's Villages while preserving natural resources. The municipalized housing target developed by the Northwest Regional Planning Commission will be used to guide decisions on the appropriate amount of developable area. Draft changes to the regulations will further address housing dimensional standards and short-term rentals to reduce barriers to housing affordability. A public workshop will be held to receive public input and feedback on these zoning changes.

The goal of this project is to support additional housing growth and prepare for the potential development that a public wastewater system may allow. This project will expand upon the Town's work as part of the bylaw modernization consortium in identifying possible changes to dimensional standards, as well as the goals and policies identified as part of the major Town Plan update currently being completed.

Option- Neighborhood Designation Area (NDA): Neighborhood designation areas are an additional state designation that can be applied to selected land within $\frac{1}{4}$ mile of an existing Village Center designation. An NDA designation requires certain standards be met, including that zoning must allow for four unit per acre, Complete Streets standards, and building siting standards. Areas with NDA designation have certain Act 250 exemption, reduction in certain development fees/taxes, and priority consideration for state grants. NDA designation is more complex than Village Center designation and involves significant mapping effort. If the Town is interested in NDA designation, included is an additional workplan step that could be added to the grant. NDA designation would likely make the most sense if there is potential for wastewater infrastructure to extend beyond the Village Center designation boundaries.

	Task Name	Task Description	Hours	Rate	Total
1	Village Constraints Analysis	Conduct an analysis of existing constraints to development in and adjacent to the Village 1 and Village 2 districts, with particular focus on flooding risk and agricultural soils.	70	78	5460
2	Update Zoning Districts	Consider appropriate areas to expand Village Districts to support additional housing growth, including a consideration of sufficient development area to meet the municipalized housing target developed by the Regional Planning Commission.	20	78	1560
3	Public Outreach	Hold a public workshop to review potential changes to the zoning districts and zoning changes to support housing.	20	78	1560
4	Update Zoning Bylaws	Update zoning bylaws with a focus on barriers to housing in the Villages including dimensional standards & regulation of short-term rentals.	100	78	7800
			210		\$ 16,380.00

NDA Designation Option

	Task Name	Task Description	Hours	Rate	Total
	Neighborhood Development Area Designation Application	Complete application and mapping requirements associated with Neighborhood Development Area designation application.	30	78	\$2,340

ATTACHMENT B

Style Definition: TOC 1

Style Definition: TOC 2

Draft Montgomery Town Plan- 10.18.2023

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Vision

Our vision is of a future for Montgomery that is thriving, strong, and sustainable. Montgomery will preserve its unique character, history, and the natural environment that is the heart of the community. We envision a future with a strong economy and a vibrant Main Street, where residents and visitors can safely walk and bike. Residents, including seniors and young families will have access to the housing, infrastructure, and opportunities needed to live, work and thrive in Montgomery. We will protect our woodlands and water resources to preserve their health and productivity for future generations.

Purpose & Authority

A Town Plan is a vision for the future which is put together by the residents of the Town. The plan include goals and objectives based on the Town's past and present. Through this collective effort, the plan is developed with the best interests of the Town as a whole in mind. A Town Plan helps Montgomery control its future by providing it with the means to plan for development and change. Additional reasons the Town has a Town Plan include:

- Providing additional information and data to guide decision-makers in developing new policies.
- Identifying areas where additional study is needed.
- Providing a foundation for developing a capital program and amending the zoning and subdivision bylaws.

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Moved down [2]: Through this collective effort the vision and recommendations have developed with the best interests of the Town as a whole in mind.

Deleted: The purpose of a municipal plan is to help guide decision-makers to chart the future of a community. A plan is a town's vision for the future. It states related goals and objectives based upon a brief reflection of the past and an analysis of existing conditions. A plan is developed from an established planning program. This planning program has involved the public in a variety of ways.

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Deleted: control change. A Town Plan does that by providing the community with a plan of action, or blueprint, which shows a community what it will be like in the future. A Town Plan shows a community what things are going to stay the same and what things are going to change. It defines how those changes are going to happen, and how quickly, or slowly, they are going to take place. A Town Plan gives Montgomery the power to guide change, and the pace at which change will occur, so that change does not control the Town's future. If the recommendations of the plan are implemented, the quality of life in Montgomery can be positively affected.

Deleted: Montgomery Town Officials engage in an ongoing program for additional reasons including:

The Town of Montgomery is authorized to prepare and adopt a Municipal Plan via Chapter 117, Title 24 of the VSA (Vermont Municipal and Regional Planning and Development Act). Section 4382 of the Act dictates twelve required elements of the plan, summarized in the box below.

1. A statement of objectives, policies, and programs of the municipality to guide the future growth and development of land, public services and facilities, and to protect the environment.
2. A land use plan and map.
3. A transportation plan and map.
4. A utility and facility plan and map.
5. a statement of policies on the preservation of rare and irreplaceable natural areas, scenic and historic features and resources.
6. An educational facilities plan and map.
7. A recommended program for the implementation of the objectives of the development plan.
8. A statement indicating how the plan relates to development trends and plans for adjacent municipalities, areas, and the region.
9. Energy plan.
10. Housing Element.
11. Economic Development Element.
12. Flood resilience plan.

The plan must be updated and re-adopted every eight years, and should be continually re-assessed to ensure it meets the needs of the community. Residents, community groups, or anyone with an interest in the Town is encouraged to provide input into this ever-continuing process to the Montgomery Town Planning Commission at any time.

Planning Process

The first Montgomery Town Plan was adopted in 1974 and has since been amended seven times. The most recent revision began in 2023 and was funded by a Municipal Planning Grant. In June 2023, the Planning Commission held a community outreach event where more than 25 residents attended and provided input on their vision for the future of Montgomery. A summary of resident feedback from the event is included in Appendix B to this plan. These comments have influenced the goals and policies throughout this plan.

Community Profile

The Town of Montgomery is located in the northwestern part of the State of Vermont in Franklin County. It is bordered by the following seven towns: Richford, Enosburg, and Bakersfield, (all located in Franklin County); Belvidere and Eden (both located in Lamoille County – to the south of Franklin County); and finally, Lowell and Westfield (both located in Orleans County – to the east of Franklin County). Montgomery covers a total of 57 square miles – which includes the Trout River and numerous streams and brooks. This amounts to 8.2 percent of the total area of Franklin County.

Deleted: Recommendations within the municipal plan are based on an analysis of current conditions, the input of many residents, housing and population projections, and development trends in the Town and the surrounding region. Though the goals and recommendations of this plan are long-term, it is expected that Montgomery will re-examine them periodically and amend the Plan as needed and as required by law. ¶

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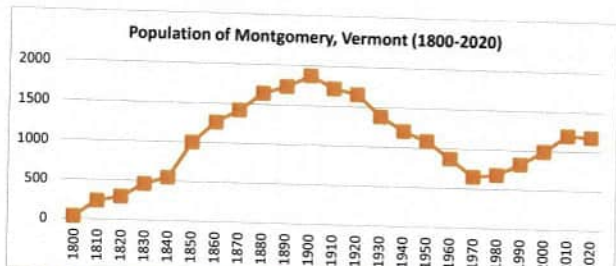
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Past, Present and Future Population & Households

While Montgomery's population grew from 1970-2010, it stayed relatively stable from 2010 to 2020. This trend was also seen in Montgomery's neighboring communities. Population grows or shrinks based on the number of people migrating in or out of a community, and from the number of births and deaths of town residents. In Montgomery's case, the population appears to be decreasing primarily due to residents moving out of town. This does not account for any impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on population.



While the population has remained stable, the number of households appears to be increasing, as there are more people living in one or two person households. In 2021, over 40% of Montgomery residents lived alone, and just 19% were households with children under 18.



Montgomery's population is aging. In 2010, roughly 10% of the population were seniors, while in 2020 it was nearly 30%. As residents get older, the community will need to adapt to ensure their needs can be met. Around 14% of residents have a disability and among senior residents roughly 1/3 age 65-74 have a disability and roughly 60% age 75 or older have a disability.

Chapter 2: Goals, Policies and Implementation

Goals and Policies

One of the most important steps in developing a Town Plan is how the recommendations in the Plan are to be implemented: goals, policies and actions to implement the plan are listed below.

When combined together, the goals, policies and actions should support the "Visions for the Future of Montgomery" set forth by the Plan in the beginning. The Town Plan should also be compatible with other plans in the surrounding communities.

Planning to address future needs and improvements can be facilitated by the development of a municipal capital plan to guide decisions typically over a five-year period. These plans can cover various topics such as detailing community-wide needs and assigning a priority to address them to the scheduling of maintenance and improvements as well as equipment replacement. Considerable expected capital expenditures are outlined in this plan. Capital funds have been established to address these expected costs; however, other creative solutions should be pursued in order to keep the local tax rate from sudden significant increases.

Planning is an ongoing process that will require the efforts of many different people. The Plan will change over time to best address the needs of the community. The Town should continue to encourage the involvement and input of residents addressing these goals, policies, and actions.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL, HISTORIC, AND SCENIC RESOURCES

GOAL: TO RECOGNIZE THE ROLE OF MONTGOMERY'S ARCHAEOLOGICAL, HISTORIC, AND SCENIC RESOURCES IN SHAPING THE TOWN'S PRESENT QUALITY OF LIFE AND FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES

Policies

1. Protect sites of potential archaeological and/or historical significance
2. Promote community growth that maintains the land use pattern developed throughout the Town's history – villages and hamlets separated by open agricultural and forest land, where appropriate for current environmental conditions.
3. Promote the use of historic buildings for public purposes whenever feasible.
4. Preserve the scenic beauty and rural character of Montgomery's ridgelines, forests, open lands, roads, and waterways.
5. Require new development to be located and designed in a manner that minimizes its impact on the town's identified scenic resources.

Deleted: Goals and policies were established for the following chapters of this Plan: ¶

Chapter 5: Archaeological, Historic, and Scenic Resources¶
Chapter 6: Community Facilities¶
Chapter 7: Community Services¶
Chapter 8: Community Utilities¶
Chapter 9: Economy¶
Chapter 10: Energy¶
Chapter 11: Transportation¶
Chapter 12: Education¶
Chapter 13: Housing¶
Chapter 14: Natural Features¶
Chapter 15: Flood Resiliency¶
Chapter 16: Land Use

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6. Limit clearing of existing vegetation on development sites
7. Encourage and promote the preservation and rehabilitation of historic public and private buildings

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NATURAL RESOURCES

GOAL 1: TO PROVIDE FOR THE LOCAL GROWTH THAT IS COMPATIBLE WITH THE TOWN'S NATURAL FEATURES INCLUDING SOILS, LANDSCAPE, WATER RESOURCES & WILDLIFE

GOAL 2: ENCOURAGE AND FOSTER A FLOOD RESILIENT COMMUNITY

GOAL 3: MITIGATE THE RISK TO LOSS THAT RESULTS FROM FLOOD EVENTS

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GOAL 4: REDUCE DAMAGES TO PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE RESULTING FROM FLOOD EVENTS THROUGH HAZARD MITIGATION PLANNING AND PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

Policies

1. Limit development in areas where soils have limited capacity to support structures or filter wastes and in areas where the slope is greater than 15%
2. Maintain natural vegetative cover to the greatest extent possible where development occurs in Conservation Districts (Conservation I and II)
3. Guide development away from productive agricultural or forest soils
4. Protect the water quality of the Trout River and its tributary streams by preventing erosion along their banks and encouraging reduction of stormwater and agricultural runoff and non-point source pollution
5. Protect groundwater quality by regulating uses that could introduce contaminants into the ground in the source water protection areas
6. Protect from development wildlife corridors, unique sensitive areas, and natural communities that, if developed, would demonstrably reduce the ecological function of habitat on the landscape scale.
7. Development shall be designed and sited in a manner to limit the fragmentation of large blocks of contiguous forest to the greatest degree possible
8. Prohibit land development resulting in the loss of wetland and floodplain storage capacity
9. Recognize the collective value in preserving natural resources throughout the town and encourage good land stewardship practices among private landowners in matters of soil health, biodiversity, and water quality

Deleted: Limit the loss or degradation of wildlife habitat by maintaining significant features, including wildlife corridors and unique sensitive areas or natural communities, and protecting such areas from development that would demonstrably reduce the ecological function of habitat on the landscape scale

10. Ensure the conservation and proper stewardship of significant natural communities and forestland
11. Avoid development and other encroachments – including fill, dredging, new structures, parking areas, infrastructure and utilities – within mapped river corridors
12. Protect headwaters and the ecosystems they sustain from risk of degradation; to ensure high water quality, these areas shall be principally maintained for forestry and recreational uses
13. Incorporate vegetated buffers from streams, rivers and ponds into Montgomery's zoning bylaws in order to better protect water quality
14. Encourage flood emergency preparedness and response planning
15. Where development already exists in vulnerable areas, measures shall be taken to protect people, buildings and facilities to reduce future flooding risk
16. New development shall be planned for and encouraged in areas that are less vulnerable to future flooding events
17. Discourage new development in the Special Flood Hazard Area and river corridors; in areas where new development is allowed, it should not exacerbate flooding and fluvial erosion
18. Encourage the protection and restoration of floodplains and upland forested areas that attenuate and moderate flooding and fluvial erosion; where feasible floodplain restoration and conserved land in vulnerable areas should be encouraged

HOUSING

GOAL: TO PROVIDE SUITABLE LAND AREAS FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT THAT WILL SERVE THE NEEDS OF MONTGOMERY'S CURRENT AND FUTURE RESIDENTS

GOAL: PRESERVE THE EXISTING HOUSING STOCK AND DISCOURAGE CONVERSION FROM TRADITIONAL LONG-TERM HOUSING INTO SHORT-TERM RENTALS

Commented [EK4]: My attempt at wording this goal.

Policies

1. Ensure adequate housing options for people of all income levels, ages, household types, and preferences
2. Ensure that households and individuals with special housing needs, including the elderly, disabled, and low-income households are able to attain suitable and affordable housing
3. Allow only low-density residential housing in areas without municipal services, while promoting higher densities in parts of town with existing services or close to existing service boundaries
4. Conserve, restore, and protect the vitality and quality of existing & previously existing neighborhoods & hamlets.

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5. Allow for innovative housing to promote low-cost, low-impact, consolidated, and resource efficient options.
6. Accessory apartments are encouraged, as they provide needed income for the homeowner and needed small apartments for residents living alone
7. Affordable housing should minimize long-term living costs through high quality design, efficient construction, energy efficiency, and proximity to employment
8. Encourage land use patterns which are inherently more affordable by nature of cost of efficiencies associated with construction (e.g. shorter access roads, smaller lots, proximity to utilities)
9. Existing housing in the floodplain should be flood-proofed for the safety of the residents and the community as a whole

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ECONOMY

GOAL: TO FOSTER A DIVERSE AND STABLE ECONOMY BY SUPPORTING EXISTING ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES AND PROVIDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR NEW ENVIROMENTALLY SENSITIVE ONES

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Policies

1. Support and encourage sustainable and diversified businesses that supply local and regional food needs
2. Encourage businesses that complement recreation opportunities within the town
3. Protect the vitality and importance of the villages as a community and regional asset
4. Encourage commercial development that supplies local needs for retail, business, and personal services
5. Encourage and develop resources for home occupations
6. Encourage Montgomery's growing arts community
7. Encourage businesses and industries that use the skills of the local labor force
8. Create an attractive, safe and friendly village environment that invites and supports safe pedestrian use, community events and an active lifestyle

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LAND USE

GOAL: TO MAINTAIN MONTGOMERY'S RURAL CHARACTER AND SCENIC RESOURCES BY ENCOURAGING DEVELOPMENT TO FOLLOW SUSTAINABLE LAND USE PRACTICES

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Policies

1. Maintain the character of existing neighborhoods and avoid potential conflicts between incompatible land uses
2. Explore allowing for a greater density of development in and directly adjacent to

- existing neighborhoods or hamlets
3. Limit development on slopes greater than 15% and maintain natural vegetation on slopes
 4. Protect scenic ridges by limiting development above 1,600 ft. in elevation
 5. Steer development away from areas where soils will not support it due to shallow depth to bedrock, instability, or high water table
 6. Protect public health, welfare, and safety by limiting development in the flood plain
 7. Protect water quality by limiting development in Wellhead Protection Areas, wetlands, and along stream banks
 8. Conserve productive lands by accommodating development in areas apart from most farming activity
 9. Recognizing the community's susceptibility to flooding, new development shall conform strictly to floodplain regulations
 10. Promote new development in areas of existing infrastructure, such as roads, power, and water.
 11. Encourage sustainable agricultural and silvicultural practices to both protect the use of land and water resources, and keep a working rural landscape based on a practice of stewardship
 12. Avoid fragmentation of large forest blocks of contiguous forests that provide both economic opportunities for landowners as well as ecological and cultural benefits to the community, including wildlife habitat, water quality maintenance and recreation
 13. Promote anti-sprawl initiatives as a measure to maintain the appropriate use of our land resources
 14. Promote the enrollment of productive farm and forestland in the current use value appraisal program.
 15. Promote, through incentives in land use regulations, the clustering of residential housing with the goal of preserving larger contiguous parcels for farming, forestry and the preservation of open space
 16. Inventory undeveloped scenic ridges that should be protected

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TRANSPORTATION

GOAL: TO DEVELOP A FUNCTIONAL AND CONNECTED TRANSPORTATION NETWORK.

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Policies

1. Protect the health, safety, and welfare of the traveling public
2. Promote safe, convenient, economic, and energy efficient transportation systems including public transit options and paths for pedestrians and bicycles
3. Promote transportation activities that respect the natural environment
4. Maintain the scenic character of the Town's rural byways
5. Support public transit efforts of the Green Mountain Transit Agency to increase

mobility and access of Town residents

6. Provide appropriate provisions for bicycle and pedestrian use on designated routes, including sidewalks, paths, widen shoulders, proper signage and pavement improvements
7. Maintain good quality, safe local roads and streets, sidewalks, bridges, and equipment needed for their maintenance
8. Recognize the link between land use and transportation and coordinate transportation improvements to facilitate and complement the desired type, location, density, and timing of local development

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COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

GOAL: TO LOOK AHEAD AND PREDICT FUTURE NEEDS FOR PUBLIC FACILITIES BASED UPON COMMUNITY GROWTH AND CHANGE

GOALS: TO PROVIDE MUNICIPAL SERVICES TO MEET THE NEEDS OF LOCAL RESIDENTS OF ALL AGES WITHOUT UNDUE OR SUDDEN IMPACTS UPON LOCAL PROPERTY TAXES

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GOAL: TO PROVIDE PUBLIC UTILITIES TO SUPPORT CONCENTRATED COMMERCIAL, AND LIGHT INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT.

GOAL: TO CREATE A LEARNING COMMUNITY THAT WILL PROVIDE TOOLS FOR LIFELONG SUCCESS

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Policies

1. Promote efficient and functional use of existing municipal buildings and facilities
2. Provide sufficient space and facilities to carry out essential municipal functions
3. Provide a gathering place for the local population to address town business
4. Conserve Montgomery's recreational resources, discourage incompatible land uses, and protect the scenic qualities that contribute to recreation
5. Promote recreational areas and facilities in convenient and reasonable locations for the use and enjoyment of all residents and visitors
6. Promote the protection and maintenance of public recreation trails within the town on private land, including the Catamount Trail, a cross-country ski trail that runs the length of Vermont
7. Provide space for gatherings, functions, and events to provide educational, social, and civic opportunities to enhance community involvement and identity

8. Provide emergency services to protect the health, safety, and property of local residents
9. Provide library services to enable Montgomery residents access to information, resources, and opportunities for personal and community enrichment
10. Encourage safe and affordable childcare facilities in the community
11. Protect the public water supply by restricting inappropriate development in the source protection area
12. Operate the Montgomery Water System in an economic manner, while providing an adequate source of good potable water for the needs of the Village and Center
13. Promote the expansion of telecommunications and electric facilities provided that infrastructure to develop these opportunities shall be located in appropriate areas; respecting the integrity of residential areas, aesthetic concerns, and natural resource issues
14. Provide appropriate facilities and infrastructure for a variety of academic, athletic, social, cultural and community activities
15. Broaden access to educational and vocational training opportunities for all ages
16. Ensure that both motorized and pedestrian access to school is safe and convenient
17. Support use of town lands, facilities, and resources for broad-based educational experiences

ENERGY

GOAL: PLAN FOR INCREASED ELECTRIC DEMAND WITH THE SUPPORT OF EFFICIENCY VERMONT AND LOCAL ELECTRIC UTILITIES.

GOAL: REDUCE ANNUAL FUEL NEEDS AND FUEL COSTS FOR HEATING STRUCTURES, TO FOSTER THE TRANSITION FROM NON-RENEWABLE FUEL SOURCES TO RENEWABLE FUEL SOURCES, AND TO MAXIMIZE THE WEATHERIZATION OF RESIDENTIAL HOUSEHOLDS AND COMMERCIAL ESTABLISHMENTS.

GOAL: HOLD VEHICLE MILES TRAVELED PER CAPITA TO 2011 LEVELS OR LESS BY REDUCING THE NUMBER OF SINGLE OCCUPANCY (SOV) TRIPS, INCREASING THE NUMBER OF PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE TRIPS, PROMOTING FORMAL AND INFORMAL RIDESHARING AND PUBLIC TRANSIT RIDERSHIP.

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GOAL: FOCUS GROWTH WITHIN AND ADJACENT TO THE VILLAGES.

Policies

1. Montgomery supports energy conservation efforts and the efficient use of energy across all sectors.
2. Montgomery supports the reduction of transportation energy demand, reduction of single-occupancy vehicle use, and the transition to renewable and lower-emission energy sources for transportation.
3. Montgomery supports patterns and densities of concentrated development that result in the conservation of energy. This includes support of public transit connections from Montgomery to other parts of the region and considering access to public transit when reviewing Act 250 applications.
4. Montgomery supports the development and siting of renewable energy resources in the Town that are in conformance with the goals, strategies, and mapping outlined in this plan. This includes language in the above mapping section about the preferred size and colocation of solar facilities. Development of generation in identified preferred locations shall be favored over the development of other sites.
5. Montgomery supports the conversion of fossil fuel heating to advanced wood heating systems or electric heat pumps.
6. Montgomery will support local farms and the local food system.

Implementation

One of the most important aspects of a planning process is to identify how the goals and policies contained in this Plan will be implemented. The Implementation Plan identifies actions that the community should take to implement the vision, goals and policies. Actions may take time and require additional funding to implement, for each action the Planning Commission has identified an expected time-frame. The Planning Commission shall reevaluate this Implementation Plan each year to measure progress and to establish priorities of the coming year.

Deleted: The Town of Montgomery can work with other agencies and organizations such as the Northwest Regional Planning Commission, the Vermont Agency of Transportation, the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, the Vermont Agency of Housing and Community Affairs, and the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation, to name a few. These agencies and organizations can help the Town in achieving the goals that were set forth in the Town Plan. ¶

¶ Citizen involvement is also a tool that should be used and encouraged. Citizens should be involved in local planning issues that may arise for they will be the ones most likely affected by any changes that occur in the Town. Their input, ideas, opinions, and concerns should be taken into account when dealing with planning issues since they are the ones who have the most to gain from the Plan. Input from residents is very useful in deciding what the most pressing issues are in Town and also where the Town should most likely be headed in the future. Planning to address future needs and improvements can be facilitated by the development of a municipal capital plan to guide decisions typically over a five-year period. These plans can cover various topics such as detailing community-wide needs and assigning a priority to address them to the scheduling of maintenance and improvements as well as equipment replacement. Considerable expected capital expenditures are outlined in this plan. Capital funds have been established to address these expected costs; however, other creative solutions should be pursued in order to keep the local tax rate from sudden significant increases.

Deleted: over the next several years to implement the goals and policies in Chapter 3 and Montgomery's Vision in Chapter 2. Many actions will require funding and it may take time to obtain financial resources. Some actions may require several years to implement.

Line	Implementation Action	Timing	Responsibility
ARCHAEOLOGICAL, HISTORIC, AND SCENIC RESOURCES			
4	Seek funding and resources to restore the Montgomery Grange.		Selectboard
NATURAL RESOURCES			
7	Consider requirements of a naturally vegetated buffer strip between any development and the shoreline of the Trout and streams with an average channel width of 10 feet or more		Planning Commission
8	Conduct a Natural Resource Inventory of the town to identify important natural resource features, including habitats and natural communities, to assist the town in planning for future development		Conservation Commission
10	Provide educational materials and assistance in planning to prevent or minimize destruction of core habitat and wildlife connectivity areas		Town Clerk, Conservation Commission
11	Promote enrollment of private forest and/or agricultural land the Use Value Appraisal program, as well as encourage the application of voluntary Conservation Easements on parcels of significant resource value		
12	Hold a community meeting to review the new mapped floodplain and river corridor areas once updated by FEMA.	Short/Medium	Planning Commission
14	Strengthen flood hazard bylaws to increase public safety and reduce future damage.	Long	Planning Commission
16	Maintain a current Local Emergency Operations Plan (LEOP) and Hazard Mitigation Plan	Ongoing	Selectboard, Fire Chief

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Deleted: Identify ridgelines and review proposed development on or adjacent to them in order to minimize impacts on the town's scenic character

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Commented [EK11]: Current bylaws require in conservation, river corridors adopted

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17	Incorporate <u>hazard</u> mitigation measures when developing improvements or expansion to municipal infrastructure	<u>Ongoing</u>	<u>Selectboard</u>
18	Support river corridor and floodplain restoration efforts by watershed organizations, the state and others	<u>Ongoing</u>	

HOUSING

19	<u>Support</u> Hazard Mitigation Grants and other applications providing funding for property owners to undertake flood-proofing or to buyout flood-prone properties	<u>Ongoing</u>	<u>Selectboard</u>
20	<u>Support</u> efforts to educate homeowners and renters about flood mitigation and flood safety	<u>Ongoing</u>	<u>Selectboard</u>
21	<u>Identify</u> potential locations for <u>additional affordable and market rate housing and work with housing agency and private developers to support creation of housing.</u>	<u>Medium</u>	<u>Planning Commission/Selectboard</u>
23	The <u>Town</u> should work with housing agencies and others to investigate the development of senior housing in the village centers	<u>Long</u>	<u>Selectboard</u>

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Deleted: The Town should support efforts by housing agencies and private developers to create additional affordable and market rate owner-occupied entry-level housing

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ECONOMY

26	Maintain Village Center designations and encourage private landowners to utilize the financial incentives of the program	<u>Ongoing</u>	<u>Planning Commission, Selectboard</u>
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LAND USE

28	Develop guidelines and criteria to identify land that is physically capable of supporting development	<u>Medium</u>	<u>Planning Commission</u>
29	Make inventories and maps of all protected natural resource areas readily available to all residents, landowners or their agents	<u>Ongoing</u>	<u>Town Clerk, Conservation Commission</u>

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	Identify additional areas for residential development adjacent to the existing villages to promote clustering of residential housing and preservation of open space & agricultural soils.		
31	Support organizations that support long-term viability of agricultural and forestlands.		

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TRANSPORTATION

33	Evaluate the safety and flow of traffic at the intersection of Route 118 and 242	Long	Selectboard
34	Work with VTrans and NRPC to assess the parking and access management needs along the Route 118 corridor in Montgomery Center		
35	Pursue funding to conduct a feasibility study on providing pedestrian access from Route 118 to the Public Works Building and Library		

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COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

	Expand the public safety building to better support its function as a Town Office.		Selectboard
37	Promote the use of the schools for adult education and other community activities		
38	Develop a Safe Routes To School Program through partnerships among schools, local municipalities, parents and other community groups		
	Develop and expand community orchard		Conservation Commission
	Consider future uses for the land associated with the former Town Clerk's Office/Post Office.		Selectboard

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ENERGY			
39	Coordinate with weatherization programs to encourage residents to participate in weatherization programs available to Montgomery residents.		
40	Promote the use of the residential and commercial building energy standards by distributing code information to permit applicants.		
41	Create an Energy Committee and/or appoint an Energy Coordinator to coordinate energy-related planning and projects in Montgomery.		
42	Investigate a revision to the zoning bylaw to incentive, through the issuance of a bonus density, innovate design that promotes conservation, electricity generation, and compact development patterns.		
43	Conduct an energy audit of municipal buildings to identify weatherization retrofits and incorporate the recommendations into the municipal capital budget.		
44	Investigate the use of wood heating for use in publicly owned facilities in Montgomery.		
45	Promote and provide information about the GoVermont website, or a similar website targeted to Montgomery residents, which provides information citizens about ride share, vanpool, and park-and-ride options.		
46	Study creation of public transit routes in Montgomery.		

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47	Plan for and install electric vehicle charging infrastructure on municipal property.		
48	Review municipal road standards to ensure that they reflect the "complete streets" principles.		
49	Review local policies and ordinances to ensure that current and future municipal water and sewer infrastructure serves only areas in Montgomery where relatively intense land development is planned (Montgomery Village and Montgomery Center Village).		
50	Investigate the installation of a municipal solar and/or wind net-metering facilities to off-set municipal electric use.		
51	Investigate installation of a community-based renewable energy project		
52	Provide firefighters with training in fighting fires on structures that have solar panels installed.		

Chapter 3. Archeological, Historic, and Scenic Resources

GOAL: TO RECOGNIZE THE ROLE OF MONTGOMERY'S ARCHAEOLOGICAL, HISTORIC, AND SCENIC RESOURCES IN SHAPING THE TOWN'S PRESENT QUALITY OF LIFE AND FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES

Policies

1. Protect sites of potential archaeological and/or historical significance,
2. Promote community growth that maintains the land use pattern developed throughout the Town's history – villages and hamlets separated by open agricultural and forest land, where appropriate for current environmental conditions,
3. Promote the use of historic buildings for public purposes whenever feasible,
4. Preserve the scenic beauty and rural character of Montgomery's ridgelines, forests, open lands, roads, and waterways,
5. Require new development to be located and designed in a manner that minimizes its impact on the town's identified scenic resources.
6. Limit clearing of existing vegetation on development sites
7. Encourage and promote the preservation and rehabilitation of historic public and private buildings

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Town History

Across Vermont, there are archaeological sites from prior to European colonization. Due to the lack of written records from prior to European settlement and these sites cultural importance to the Abenaki nation in Vermont, precontact archeological sites are an important source of information and should be protected. A map of areas of possible archeological sensitivity is included below.

The Town of Montgomery was named after Captain Richmond Montgomery, a hero of the American Revolution. It was chartered on March 13, 1780. Montgomery is situated within the northern Green Mountains and is dominated by steep, forested mountain slopes drained by the Trout River and its tributaries. The first European settlers who moved to the Town of Montgomery settled along this area. Five small villages also referred to as hamlets, eventually formed along the river. These hamlets are known today as West Hill, Montgomery, Montgomery Center, Hutchins, and Hectorville.

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Spurred by abundant waterpower and surrounding raw materials, the population grew steadily until 1900. At this time, the population started to decline until the 1970's, when it slowly started to rebound, spurred by the development of ski areas. Early economic activity in Montgomery centered on farming, sugaring, logging, and small wood related industries. As these industries changed, so did Montgomery's population. Since 2000, Montgomery's economy has begun to grow again due to the development of recreation and tourist industries and more recently with

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the expansion of remote work that has allowed new residents to move to Montgomery. More information about Montgomery's history can be found at the Montgomery Historical Society or in the book *Montgomery, Vermont: The history of a town* by W. R. Branthoover & Sara Taylor. The Town is interested in expanding historical signage to better share the Town's history with residents and visitors.

Cultural and Historic Resources

Covered Bridges

Vermont regards its covered bridges as one of its most treasured landmarks. The State has more covered bridges per square mile than any other state, and Montgomery has the most covered bridges of any town in Vermont. The bridges were covered for two purposes: to protect them from the elements of nature and to preserve the wooden trusses used in their construction. Unfortunately, many of the states' covered bridges have succumbed to the forces of nature and also to neglect. It is vital that the Town take active measures to preserve these valuable landmarks.

The Town of Montgomery has six covered bridges that are considered historic sites: Fuller (1890), Comstock (1883), Hectorville (1883), Longley (1863), Creamery (1883), and Hutchins (1883). The Fuller Covered Bridge is also known as Black Falls and the Creamery Covered Bridge is also known as West Hill or Crystal Springs. The Jewett brothers, Sheldon and Savannah, built all of Montgomery's covered bridges between 1860 and 1890. They operated a sawmill on West Hill which allowed them to mill the wood to their specific requirements. The brothers used their trademark method to design the bridges, taking into account stress, wind and weight. First, the main bearing beams were positioned across the stream onto a pier foundation on either end. Then the lattice trusses were moved into position and the top beams tied. After this, the roof was secured. The Jewett brothers built bridges that have lasted for over a hundred years. All six of these bridges are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The following chart gives the location, type, the year built, and crossing for the covered bridges in Town:

Deleted: Since 2000, we have seen a shift from a greater percentage of vacation homes to a greater percentage of residential homes. The Town also receives a noticeable influx of retirees from other parts of the United States and Canada. This trend is likely to continue for the foreseeable future.

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Historic Covered Bridges in Montgomery				
Name	Location	Type	Year Built	Crossing
Fuller Bridge	South Richford Road Montgomery Village	Town Lattice	1890	Black Falls Brook and South Richford Road
Creamery Bridge	Creamery Bridge Road Montgomery Village	Town Lattice	1883	West Hill Brook and Creamery Bridge Road
Hectorville Bridge	Disassembled, and in storage awaiting a plan for restoration	Town Lattice	1883	South Branch of the Trout River and the Gibou Road
Comstock Bridge	Comstock Road Montgomery Village	Town Lattice	1883	Trout River and Comstock Road
Hutchins Bridge	Hutchins Bridge Road Montgomery Center	Town Lattice	1883	South Branch of the Trout and Hutchins Bridge Road
Longley Bridge	Longley Bridge Road Montgomery Village	Town Lattice	1863	Trout River and Longley Bridge Road

Source: Montgomery Historical Society

Historic Buildings

St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church and the Black Lantern Inn are also listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church, also known as the Union Church, was built in 1835 at a cost of three thousand dollars. Membership thrived at the church until 1882 when, it started to decline. By 1920, the church was no longer being used on a regular basis and it began to deteriorate. On November 23, 1974, the Town of Montgomery formed the Montgomery Historical Society to save the historic building for future generations. The Society purchased the church from the Episcopal Diocese of Burlington for one dollar. The church was later renamed Pratt Hall in honor of one of the founders, Larry Pratt. All the necessary repair work that was done on the building was funded through community donations and fund-raising events. See Appendix A, Volunteer Community Organizations for more on the Montgomery Historical Society.

Smaller landscape features such as stone walls, old barns, outbuildings, corner stones, markers, trees, and old apple orchards and lilac bushes planted around former homesteads have historic value and importance, but these unfortunately often go unnoticed. These features say as much about the region's rural and agricultural heritage as many of its more readily recognized historic landmarks, but are often disturbed, removed, or demolished without any thought. Recognizing the need for more public education, the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation published *Stonewalls and Cellarholes: A Guide for Landowners on Historic Features and*

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Landscapes in Vermont's Forests in 1994. There are also a number of small abandoned graveyards in Montgomery. The Town should work to provide information to property owners on these graveyards.

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Cultural and historic resources are at risk of degradation through improper earth resource extraction. This includes the accidental destruction of buried archaeological sites and diminished scenic qualities that may limit the future use of disturbed sites. Noise, dust, and increased traffic on roads near extraction sites all compromise the rural character and sense of place the Town enjoys. Earth resource extraction should be carefully regulated to limit negative impacts.

Scenic Resources

Scenic highways and corridors link natural, cultural, and scenic resources to the historic landscape of the area. The visual character of Montgomery makes it an excellent place to live. Montgomery, should preserve scenic vistas. The scenic qualities of a forested ridgeline or hillside can be compromised by poorly planned development, such as inappropriate building placement, site design, and excessive clearing. The Town should encourage innovation in design and layout of development so that the visual impact can be minimized. The use of vegetative buffers and other screening methods should be encouraged to help reduce the visual impact of development in the town.

Deleted: The Northwest Region of Vermont is an extremely rich visual mosaic of diverse landscapes, from the sweeping agricultural views of the Lake Champlain islands, to the heavily wooded Western slopes of the Green Mountains. It is the visual language of the area which plays an important part in how a community is perceived. ¶

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Montgomery shall take measures to ensure that its natural features are conserved. These natural areas include the Trout River and its tributaries, its mountains such as Burnt Mountain, Big Jay, and Little Jay, as well as farm and forest land. These natural features play a big role in drawing people to the area and they should not be compromised. The Town has identified a list of scenic resources that shall be protected in an Appendix to this plan.

BASE MAP **TOWN OF MONTGOMERY**

LEGEND

Transportation Features

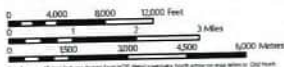
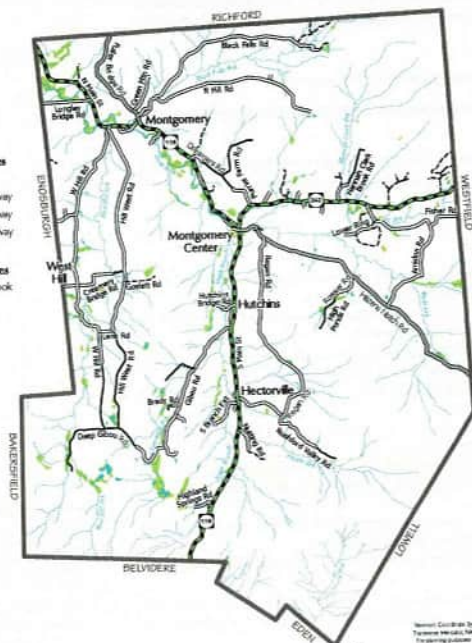
- State Highway
- Class 2 Town Highway
- Class 3 Town Highway
- Class 4 Town Highway
- Private Road

Surface Water Features

- River, Stream or Brook
- Pond
- Wetland

Other Feature

- Town Boundary



Not to Scale
Town Boundary
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Chapter 4: Natural Resources

GOAL: TO PROVIDE FOR GROWTH WITHIN THE COMMUNITY WHILE MAINTAINING A HEALTHY AND INTACT FORESTED LANDSCAPE WHICH SUPPORTS A STRONG LOCAL ECONOMY, PROTECTS CORE WILDLIFE HABITAT AND CONNECTIVITY, AND MAINTAINS WATER QUALITY AND KEY NATURAL FEATURES SENSITIVE TO ADVERSE IMPACTS OF DEVELOPMENT

GOAL: TO ENCOURAGE AND FOSTER A FLOOD RESILIENCY COMMUNITY

GOAL: TO MITIGATE THE RISK FOR LOSS OF LIFE AND INJURIES THAT RESULT FROM FLOOD EVENTS

GOAL: TO REDUCE DAMAGES TO PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE RESULTING FROM FLOOD EVENTS THROUGH HAZARD MITIGATION PLANNING AND PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

Policies

1. Limit development in areas where soils have limited capacity to support structures or filter wastes and in areas where the slope is greater than 15%.
2. Maintain natural vegetative cover to the greatest extent possible where development occurs in Conservation Districts (Conservation I and II).
3. Guide development away from productive agricultural or forest soils.
4. Protect the water quality of the Trout River and its tributary streams by preventing erosion along their banks and encouraging reduction of stormwater and agricultural runoff and non-point source pollution.
5. Protect groundwater quality by regulating uses that could introduce contaminants into the ground in the source water protection areas.
6. Protect from development wildlife corridors, unique sensitive areas, and natural communities that, if developed, would demonstrably reduce the ecological function of habitat on the landscape scale.
7. Development shall be designed and sited in a manner to limit the fragmentation of large blocks of contiguous forest to the greatest degree possible.
8. Prohibit land development resulting in the loss of wetland and floodplain storage capacity.
9. Recognize the collective value in preserving natural resources throughout the town and encourage good land stewardship practices among private landowners in matters of soil health, biodiversity, and water quality.
10. Ensure the conservation and proper stewardship of significant natural communities and forestland.
11. Avoid development and other encroachments – including fill, dredging, new structures, parking areas, infrastructure and utilities – within mapped river corridors.

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~~Deleted:~~ Limit the loss or degradation of wildlife habitat by maintaining significant features, including: wildlife corridors and unique sensitive areas or natural communities, and protecting such areas from development that would demonstrably reduce the ecological function of habitat on the landscape scale

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12. Protect headwaters and the ecosystems they sustain from risk of degradation; to ensure high water quality, these areas shall be principally maintained for forestry and recreational uses.
13. Incorporate vegetated buffers from streams, rivers and ponds into Montgomery's zoning bylaws in order to better protect water quality.
14. Encourage flood emergency preparedness and response planning.
15. Where development already exists in vulnerable areas, measures shall be taken to protect people, buildings and facilities to reduce future flooding risk.
16. New development shall be planned for and encouraged in areas that are less vulnerable to future flooding events.
17. Discourage new development in the Special Flood Hazard Area and river corridors; in areas where new development is allowed, it should not exacerbate flooding and fluvial erosion.
18. Encourage the protection and restoration of floodplains and upland forested areas that attenuate and moderate flooding and fluvial erosion; where feasible floodplain restoration and conserved land in vulnerable areas should be encouraged.

Environment of Montgomery

Though once standing higher than the Rocky Mountains, Vermont's Green Mountains now stand around 4,000 feet. The Town of Montgomery is it is surrounded by steep, forested mountain slopes that are drained by the Trout River and its tributaries.

Biosphere

Montgomery lies at the intersection of two biophysical regions, the **Champlain Valley** and the **Northern Green Mountains**. Thousands of years ago, as the glaciers retreated to the north, the Champlain Valley was lying under the fresh water glacial Lake Vermont and then later, the salt water of the Champlain Sea. The water had a profound impact on the soils found here today, with the retreat of the glacier leaving gravel and rocks in streambeds and clays and fine sediments in lake bottoms. As the glaciers retreated, salt water flowed in from the north, converting the lake to a smaller sea and depositing the sand we can find mixed in the soils today. The underlying bedrock is composed of carbonate-rich rock with some quartzite, which makes the soil very fertile. Over time, the ancient sea was replaced by the fresh water of Lake Champlain. Today, the Champlain Valley is low, warm, and comparatively dry.

In comparison, areas of higher elevation within the Champlain Valley were not flooded by either Lake Vermont or the Champlain Sea, but were scoured by the glaciers as they retreated north. This left the glacial till that the soils in these areas are made up of. Summer temperatures in the Northern Green Mountain biophysical are often 20 degrees cooler than the Champlain Valley. The Northern Green Mountains have the shortest growing season, and the coldest winter temperatures in Vermont are found on northern slopes. Annual precipitation can also be much greater, receiving up to twice as much as in the Champlain Valley.

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Deleted: The Green Mountains today present an impressive barrier along Franklin County's eastern border.

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Montgomery, like many towns in the State of Vermont, is fortunate to have a landscape that is filled with so many different types of natural features. 1

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Deleted: Many of the soils found in the valley are "lacustrine", or water deposited. These soils are made up of fine sediment, sand and gravel that were carried in the water. Water moving at fast speeds is able to hold larger pieces, like gravel, but as the water slows down the largest pieces fall out. Fine sediments lay in the water until it is nearly motionless. This is why there is

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Deleted: The carbonate rich bedrock weathers easily and releases calcium and other important nutrients into the soil, making it very fertile. Glacial rebound gradually diminished the inland reach of the sea water to its present extent. The sea was eventually cut off from the St. Lawrence Seaway, and in time the salt water was

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Deleted: The soils found on hilltops have much in common with those found in the Northern Green Mountains. Today, the Champlain Valley is low, warm, and comparatively dry. The soils, climate, and vegetation have more in common with the lowlands surrounding the Great Lakes than the Green Mountains.

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Deleted: The present formation of the Greens is the result of glacial activity that carved the older metamorphic bedrock of these mountains 20,000 years ago.

Topography

The majority of Montgomery's land area consists of upland areas (areas of 1,000 feet or more in elevation), including mountains, hilltops, and ridge lines. Many of these are highly visible from public vantage points and contribute significantly to the Montgomery's scenic beauty. These areas also include drainage divides, steep slopes, shallow soils, and exposed, fractured bedrock. These areas are important for upland drainage and groundwater recharge. They also support significant wildlife habitat, forestry, and outdoor recreation but they generally prevent all but low-density development.

Slope is one of the most important factors that determine if the area is suitable for development. The Natural Resources Conservation Service provides general guidelines for assessing slope imitations and these are listed in Table 18. The slope of an area should be considered when deciding if the land is capable of supporting potential development. Map X-X shows areas of Montgomery with slopes above 15% and 20%.

Slope Classifications	
0-3%	generally suitable for most types of development but may require drainage
3-8%	most desirable for development because these areas generally have the least restrictions
8-15%	suitable for low-density development with particular attention given to erosion control, runoff, and septic design
15-25%	unsuitable for most types of development and septic systems, construction costly, erosion and runoff problems likely
>25%	All development shall be prohibited.

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TOPOGRAPHIC LIMITATIONS TOWN OF MONTGOMERY

LEGEND

Topographic Features

- 1000 Foot Contour Line
- Slopes 20%
- Slopes 15%

Transportation Features

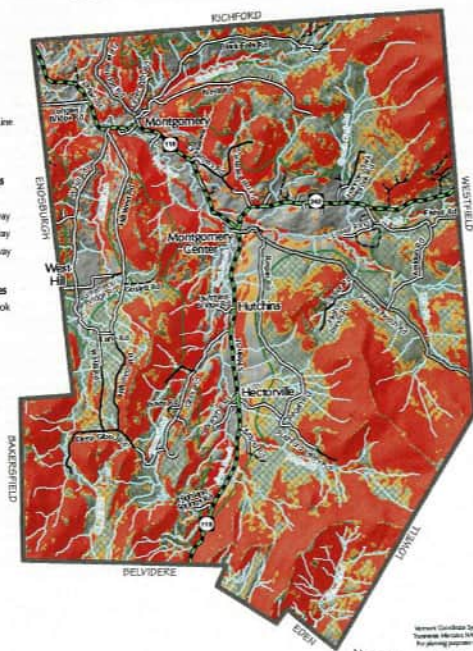
- State Highway
- Class 2 Town Highway
- Class 3 Town Highway
- Class 4 Town Highway
- Private Road

Surface Water Features

- River, Stream or Brook
- Pond

Other Feature

- Town Boundary



Data Source: All map boundaries derived from USGS digital elevation, road, and water data to 2001.

Northwest Colorado Center
Topographic Information and GIS
For planning purposes only

Prepared by:
Northwest Regional
Planning Commission
700 North Street
St. Albans, VT 05478
(802) 244-1111
www.nwrc.org

Location: map shows the boundary of the town of Montgomery in the town of 2001.

Soils

Soils are the primary environmental factor that governs the use of land in rural areas. Four characteristics are of concern when doing land use planning: bearing capacity, erodibility, drainage, and resource value. The Town's farms depends upon the availability of high-quality soils in large, adjoining parcels to allow for economical hay and field production.

The Natural Resources Conservation Service provides soil survey information; maps and a description of each type of soil can be found in the Soil Survey of Franklin County, Vermont and online on the NRCS's Web Soil Survey. The soil survey is a tool that can be used to inform decision making on agriculture, development and infrastructure.

The Town of Montgomery is home to soils that formed in glacial till in the Green Mountains and on uplands. The most common soil associations that are found in Montgomery are the Lyman-Marlow-Peru association and the Peru-Marlow association. These upland soils may create restrictions for development.

Primary agricultural soils, as defined by Vermont's Land Use and Development Law (Act 250), include soils which, based upon their chemical and physical properties, are considered especially suited for agricultural use. Because of their physical qualities, however, these soils are often also considered the best suited for development. These uses must be carefully balanced. Primary agricultural soils in Montgomery are primarily located along the lower-lying areas adjacent to Vermont 118.

Deleted: most important

Deleted: Soils are classified on the basis of structure, form, composition, and suitability for various types of development.

Deleted: primary

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Deleted: Each soil type has a soil interpretation sheet that describes the properties and the suitability of the soil for different uses.

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Deleted: ¶ helping farmers locate the best land for crops and pastures; ¶ helping developers locate areas of least limitation for basements, septic tank disposal fields, and associated uses; ¶ helping engineers in planning the best location for highways, buildings, and the like; and ¶ helping communities with the planning of economical, attractive, and trouble-free developments. ¶ Because soils vary widely in their potential for major land uses, the soil survey maps should be carefully looked at when deciding what the land should be used for. ¶ The general soil map shows the soil associations that represent a distinct type of soil landscape for each town in Franklin County.

Deleted: These are subdivided into "prime" soils having a very high potential and few limitations for producing food, feed, forage or fiber crops; and "good" soils of statewide importance that have good potential, but one or more limitations that may restrict the choice of crops and require more careful management. The Vermont Agency of Agriculture also recognized "local" soils with agricultural potential, but which are not regulated under Act 250. This classification does not consider location, current land use, and parcel size. Prime, statewide, and local agricultural soils are shown on the Agricultural Soils Map.

AGRICULTURAL SOILS TOWN OF MONTGOMERY

LEGEND

Soil Features

- Prime Agricultural Soils
- Statewide Importance Soils
- Local Soils

Transportation Features

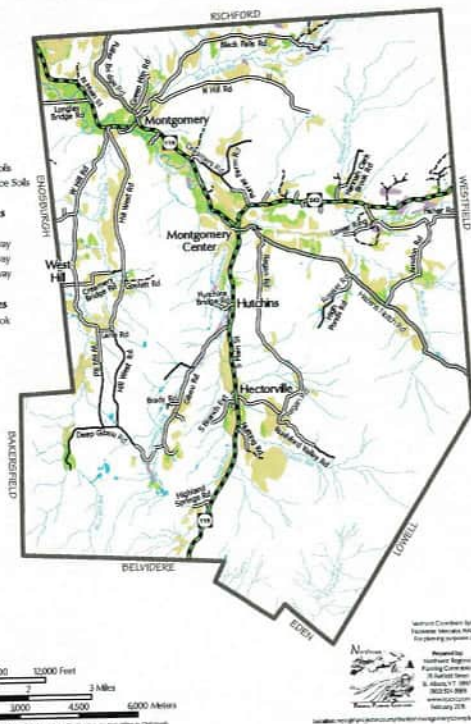
- State Highway
- Class 2 Town Highway
- Class 3 Town Highway
- Class 4 Town Highway
- Private Road

Surface Water Features

- River, Stream or Brook
- Pond

Other Feature

- Town Boundary



Montgomery Center, Spent
Tennessee, 1990-1991
For planning purposes only

Montgomery
Montgomery Regional
Planning Commission
16 South Street
Montgomery, NY 12535-1000
www.montgomeryny.org
February 2018

Montgomery Regional Planning Commission, 16 South Street, Montgomery, NY 12535-1000

Earth Resources

Earth resources, including sand and gravel deposits, are critical regional resources, especially because of their use in road maintenance and construction. As Montgomery develops, more of its earth resources will be needed to meet its infrastructure needs. The extraction of these resources can cause a problem if they are located in rural areas where residential development is increasing. Improper or excessive extraction can damage cultural resources, natural resources, and scenic resources of the area. Extraction of earth resources should be carefully managed to avoid these outcomes.

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Deleted: the needs of growing infrastructure. This is common with all towns in the State.

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Air Quality

Air quality is generally good in Vermont, especially in rural communities such as Montgomery. Motor vehicles are the largest source of air pollution in Vermont, which can create localized areas of poor air quality where traffic is congested. Air quality can also be impacted by weather patterns which carry pollutants, such as smoke, from other areas. All efforts should be made to maintain good air quality in Montgomery. The Town encourages local farms to use liquid manure injection to reduce the impact to local air quality.

Deleted: The Northwest Region of Vermont is home to many types of surface waters. They offer sustenance, scenic beauty, recreational opportunities, and livelihood to the residents and visitors of Franklin County. Water is one of the basic necessities of life; and because of that, it must be appropriately respected, managed, enhanced, and preserved to ensure the future vitality of the Region and its inhabitants.

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Deleted: The Missisquoi River traverses through most of Franklin County.

Deleted: which runs through the Town of Montgomery, is one of its many tributaries.

Deleted: a valuable natural and cultural resource. The Trout River provides many beneficial uses such as providing a place for recreation activities.

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Deleted: Recognizing Special Resources. Fifty miles of the upper Missisquoi River and 20 miles of the Trout Rivers were designated in 2014 as a Wild and Scenic waterbody. This designation excludes the section of the Missisquoi River with the Enosburg Falls dam. The National Wild and Scenic Rivers System was created by Congress in 1968 (Public Law 90-542) to preserve certain rivers with outstanding natural, cultural, and recreational values in a free-flowing condition for the enjoyment of present and future generations. This designation encourages river management that crosses political boundaries and promotes public participation in developing goals for river protection. In addition, it enables access to federal funding for projects to preserve the recreational, scenic, historic, cultural, natural, and geologic resources of these rivers. It should be noted that designation neither prohibits development nor gives the federal government control over private property, recreation, agricultural practices, development and other uses are permissible in this designated area.

Water Resources

Surface Waters

Montgomery's waters offer scenic beauty, recreational opportunities, and livelihood to the residents and visitors.

The Trout River, a tributary of the Missisquoi River, runs through Montgomery. It is one of the most valuable natural and cultural resources in the Town and is an important location for recreational activities. The Trout River, alongside the upper portion of the Missisquoi River, are the only rivers in the state who have received a "Wild and Scenic Rivers" designation from the National Parks Service. The designation recognizes the outstanding scenic, recreational and natural resource value of the river. This designation encourages river management that crosses political boundaries and promotes public participation in developing goals for river protection. In addition, it enables access to federal funding for projects to preserve the recreational, scenic, historic, cultural, natural, and geologic resources of these rivers. It should be noted that designation neither prohibits development nor gives the Federal government control over private property; recreation, agricultural practices, development and other uses are permissible in this designated area.

Maintaining the quality of the Trout River is of extreme importance. Not only does it affect the Town, but also it has the potential to directly affect the Missisquoi River Delta and consequently, Lake Champlain. The many streams which feed into the Trout River should also be protected.

In addition to its rivers and streams, Montgomery is home to swimming holes which offer great recreational opportunities for residents and visitors alike. Most swimming holes are located on private lands and are enjoyed only with permission of the property owner. Where possible, the Town should take steps to ensure continued access to swimming holes, such as negotiating land easements.

Ground Waters

Groundwater is the source of over 90% of the drinking water for rural areas in Vermont. It is replenished through rain and surface water that percolates down through the soil. Risks to groundwater are associated with human activity in the vicinity of the aquifer.

Groundwater is a critical resource that must be managed effectively. The Vermont Agency of Natural Resources identified the following as potential threats to groundwater resources: animal feedlots, fertilizer applications, irrigation practices, land application, landfills, material stockpiles, pesticide applications, pipelines and sewer lines, septic tanks, surface impoundments, and waste piles. As described in the Community Utilities section of the plan, Montgomery does have public water supply that should be protected.

Natural Springs

A number of Montgomery residents rely on natural springs as a water source. Springs are especially susceptible to contamination from surrounding land uses. The Town encourages cooperation with private landowners to protect these water sources. The Town could consider adopting a spring overlay protection district to prevent development that would negatively impact these natural springs.

Wetlands

Wetlands are areas of land where soils are saturated with surface or groundwater frequently enough to support specific types of vegetation that require these conditions for growth and reproduction. Vermont's wetlands have been well documented as serving critical ecological and socio-economic functions. In the Town of Montgomery, there are 607 acres of wetlands, which is roughly 1.7% of the total land cover in Town. Wetlands serve many different functions which are listed below:

- **Flood Control:** wetlands associated with streams slow flood waters, provide flood storage, and reduce peak flood levels.
- **Shoreline Anchoring:** wetlands provide erosion control.
- **Water Quality:** wetlands process heavy metals, pesticides, and other toxic substances and they remove nutrients from run-off water (i.e. agricultural run-off).
- **Habitat:** wetlands provide habitat for a wide variety of plants and animals including a high number of threatened or endangered species.

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Deleted: a natural feature that attracts people from all around. This natural feature is the

Deleted: holes

Deleted: that are located throughout the Town. They

Deleted: The swimming holes should be recognized because they contribute to the overall quality of life that is enjoyed by the residents of Montgomery.

Deleted: Vermont's groundwater policy declares that the State "shall protect its groundwater resources and maintain high quality drinking water" and "shall manage its groundwater resources to minimize the risks of groundwater deterioration" (10 VSA 48 1310).

Deleted: , as stated in the statute,

Deleted: There are State programs which are designed to protect groundwater. These include those aimed at hazardous materials management, agricultural plant industries, public water supply, well drilling, wastewater management, road de-icing management, and land use regulation.

Deleted: Groundwater quality in the Northwestern Region of Vermont is considered generally good but there is always the potential threat of it being contaminated.

Commented [EK23]: Does PC know the specific areas used by residents and an approx. # of how many use these sources?

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Deleted: Wetlands cover 6.2 percent of Franklin County's total land area. —

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- **Socio-Economic Value:** wetlands are utilized by humans for their recreational, scenic, historic, educational, and cultural values.

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Given the importance of wetland systems, they shall be protected by restricting development, including roads and driveways and by maintaining and/or establishing undisturbed, naturally vegetated buffers around their edges.

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Deleted: from encroaching development, including roads and driveways, and disturbances harmful to wetland-dependent wildlife ...

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Deleted: Flood Resiliency

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Flood Resiliency

Floods are inevitable and uncontrollable natural events which occur sporadically and affect lands adjacent to watercourses. As climate change affects the State, floods are expected to become more frequent and severe. It is therefore in the public interest to plan for floods, and to implement land use strategies which will protect these areas and minimize the risks to public health, safety, and property.

Floodplain

Floodplains, lands adjacent to watercourses, are periodically inundated by heavy rains or during spring thaws. Their soils are porous and can absorb considerable water before reaching flood stage. Floodplains make excellent agricultural land but are poorly suited for development. FEMA has developed maps of floodplains in Montgomery, these maps are expected to be updated in 2023. Montgomery has 550 acres of mapped floodplain, which is roughly 1.5% of the community's total land area. Like many towns in Vermont, Montgomery's villages are partially in the floodplain and are therefore very vulnerable to increased flooding.

Deleted: , because of their propensity for flooding

River Corridors

About two-thirds of Vermont's flood-related losses occur outside the mapped floodplains. A mapped floodplain assumes that a river channel does not change position or scour down and build up with material. However, river channels move and change their meander path frequently due to erosion of the bank and sediment deposition. The river corridor represents the likely area where a river could move over time. The Vermont Agency of Natural Resources has developed maps of river & stream corridors across the state.

Deleted: revealing a fundamental limitation of the FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs)

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History of Flooding

Floods of large magnitude have occurred in Montgomery on a more frequent basis since the 1970s. The flood of 1997 was the worst flood recorded in Montgomery's history and resulted in the collapse of the Route 118 Bridge over the Trout River. Minor flooding occurs nearly every spring particularly along the Trout River, as the result of ice jams and melting snow. While the minor events do not have the same town-wide impact as the larger declared disasters, reoccurring events impact the town's capital budgeting. Spring flooding in 2013 damaged a section of Regan Road necessitating improvements of less than \$50,000 and in 2014 damages along roadways in town were approximately \$120,000. The Town of Montgomery Hazard Mitigation Plan contains further information on flood resiliency and all hazard mitigation.

Deleted: when melting snow combined with spring rainfall flows from the surrounding mountains

Impacts of Development

Human development can have a major negative impact on flooding risks. Undeveloped wetlands serve as natural storage for floodwaters, slowing the release of water downstream. When developed, this critical function is lost. Historic development activities such as deepening river channels and removing vegetation from rivers has increased the speed of rivers during flood events and increased risks of erosion. Development in the floodplain or river corridor decreases the area available for floodwater and puts that development at high risk. Attempts to protect development by raising buildings with fill can also result in worse floods downstream.

Currently there are 103 structures within the FEMA-mapped floodplain in Montgomery, which represent 14% of all structures in the community. Sixty-nine percent of these structures are residential dwellings. Owners of buildings within the designated SFHA are required to carry flood insurance to get a federally backed mortgage. According to FEMA's National Flood Insurance Program as of March 31, 2014, the Town of Montgomery had only 31 flood insurance policies in force. The cost of flood insurance can be prohibitively expensive for many residents and business owners.

In recent years, the Town has worked to identify and up-size critical culverts to reduce the severity of flooding and its impacts on infrastructure, improving bridges and working with UVM and NOAA to examine the possibility of monitoring the Trout River.

Montgomery's adopted Flood Hazard Bylaw adheres to the minimum development standards allowed by the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). Montgomery also follows all four minimum measures communities should take to reduce flood-related risks and prepare for emergencies which are:

1. Adopt the most current Town Road and Bridge Standards (see VTrans Orange Book: Handbook for Local Officials).
2. Adopt flood regulations that meet the minimum standards for enrollment in the National Flood Insurance Program.
3. Annually adopt and maintain a Local Emergency Operations Plan (LEOP).
4. Adopt a FEMA-approved Local Hazard Mitigation Plan.

As a result of these actions, Montgomery is eligible for the smallest local match requirements (12.5%) for repairs to municipal infrastructure after a declared disaster.

To further protect the community against flooding risks, Montgomery should review the standards for land development in the floodplain to ensure public safety and reducing future risk to infrastructure and investment.

Potential strategies to be considered include:

- Prohibition on New Development – this would prohibit new structures in the Flood Hazard Overlay District.

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- Increasing Standards – Communities can choose to increase the requirements for new developments in the floodplain while still allowing all or most forms of development. For example:

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- o Limit the amount of fill or impervious surface.
- o Require structures be elevated such that the lowest floor (including basement) is at least two (2) feet above the base flood elevation. This requirement also can result in major reductions to flood insurance premiums.

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- Consider regulations to preserve upstream wetlands.

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More information on disaster planning and priority infrastructure improvements can be found in the Montgomery Local Hazard Mitigation Plan.

Deleted: Floodplains, lands adjacent to watercourses, are periodically inundated by heavy rains or during spring thaws. Their soils are porous and can absorb considerable water before reaching flood stage. Floodplains make excellent agricultural land but are poorly suited for development, because of their propensity for flooding. Montgomery has 550 acres of mapped floodplain, which is roughly 1.5% of the community's total land area. ¶

WATER RESOURCES **TOWN OF MONTGOMERY**



LEGEND

Water Resource Features

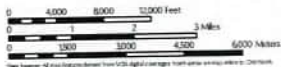
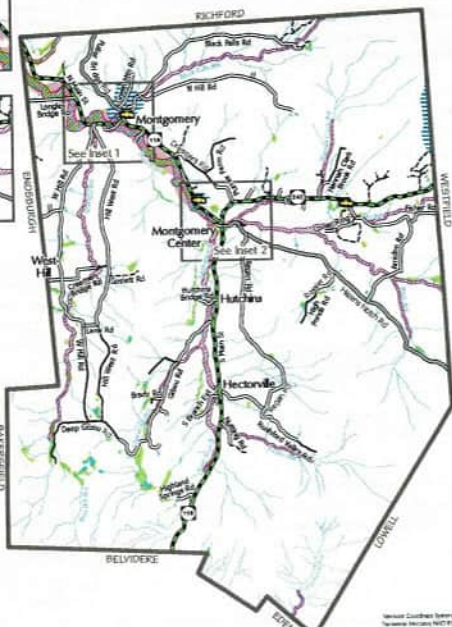
- Water Source
- River, Stream or Brook
- Pond
- Wetland
- 100 Year Flood Zone
- River Corridor
- Groundwater Source Protection Area

Transportation Features

- State Highway
- Class 2 Town Highway
- Class 3 Town Highway
- Class 4 Town Highway
- Private Road

Other Feature

- Town Boundary



Scale Source: All measurements derived from 1:25,000 scale aerial photography. Town water resources information is derived from the town's water resources inventory.

Source: Geographic Information System (GIS) data from the town's water resources inventory.



Location: Montgomery is located in the town of Montgomery, New York.

Forest Resources & Animal Species

Approximately 84 percent of the Town is covered in forest land. These forest lands and associated habitat are part of the important "Cold Hollow to Canada" habitat connection between northern New York and forests in Maine & Canada. Preserving these connections that allow the movement, migration, and dispersal of animals and plants is crucial in maintaining biological diversity, and the long-term viability of breeding populations in the face of climate and habitat change.

Significant Wildlife Habitat & Rare Species

Montgomery's residents are fortunate to share the community with a variety of animal species that depend on a variety of habitat types – and connectivity between habitats – for their survival. Maintaining viable populations of native wildlife is an important goal of town residents. To achieve this, residents and local officials should understand the habitat needs of different species, where those habitats are found in the community, and how land use and human activity can best be guided so that the function of important habitat is not diminished.

Deer Yards.

Deer wintering areas provide critical habitat for white tail deer and other species. These areas of hemlock, spruce, fir, cedar, and pine species provide shelter from deep snows, and they also permit easier winter travel. The combination of elevation, vegetation, and solar aspect significantly increases the survival rates of deer populations and also impact the landscape, ecology, and recreation. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service have targeted these areas for protection.

There is an extensive amount of deer wintering areas identified in the heavily forested areas of the Town. Large, contiguous wintering areas exist along the Trout River. Careful management of these areas is of extreme importance in order for the species to thrive.

Black Bear Habitat.

Black bear prefer mountainous and forested landscapes just like those found on the slopes of the Green Mountains. The location of most bear habitat is in eastern portion of Franklin County; the entire Town of Montgomery has been identified as potential habitat. Black bear have a significantly large home range and because of this, their survival rate decreases when larger areas of forest are divided into smaller areas due to development. In addition to needing large blocks of un-fragmented forests, bears are especially dependent on concentrated stands of mast producing trees that provide concentrated fruit or nut production.

Moved up [3]: Floods of large magnitude have occurred in a more frequent basis since the 1970s. The flood of 1997 was the worst flood recorded in Montgomery's history and resulted in the collapse of the Route 118 Bridge over the Trout River. Minor flooding occurs nearly every spring particularly along the Trout River, when melting snow combined with spring rainfall flows from the surrounding mountains. While the minor events do not have the same town-wide impact as the larger declared disasters, recurring events impact the town's capital budgeting. Spring flooding in 2013 damaged a section of Regan Road necessitating improvements of less than \$50,000 and in 2014 damages along roadways in town were approximately \$120,000. The Town of Montgomery Hazard Mitigation Plan contains further information on flood resiliency and all hazard mitigation.

Timeline of flood events in Montgomery:

Major Events	1888	1895	1927	1973	1976	1983
			2011			

Minor Events

	2002	2006	2007	2013	2014

Moved up [4]: Montgomery's adopted Flood Hazard Bylaw adheres to the minimum development standards

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Deleted: of eastern Franklin County - this includes the Town of Montgomery.

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Both deer wintering areas and productive/seasonal bear habitat cover Montgomery's landscape, town should encourage the management of these habitats—where they occur—in a manner that does not threaten the ability of the habitat to support these desired species.

Deleted: unlike the landscape that is found in the western portion of Franklin County. The

Threatened and endangered species are protected by Vermont's Endangered Species Law (10 V.S.A. section 5401 et. seq.). The Vermont Non-Game and Natural Areas Program maintains an inventory of the locations of rare, threatened or endangered plants, animals and natural communities. The precise locations are made available to town planners, although they are not published or made available to the general public. Endangered and threatened species are presently mapped in town in areas associated with the high elevation natural communities of the upper elevations of Jay Peak and along the town borders with Lowell and Bakersfield. Subsequent additions to the Non-Game and Natural Areas Inventory should inform planning and development decisions in town to conserve or otherwise protect those species and the habitats necessary for their continued survival.

Habitat Blocks & Corridors

As noted throughout this section, ability to travel across blocks of core habitat within a landscape is critical for the health of wildlife populations. Conservation of and continued management of these forest lands is an important community goal. Forest land and its traditional uses (timber extraction, wildlife habitat, recreation, scenic resources, etc.) help define the rural character of the Town. The majority of Montgomery's land are high priority habitat blocks at a statewide level, with the most important blocks being the southeast corner of Town. While portions of this land are conserved through the Atlas Timberland Partnership, other portions remain in private ownership. Similarly, a portion of the southwest corner of Montgomery is conserved, but other areas in the habitat block are not.

Deleted: "Travel corridors" is a term used to describe land that links larger

Moved up (6): allowing the movement, migration, and dispersal of animals and plants, which is crucial in maintaining biological diversity, and the long term viability of breeding populations in the face of climate and habitat change. Riparian habitat along streams and rivers, strips of forest cover between developed areas, and even hedgerows/fencerows all represent potential connecting habitat. Included are areas where land use and landscape

Deleted: allowing the movement, migration, and dispersal of animals and plants, which is crucial in maintaining biological diversity, and the long term viability of breeding populations in the face of climate and habitat change. Riparian habitat along streams and rivers, strips of forest cover between developed areas, and even hedgerows/fencerows all represent potential connecting habitat. Included are areas where land use and landscape features

Deleted: allow wildlife to move across roads to and from habitat areas (e.g., undeveloped areas with forest cover close to each side of the road). Travel corridors can serve local populations of wildlife, or species with wide ranging habitat requirements.

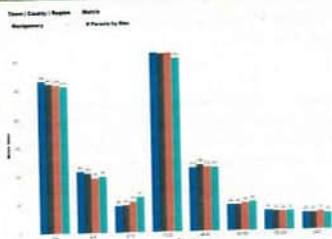
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Even low densities of development lead to the fragmentation of these habitat blocks. Forest fragmentation affects water quality, fish and wildlife populations, and the biological health and diversity of the forest itself. When many small habitat losses occur over time, the combined effect may be as dramatic as one large loss. Fragmentation results primarily from the construction of roads and associated development and can result in a disruption in animal travel, promote the invasion of exotic vegetation, expose interior forest habitat, and create more conflict points between people and wildlife.

Moved (insertion) [7]

There is some evidence of development pressure leading to forest fragmentation in Montgomery. According to analysis of the Grand List conducted by the Vermont Council on Rural Development, the number of acres in undeveloped woodlands parcels has decreased 6.8% from 2005 to 2020. However, the number of large parcels, 50 acres or greater has stayed similar. This suggests that residents are developing low-density residential or seasonal uses on existing parcels, but that these parcels are generally not being subdivided for more intensive development. Identifying and working to conserve large undeveloped habitat areas should be a priority for the Town. Where development impacts habitat areas, development should be sited on the edge of the forest and include the shortest road or driveway feasible to limit impacts.



Outdoor Recreation

Maintaining and developing Montgomery's natural beauty and resources for recreational purposes is an important part of the Town Plan. Montgomery has some of the most beautiful hiking, hunting, and fishing areas in the State and the Town should make a concerted effort to preserve these.

- Water quality, for swimming and fishing, should be protected against adverse impacts from development adjacent to streams and rivers.
- Commercial development that compromises recreational resources should be discouraged.
- Montgomery should encourage the development of recreation areas in the regions defined as suitable in the land use plan, as long as appropriate standards of attractiveness and supplemental protection are maintained.

Currently, the Recreation Board manages the Town's formal recreational activities. They work with other volunteer groups in town to provide and maintain recreational facilities for use by the entire town.

Deleted: In 2011, the Vermont Staying Connected Initiative identified seven habitat connectivity areas in Montgomery. These areas are considered "connectivity areas" as they are the remaining links between large forest blocks necessary for wildlife travel between habitat areas. One critical connectivity area is along Route 242 that has been documented as utilized by black bear, moose, deer and fisher cat. These connectivity areas are very important to maintain in order to prevent forest fragmentation of our forests and wildlife habitat. ¶

Moved up [5]: Approximately 84 percent of the Town is land. Continued management of these forest lands is an important community goal. Forest land and its traditional uses (timber extraction, wildlife habitat, recreation, scenic resources, etc.) help define the rural character of the Town. ¶

¶ Forests provide habitat to a diverse population of wildlife, which is negatively impacted when forested land is

Moved up [7]: Forest fragmentation affects water quality, fish and wildlife populations, and the biological health and diversity of the forest itself. When many small habitat losses occur over time, the combined effect may be as dramatic as one large loss. Fragmentation results primarily from the construction of roads and associated development and can result in a disruption in animal travel, promote the invasion of exotic vegetation, expose interior forest habitat, and create more conflict points between people and wildlife. ¶

Deleted: Forest Fragmentation¶
Approximately 84 percent of the Town is covered in forest land. Continued management of these forest lands is an important community goal. Forest land and its traditional uses (timber extraction, wildlife habitat, recreation, scenic resources, etc.) help define the rural character of the Town. ¶

¶ Forests provide habitat to a diverse population of wildlife, which is negatively impacted when forested land is fragmented through development.

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Deleted: For the purpose of this Plan, recreation is divided into three equally important categories: sport recreation, wildlife recreation, and other outdoor recreation.

Wildlife recreation includes activities such as hunting, fishing, trapping, and wildlife viewing. The Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife administers Avery's Gore, located in the southern part of the Town. It contains a total of 259 acres and has many different types of game available for hunting, including black bear, deer, wild turkey, gray squirrel, rabbit/hare, partridge, and woodcock. Potential users of the area are responsible for making themselves familiar with all rules, regulations, and restrictions before they can hunt or fish.

Outdoor recreation activities include skating, downhill skiing, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, snowshoeing, hiking, swimming, mountain biking, and road biking. Within the borders of Montgomery, there exists Little Jay (elevation 3180 feet) and Big Jay (elevation 3780 feet). There are several natural swimming holes in Montgomery. The Trout River, with its Wild & Scenic designation, is a major resource for fishing & paddling, although work is needed to restore water quality.

There are several public and private recreational resources available to the community:

The **Hazen's Notch Association** maintains about 40 miles of trails on over 2,000 acres. These trails are used in summer and fall for hiking and in winter for cross-country skiing and snowshoeing. The Association acts both as a local land trust for the Town of Montgomery, as well as a stewardship partner with other regional and statewide land trusts. The 300-mile Catamount Trail is a winter-use cross-country ski trail that passes through Montgomery as it traverses the length of Vermont from Massachusetts to Canada.

The **Covered Bridges Snowmobile Club** maintains an extensive snowmobile trail network throughout the town and works with landowners to maintain these trails and the permission for use by snowmobilers.

The **Long Trail** extends the length of the State of Vermont from Massachusetts to Canada, and briefly passes through Montgomery. The local chapter of the Green Mountain Club maintains hiking trails associated with this trail. Hiking is possible throughout the Town and there are many trails for people to enjoy.

Catamount Trail is a 300-mile, winter-use trail open to the public for skiing and snowshoeing.

The Towns of Jay and Westfield, located to the east of Montgomery, are home to the Jay Peak Ski Area (elevation 3862 feet) which offers downhill skiing, cross-country skiing, and snowboarding. Jay Peak Resort owns approximately 2,600 acres; of which 1,500 acres will remain forever wild by Jay Peak's choice and 1,100 of which is to be used for some type of development based on the Jay Peak Master Plan.

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Deleted: over 95,000 acres of wildlife management areas which are open to the public for hunting and other outdoor recreational activities.

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Deleted: Avery's Gore, located in the southern part of the Town, is one of these areas. It contains a total of 259 acres and has many different types of game available for hunting. Such game includes black bear, deer, wild turkey, gray squirrel, rabbit/hare, partridge, and woodcock.

Moved up [8]: Recognizing Special Resources. Fifty miles of the upper Missisquoi River and 20 miles of the Trout Rivers were designated in 2014 as a Wild and Scenic waterbody. This designation excludes the section of the Missisquoi River with the Enosburg Falls dam. The National Wild and Scenic Rivers System was created by Congress in 1968 (Public Law 90-542) to preserve certain rivers with outstanding natural, cultural, and recreational values in a free-flowing condition for the enjoyment of present and future generations. This designation encourages river management that crosses political boundaries and promotes public participation in developing goals for river protection. In addition, it enables access to federal funding for projects to preserve the recreational, scenic, historic, cultural, natural, and geologic resources of these rivers. It should be noted that designation neither prohibits development nor gives the federal government control over private property; recreation, agricultural practices, development and other uses are permissible in this designated area. ¶

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Moved down [9]: The Towns of Jay and Westfield, located to the east of Montgomery, are home to the **Jay Peak Ski Area** (elevation 3862 feet) which offers downhill skiing, cross-country skiing, and snowboarding. Jay Peak is an important asset to the area because of the amount of tourism activity that goes on at it. Although located in Jay, the Jay Peak Ski Area brings in more potential tourists to their town and its bordering neighbors like Montgomery.

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Commented [EK24]: Will address other aspects in economic section

CRITICAL AREAS TOWN OF MONTGOMERY

LEGEND

Critical Area Features

- Bear Mast Wetland Finding Area
- Bear Crossing
- Moose Collision
- Summit
- Deer Yard

Endangered or Threatened Species

- 100 Year Flood Zone
- Wetland

Habitat Blocks by Acreage

- 5,000 - 10,000
- 10,000 - 30,000
- 30,000 - 50,000

Transportation Features

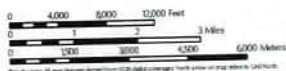
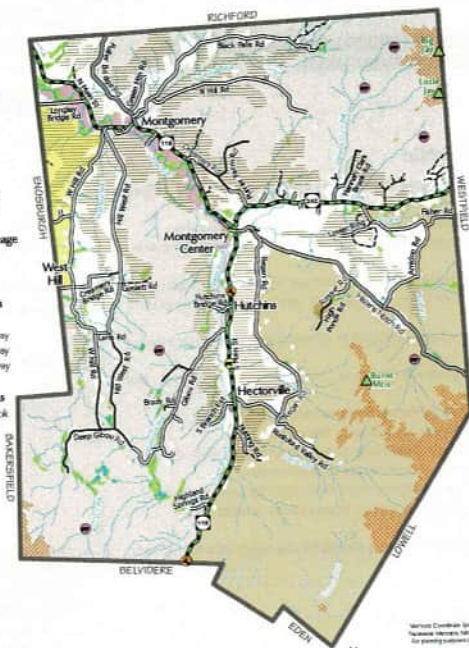
- State Highway
- Class 2 Town Highway
- Class 3 Town Highway
- Class 4 Town Highway
- Private Road

Surface Water Features

- River, Stream or Brook
- Pond

Other Feature

- Town boundary



Data Source: All map features derived from GIS digital coverage. Town names on map derived from GIS data.

Service Coordinate System:
NAD83, Montana Albers, UTM
Zone 12N, UTM
Datum: NAD83
Projection: UTM
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Units: Meters

Chapter 5: Housing

GOAL: TO PROVIDE SUITABLE LAND AREAS FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT THAT WILL SERVE THE NEEDS OF MONTGOMERY'S CURRENT AND FUTURE RESIDENTS

GOAL: PRESERVE THE EXISTING HOUSING STOCK AND DISCOURAGE CONVERSION FROM TRADITIONAL LONG-TERM HOUSING INTO SHORT-TERM RENTALS

Deleted: Presently, Ivy Peak has built an 18-hole golf course, an indoor ice rink, and an indoor waterpark since 2005. A four-season operation is vital to Ivy Peak's future and will have a very positive impact on all of its neighboring communities as they provide more year round employment for its staff, many of whom reside in or around Montgomery. Hiking is possible throughout the Town and there are many trails for people to enjoy. ¶

Page Break

Commented [EK25]: My attempt at wording this goal.

Policies

1. Ensure adequate housing options for people of all income levels, ages, household types, and preferences.
2. Ensure that households and individuals with special housing needs, including the elderly, disabled, and low-income households are able to attain suitable and affordable housing.
3. Allow only low-density residential housing in areas without municipal services while promoting higher densities in parts of town with existing services or close to existing service boundaries.
4. Conserve, restore, and protect the vitality and quality of existing & previously existing neighborhoods & hamlets.
5. Allow for innovative housing to promote low-cost, low-impact, consolidated, and resource efficient options.
6. Accessory apartments are encouraged, as they provide needed income for the homeowner and needed small apartments for residents living alone.
7. Affordable housing should minimize long-term living costs through high quality design, efficient construction, energy efficiency, and proximity to employment.
8. Encourage land use patterns which are inherently more affordable by nature of cost of efficiencies associated with construction (e.g. shorter access roads, smaller lots, proximity to utilities).
9. Existing housing in the floodplain should be flood-proofed for the safety of the residents and the community, as a whole.

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Change in Population, Households, and Housing Units

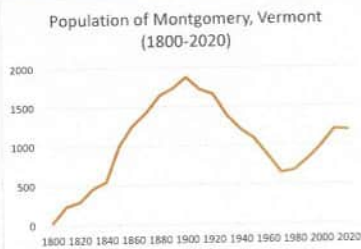
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Deleted: Adequate and affordable housing is an important concern to residents in every town. Differences can be seen across Franklin County in the supply and demand for affordable housing. Towns that are located in the southern tier of the County, closer to Chittenden County have a relatively small percentage of families below the County median income. Therefore, there is little housing that would be affordable to households earning the County median income. Towns that are more rural in nature, often provide a large portion of the Region's affordable housing. ¶

Over the last 10 years population in Montgomery has been relatively stable. However, the



number of households has increased 21% in the last 10 years, with 522 households in 2021. The number of households is increasing despite a flat population because household sizes are getting smaller. Just 19% of households have children under 18. The number of senior residents has increased from roughly 10% in 2010 to roughly 30% in 2020.

According to the 2022 Grand List, there are 636 residential properties in Montgomery suitable for year-round occupation, while there are 85 units that are only suitable for seasonal use. According to the American Community Survey, 30% of all units are used seasonally. This suggests that there is substantial overlap in the market for seasonal and year-round homes, and that increased demand for seasonal homes could reduce the availability of year-round housing.

In recent years, the number of properties rented out for short-term rentals has increased. Currently, no list or registry of short-term rentals exists, making it difficult to quantify the number or potential impacts. The Town plans to continue to monitor the impact of short-term rentals on the housing market & economy of Montgomery.

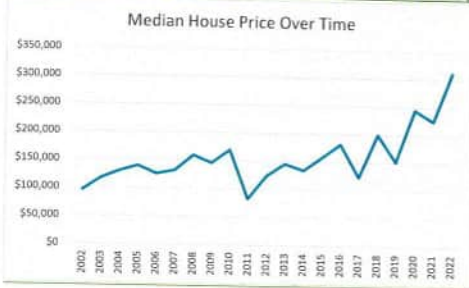
The number of residential properties serving as the primary residence for Montgomery residents (homestead rate) is 61% of all residential properties, which is slightly higher than it was in 2013. Therefore, there is no evidence that demand for seasonal or short-term rentals is affecting the number of homeowners. It is more difficult to understand whether short-term rentals are affecting the long-term rental market as there is not data on the exact number of rental properties in Montgomery.

Housing Options & Availability

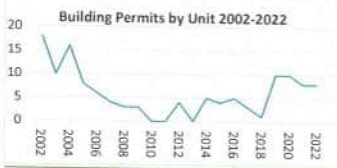
Housing Availability

On a State and regional scale, availability of both housing for sale and rental housing has decreased. For houses for sale in Franklin County, the average number of days on the market has decreased by 50% from 2016 to 2022, pointing to a competitive market. Statewide, rental vacancies are 3.2%, which is below the healthy rate of 5% to 10%.

The price of the average home for sale in Montgomery has increased over 100% in the last four years. Currently, similar increases have not been seen in data on the price of rental housing.



The increased demand for housing appears to be having an impact on housing development. From the economic recession in 2008 to 2018, very few residential units were permitted in Montgomery. In the last four years, that number has increased, although it is still far lower than the number permitted in the early 2000s.



Affordable Housing Needs

The demand for affordable housing is something that needs to be addressed in all communities. According to Vermont Statute, rental housing is considered affordable when a household earning not more than 80 percent of the county median income or the metropolitan statistical area's median (MSA) income, if it applies, pays no more than 30% of their income on housing, while owner-occupied housing is considered affordable when a household making not more than the county or MSA median income, pays no more than 30% of their income on housing. All

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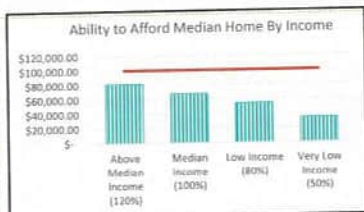
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municipalities in Franklin County are part of the Burlington-South Burlington Metropolitan Statistical Area; however, the figures for median income do not paint an accurate picture for many of the municipalities within Franklin County, including Montgomery. The 2021 median household income for the Burlington-South Burlington MSA was \$79,246, while it was \$68,476 in Franklin County. For this reason, the Northwest Regional Planning Commission has used the county median household income to compute affordability statistics.

The regional affordability compares the median cost of housing locally to the regional or county median income. This allows the community to see how affordable the housing is to the average household in the region.

Homeownership

A household would need an annual income of \$100,425 to afford the median house in Montgomery. Homeownership is therefore unaffordable to households making the county median income, and even many households making above the median income. Of current Montgomery homeowners, 43% are paying more than 30% of their income on housing costs.



Rentals

A household would need to earn \$31,320 to afford the average rent in Montgomery, therefore renting is generally an affordable option for county residents. However, it is important to note that this data may be flawed and that limited rental housing is available in Town. Of current Montgomery residents, 88% of renters are paying more than 30% of their income on rent & utilities.



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Deleted: The affordability gap for Montgomery is the difference between the maximum affordable mortgage and the median sale price for single-family homes. In Montgomery, low-income households can afford a mortgage, with monthly payments not more than 30 percent of their monthly income, or not more than \$153,719. This figure is higher than the 2014 median sale price for single-family dwellings of \$135,000. This means these households can afford the median home price and have \$18,719 remaining, ruling that affordable housing is available in Montgomery according to the definition of affordable housing in Title 24 VSA, Chapter 117, Section 4303. Households earning less than 80 percent of the county median income may face hardship in locating housing. The median household income in Montgomery is \$38,000 as of 2013; these households would face a shortfall of \$18,194 to meet the median sale price for a home.

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Specialized Housing Options

Communities also need to account for providing housing to individuals and families with special housing needs such as senior residents, families with children in poverty, and disabled individuals. Different measures will be needed to accommodate these groups ranging from modifications to existing housing stock (for accessibility), while others need assisted living arrangements or financial assistance. If these housing options are not available, it may force some residents to relocate outside of Montgomery as they age or need additional levels of care.

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The following is a list of population groups with special needs and an evaluation of how well their needs are being met in Montgomery.

Seniors - Currently, the Town of Montgomery does not have specific independent or assisted living housing for senior citizens. As of the 2020 US Census, 30.5% of the Town residents are age 65 and older. Supporting the development of senior housing is a high priority for the Town. Senior housing allows more residents to age in their community, rather than needing to leave for larger communities.

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Deleted: Of the population that is older than 65 years old, 51% of the age group is classified as having some type of disability (as identified in the Community Profile). Twenty-three percent of the population age 16-64 has some form of disability. The

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Persons with Disabilities - Roughly 1/3 of Montgomery residents have some form of disability, including roughly 6% with an ambulatory disability. The existing housing stock in Montgomery is older and often not accessible. The needs of these residents need to be considered as a part of future housing development.

Families in Poverty - Currently, 13% of Montgomery families are considered to be below the poverty level. With high levels of cost burden for existing residents, the Town will should take actions to ensure that there are opportunities for all incomes to find safe and adequate housing,

Options to Increase Housing Variety and Affordability

Increasing the availability and affordability of housing in Montgomery is critical to supporting the many existing residents who are cost-burdened, younger residents and renters looking to become homeowners, and new residents looking to move to Montgomery for employment opportunities.

Municipal regulations can have an impact on the types of housing available and the potential for more affordable housing. For instance, regulations that allow for a smaller lot size reduce the land cost of new development, which can support more affordable homes.

The Town is in the process of reviewing its zoning regulations to identify opportunities to allow for a variety of housing types, especially in the core Village areas, while providing standards to maintain the character of the area and ensure adequacy of services. The goal is to accommodate a diversity of housing types and development near existing services with flexible standards that allow for development within village settings. Other forms of housing development that can be economically and structurally viable for affordable units are planned unit developments and other forms of cluster housing, accessory apartments, and multi-unit housing. Mobile homes also are an important source of affordable housing. Vermont land use law does not allow municipalities to discriminate against or segregate mobile homes. Mobile homes in a town can provide an opportunity for those who cannot afford conventional housing.

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Public infrastructure contributes to the availability of low-cost housing. In particular, shared sewer and water connections allow for higher densities and lower land costs by minimizing the amount of land that is necessary to accommodate new development. Affordable housing developers often depend on these public facilities to reduce building costs. The expense of drilling wells and designing individual septic systems significantly increases the price the developers require for their efforts. The Town is working on efforts to expand sewer access in the village areas, more information is available in Chapter 9.

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Montgomery can also promote housing variety and affordability by promoting programs such as HomeShare Vermont. HomeShare Vermont assists elders and persons with disabilities to live independently in their own home by bringing them together with persons who are seeking affordable housing and/or care giving opportunities. Montgomery also supports efforts from non-profit housing developers to develop appropriately sized senior and affordable housing in the village areas.

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Chapter 6: Economy

GOAL: TO FOSTER A DIVERSE AND STABLE ECONOMY BY SUPPORTING EXISTING ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES AND PROVIDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR NEW ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE ONES

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Policies

1. Support and encourage sustainable and diversified businesses that supply local and regional food needs
2. Encourage businesses that complement recreation opportunities within the town
3. Protect the vitality and importance of the villages as a community and regional asset
4. Encourage commercial development that supplies local needs for retail, business, and personal services
5. Encourage and develop resources for home occupations
6. Encourage Montgomery's growing arts community
7. Encourage businesses and industries that use the skills of the local labor force
8. Create an attractive, safe and friendly village environment that invites and supports safe pedestrian use, community events and an active lifestyle

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Economic planning can assist in providing jobs that match with the skills and aims of local residents, a more balanced tax base to meet community needs, the protection of important economic resources, and the provision of services and products to support the local community. Poorly planned economic development can negatively affect the local environment, strain municipal services, cause dislocations of businesses and labor, and adversely impact community character.

Deleted: The term "economy" for purposes of municipal planning refers to resources, production, jobs, income and activities in the town and region that contribute to the economic well-being of local residents, businesses and industries.

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Montgomery has many assets that can strengthen its role in the regional economy. Each of the two Village Centers serve as hubs of culture, community, and commerce and offer unique opportunities for residents and local businesses. These Village Centers contain most of the Town's important civic structures, iconic businesses, and historic landmarks such as the Black Lantern, Pratt Hall, and the Baptist Church. Montgomery contains several publicly accessible open spaces and recreation opportunities such as the Recreation Center with pavilion and fields, River Walk Park, community gardens and the village green. Montgomery also offers striking views of Green Mountains and a quality K-6 education system. These factors enhance the quality of life in Montgomery and provide a solid foundation for future economic development.

Data on Commute, Income, Employment, Business and Poverty

The majority of workers in Montgomery commute outside the Town for work, with just 5% working for Montgomery businesses and 11.3% working from home. Map X X shows the most popular commuting destinations. Montgomery residents are about as educated as the state

average, with 93.5% of residents having at least high school degree or GED and 37.3% having at least a bachelor's degree. The top three industries that Montgomery residents work in are tourism/hospitality/ restaurant industry, manufacturing and professional services jobs.

Roughly 5% of Montgomery's residents are unemployed, compared to 2.1% in Vermont overall. The average income reported on a Montgomery tax return is \$58,843; for households with children the average income is \$66,006. Compared to the state average of \$81,960, incomes in Montgomery are generally lower. Poverty has decreased in Montgomery over the last 9 years, from 19.9% in 2012 to 14.9% in 2021.

Worker Occupation By Type



Agriculture & Forestry

In the past 20 years, the State's agricultural economy has experienced both consolidation and diversification. To remain profitable, the average Vermont dairy farm has become larger which leads to a decrease in the number of farms while the amount of land being farmed may increase. This increase in large farm activity has led to environmental and health concerns at the local and State level. The available statistics also point to an increasing number of small farms that are diversifying the region's agricultural economy, which for more than a century has been largely focused on milk production. In recent years, the amount of land used for farming in Montgomery appears to be relatively stable with 5% of land being used for farming in 2013 and 6% being used for farming in 2022.

Deleted: <#><object>The majority of Montgomery's residents work outside of the community, and most of the existing businesses in Montgomery are small in comparison to other communities in the region. Excluding self-employment, approximately 3% of Montgomery residents work in Town and another 40% are employed in other parts of Franklin County. Montgomery and its neighboring towns house much of the region's workforce as well as provide affordable housing opportunities. Providing a diverse housing stock, as prescribed in the Chapter 13 on Housing, will help to strengthen the local and regional economy. ¶

Deleted: The economy of the Northwest Region, particularly with regard to land use, remains predominantly rural and resource-based; however, it is in transition. In Franklin County, the number of farms between 1997 to 2012 decreased by twelve percent while the size of farms increased by ten percent in this same timeframe (Census of Agriculture). ¶

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The are no operating dairy farms remaining in Montgomery. There are several farms that raise and sell heifers, beef and/or pork in Montgomery. There are numerous vegetable producers and other hobby and small commercial producers. Several hobby beekeepers help keep local crops pollinated. Maple sugaring operations have increased in recent years, with more trees tapped. The Town encourages maple sugar producers to use increased tubing to avoid the need for heavy maple trucks on dirt roads where possible.

The Town should encourage efforts that support its agricultural base, including the protection of primary agricultural soils, support diversified agriculture, and support of tax abatement programs such as the Use Value Appraisal Program or Current Use.

Roughly 84% of Montgomery's land area is forest land. Well-managed forestry activities can support forest health while providing an economic benefit to the Town.

Local Businesses

Role of Tourism

Montgomery's location close to Jay Peak Resort, as well as its many outdoor recreation and historic sites, make it a popular destination for tourism. Tourism supports many local businesses such as inns, restaurants and retail stores.

Jay Peak Resort: The Towns of Jay and Westfield, located to the east of Montgomery, are home to the Jay Peak Ski Area (elevation 3861 feet) which offers downhill skiing, cross-country skiing, and snowboarding. Although located in Jay, the Jay Peak Ski Area brings in more potential tourists to their town and its bordering neighbors like Montgomery. since 2005, Jay Peak has built an 18-hole golf course, an indoor ice rink, and an indoor waterpark. A four-season operation is vital to Jay Peak's future and will have a very positive impact on all of its neighboring communities as they provide more year-round employment for its staff, many of whom reside in or around Montgomery.

Historic & Cultural Tourism. Historic and cultural tourism promotes responsible travel to these sites and activities that educate the community and visitors by connecting us to our history and culture. Activities in Montgomery include historic sites, agricultural tours, cultural events, performing arts center, and festivals. Covered bridges are an attraction that draws tourists to the Region and to the Town. The covered bridge is viewed as a treasured landmark in the State of Vermont for they represent each town's history and an appreciation of their cultural heritage. Currently, there are six covered bridges in the Town of Montgomery, all of which can be found on the National Register of Historic Places (one is disassembled pending restoration). A description of these can be found in Chapter 3: Archaeological, Historic, and Scenic Resources.

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Deleted: Agriculture is extremely important to the regional and local economy. The agricultural industry exports goods from the Region and imports new dollars into the local and regional economy. Local farm operators tend to rely on other local businesses for their needs. By keeping things local, the multiplier effect of every new dollar brought into the area increases.

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Deleted: Many towns in the Northwest Region of Vermont depend on their natural features, their rural settings, and their history to attract tourists. The Town of Montgomery is no exception to this fact. See Chapter 6 – Community Facilities for discussions of tourism resources. 1

Deleted: Jay Peak is an important asset to the area because of the amount of tourism activity that goes on at it.

Deleted: Jay Peak owns approximately 2,600 acres; of which 1,500 acres will remain forever wild by Jay Peak's choice and 1,100 of which is to be used for some type of development based on the Jay Peak Master Plan.

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Ecotourism. Montgomery is located near the Long Trail and the skiing and snowshoeing Catamount Trail, along with many other local hiking and outdoor recreation opportunities. The Trout River's designation as a wild & scenic river is another asset to recreation tourism in the Town. There is potential in Montgomery to promote ecotourism or nature-based tourism destination that acts as a tool for both education and community development and promotes the available outdoor recreation and rural serene environment. Ecotourism activities could include nature-based tours and attractions, wildlife viewing, and outdoor recreational activities such as swimming holes, hiking, boating, fishing and winter sports.

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According to the 2011 US Fish and Wildlife Service survey, \$704.4 million was spent in 2011 on fish and wildlife-based recreational activities in Vermont which includes activities such as wildlife observation, bird watching, fishing, and hunting, and fall foliage touring. Given the impact of these activities on the Vermont economy, conservation and protection of important wildlife habitat should be considered an economic development strategy as well as a natural resource conservation strategy. These types of tourism support the Town's goals to maintain the natural environment, history, and cultural heritage of the area.

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Home Businesses 1

Types of Local Businesses

To complement the rural character of the Town and agrarian economy, small commercial enterprises, home occupations and light industry, in appropriate locations, should be encouraged. The largest types of businesses in Montgomery are professional and business services, goods producing industries, and construction businesses. Small home-based businesses are common in Montgomery, and roughly 13.2% of residents report self-employment income. These businesses provide jobs, tax revenues, lodging, dining, and other services for Montgomery's residents.

Deleted: Montgomery does have a variety of businesses that serve both local needs and the needs of its surrounding areas.

Deleted: a mixture of employment opportunities for its residents and for residents from other towns. According to the 2013 American Community Survey, most of the employees in Montgomery worked in the educational, health and social services trade sector, followed by those working in the retail, construction and manufacturing trade sectors.

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The Town of Montgomery has many different types of businesses and services for its residents and visitors. These include tourist orientated services, outdoor recreational services, retail stores, lodges, construction services, automotive services, financial advising services, and restaurants. These businesses all contribute to the local economy by providing jobs, tax revenues, lodging, dining, and other services for Montgomery's residents. 1

Deleted: The Town is faced with some challenges to local economic development created by infrastructure limitations. By working on these challenges, including sewer capacity, improving facilities for pedestrians and parking, and encouraging improvements to telecommunication, the Town will encourage the continued development of a healthy economy in the village areas

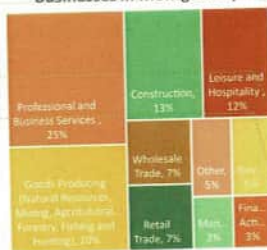
Challenges to Economic Development

Certain infrastructure limitations have created challenges to economic development in Montgomery. Many of these challenges are discussed in other chapters of the plan but are referred to here as they relate to economic development.

Workforce Development

A strong economy relies on a skilled workforce. Montgomery should support educational opportunities for residents of all ages to provide residents

Businesses in Montgomery



opportunities. A strong workforce also requires available and affordable housing opportunities. Strategies for supporting workforce housing are discussed in Chapter 5.

Village Streetscape

Improvements to the village streetscapes could help in attracting future development and businesses to the village centers, encourage tourism, and enhance the livability of its residents. While each village has a sidewalk system, the current infrastructure is narrow and is often blocked by parked cars. The Town has completed an initial streetscape study and is examining options for moving forward with streetscape improvements. More information can be found in Chapter 8.

Deleted: should identify options to improve the streetscape of the villages that consider safety and accessibility of all users.

Sewer

The lack of a public sewage disposal facility can inhibit development of the village centers. However certain commercial uses, such as office and retail stores, require significantly less wastewater capacity than residential uses, making commercial use of existing structures on small village lots a viable option for village redevelopment. The Town is currently planning a community wastewater system, more information can be found in Chapter 8.

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Telecommunications

Most modern businesses, including home-based businesses, rely on high-speed (broadband) internet access and cellular service which are unavailable in parts of Town. Expanding internet access and cellular service throughout the community should be an economic development priority for the town. The Town is a member of the Northwest Vermont Communications Union District (Northwest Fiberworx), a municipal organization working on expanding fiber internet to the Northwest region. More information on telecommunications can be found in Chapter 8.

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Chapter 7: Land Use

GOAL: TO MAINTAIN MONTGOMERY'S RURAL CHARACTER AND SCENIC RESOURCES BY ENCOURAGING DEVELOPMENT TO FOLLOW SUSTAINABLE LAND USE PRACTICES

Policies

1. Maintain the character of existing neighborhoods and avoid potential conflicts between incompatible land uses.
2. Allow for a greater density of development in and directly adjacent to existing neighborhoods or hamlets.
3. Limit development on slopes greater than 15% and maintain natural vegetation on slopes.
4. Protect scenic ridges by limiting development above 1,600 ft. in elevation.
5. Steer development away from areas where soils will not support it due to shallow depth to bedrock, instability, or high water table.
6. Protect public health, welfare, and safety by limiting development in the floodplain.
7. Protect water quality by limiting development in Wellhead Protection Areas, wetlands, and along stream banks.
8. Conserve productive lands by accommodating development in areas apart from most farming activity.
9. Recognizing the community's susceptibility to flooding, new development shall conform strictly to floodplain regulations.
10. Promote new development in areas of existing infrastructure, such as roads, power, and water.
11. Encourage sustainable agricultural and silvicultural practices to both protect the use of land and water resources, air quality, and keep a working rural landscape based on a practice of stewardship.
12. Avoid fragmentation of large forest blocks of contiguous forests that provide both economic opportunities for landowners as well as ecological and cultural benefits to the community, including wildlife habitat, water quality maintenance and recreation.
13. Promote anti-sprawl initiatives as a measure to maintain the appropriate use of our land resources.
14. Promote the enrollment of productive farm and forestland in the current use value appraisal program.
15. Promote, through incentives in land use regulations, the clustering of residential housing with the goal of preserving larger contiguous parcels for farming, forestry and the preservation of open space.
16. Inventory undeveloped scenic ridges that should be protected.

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Montgomery is wooded, hilly, and well suited for forestry. Forested areas are beneficial for both the economic livelihood of the rural communities and for the natural habitat they provide. Uses of land, such as wildlife habitat and watershed protection, provide substantial benefits to society, ranging from the economic returns arising from tourism to the benefits of water purification and flood control. The natural environment and community of Montgomery also make it a desirable place to live and visit. This can lead to new development, which if not planned for, can create negative impacts on Montgomery's natural areas. Land use planning will ensure the Town can continue to be an excellent place to live and visit while preserving its most important natural resources.

Current Land Use

Montgomery's total land area is 57 square miles or 36,436 acres. The majority of land cover in the Town is comprised of forest land (approximately 84 percent) with agriculture the second dominant land cover (less than 10 percent).

The Town of Montgomery has two unique village areas: Montgomery Center and Montgomery Village. Both of these are considered assets to the Town. The Center and the Village need to be promoted and preserved. Historic preservation, economic development, and the adaptive reuse of existing structures should be encouraged. The majority of residential homes are located in these two villages.

The two major routes in the Town are Route 118 and Route 242. Most of the development in Town occurs along the two routes, including residential development, agriculture, and communication & utility lines.

According to data from the property tax records, the amount of undeveloped woodlands and farmland has stayed roughly the same over the past nine years. However, the number of properties developed for seasonal use has increased significantly.

Category	Appraised Value of Category		% of Total		Total Acreage		% of Total	
	2013	2022	2014	2022	2013	2022	2013	2022
Residential	\$ 101,936,600	\$ 134,252,800	73.5%	67.9%	13,788.27	11,833.4	38.0%	31.4%
Mobile Home	\$ 1,725,300	\$ 1,930,800	1.2%	1.0%	252.45	227.2	0.7%	0.6%
Seasonal	\$ 3,184,300	\$ 14,966,000	2.3%	7.6%	1,135.29	3,890.7	3.1%	10.4%
Commercial*	\$ 2,714,900	\$ 18,059,200	2.0%	9.1%	233.86	354.3	0.6%	0.9%
Industrial	\$ -	\$ -	0.0%	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0.0%
Utilities	\$ 2,764,100	\$ 4,492,300	2.0%	2.3%	2.81	0.6	0.0%	0.0%
Farm	\$ 3,051,400	\$ 5,431,800	2.2%	2.7%	1,874.59	2,292.2	5.2%	6.1%
Woodland	\$ 10,447,200	\$ 12,370,900	7.5%	6.3%	16,630.9	16,856.5	45.8%	45.0%
Misc.	\$ 2,358,100	\$ 5,583,400	1.7%	2.8%	1,515.98	2,041.2	4.2%	5.4%

Deleted: Over the years, Vermont's economy has changed from natural resource based businesses to technology based businesses. As the types of businesses have changed, the value of land has also changed. Previously, the productivity of a piece of land for farming or timber largely determined its economic value. Today, features such as access to major transportation networks; infrastructure such as water and sewage systems; and proximity to qualified labor markets all help in determining the value of land for economic development. ¶
Much of Franklin County's eastern section is wooded, hilly, and well suited for forestry. This includes the Town of

Deleted: Technological change has an impact on land use and conservation. Modern machinery and financing allow projects to be accomplished on a grander scale and more rapidly than in previous times. The construction of roads and the use of transportation technology allow people and materials to move more rapidly and reliably over the landscape. Care should be taken to prevent inappropriate development at the expense of our natural environment. Advances in telecommunication and computer technologies erase geographical limitations.

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Land use planning involves the consideration of the many possible types of land uses and the goals of the land users. The impacts of growth, development, and environmental change on the land should be taken into consideration before any changes are made to the land. These changes will have a lasting effect on the community for years to come. ¶

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Deleted: By looking at the Land Cover/Land Use Map for Montgomery, it can be seen that most

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Deleted: Land use types include

Deleted: (such as row crops and hay or pastures)

Deleted: and

Other*	\$ 10,448,600	\$ 531,100	7.5%	0.3%	879.2	0.3	2.4%	0.0%
Total	\$ 138,630,500	\$ 197,618,300	100%	100%	36313.35	37,496.3	100%	100%

* In 2013 Grand List, municipal properties were listed as other, while in 2022 they were listed as commercial.

LAND USE/LAND COVER TOWN OF MONTGOMERY

LEGEND

Land Use/Land Cover

Built Up (residential, commercial, industrial, or other urban)

Open Land (fields, transitional, or barren)

Agricultural (row crop, hay/pasture or other agricultural practices)

Forested (broad leaf, coniferous, deciduous or mixed)

Wetland (includes forested wetland)

Transportation Features

State Highway

Class 2 Town Highway

Class 3 Town Highway

Class 4 Town Highway

Private Road

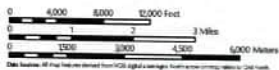
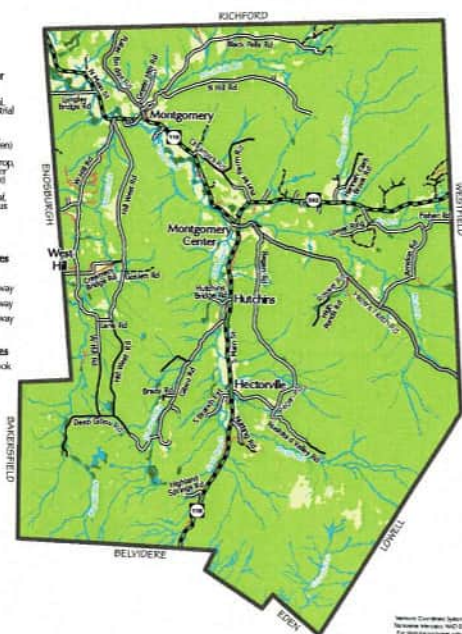
Surface Water Features

River, Stream or Brook

Pond

Other Feature

Town Boundary



Scale: Township 44 N, Range 10 W, Section 10 NE, T44N R10W S10NE, Montgomery, Michigan, 48°10'N, 83°10'W

Source: Geographic Information System
MapScale: 1:50,000
For 2000-2001 only



Prepared by:
Michigan Department of Transportation
Planning Commission
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800-288-2888
800-288-2888
800-288-2888

Montgomery, Michigan, 48°10'N, 83°10'W

Constraints to Development

Areas with steep slopes (15% or greater), shallow soils, high water table, or within the floodplain are poorly suited for development. These site conditions may entail high maintenance costs, and pose a burden to municipal taxpayers as well as hazards to public health and safety. Development in these areas may also compromise the quality and quantity of ground and surface waters and other natural resources, and therefore should be restricted.

Village Center Designations

Montgomery received Village Center Designations for both villages in Montgomery in 2003. The purpose of the designation is to support revitalization of the existing traditional village centers. This designation is one tool to encourage investment in the villages that will lead to enhancing the livability by expanding access to employment, housing, education and schools, services, public facilities, and other basic needs. Supporting our villages also aligns with the statewide planning goals of encouraging compact development and maintaining the historic settlement pattern as stated in 24 V.S.A. § 4302.

Deleted: Both of the Villages in Montgomery received state designation in August of 2003 as a way to support the

Deleted: supports the goals of the community by gaining access to several benefits as listed below as

Deleted: these settlement areas

State Village Center Designated Areas in Montgomery

Montgomery Village



Montgomery Center



Benefits available for designated village centers are:

- Up to 20% Vermont income tax credit for substantial rehabilitation of certified historic buildings;
- Up to 50% Vermont Income Tax credit for code improvements to commercial buildings;
- Priority consideration for all grants through the state's Municipal Planning Grant Program, and the Consolidated Plan for HUD funding including the Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG);
- The State Buildings Department will give consideration and priority to designated village center locations when leasing or constructing buildings, in consultation with the

community;

- A special assessment district in a designated village center may use funds for operating costs in addition to capital expenses.

Future Land Use

While Montgomery is not currently experiencing a large growth in population, data shows there is continuous demand for new housing units, with an average of seven units per year permitted over the last five years. This development pressure could lead to sprawl, which is defined as "a regional land use pattern of scattered, low-density, single use development...it is land consuming, auto dependent, energy and resource intensive, economically exclusive, and is initially some distance from existing infrastructure" (source: The History of Sprawl in Chittenden County). Growth can occur without sprawl by redeveloping existing village centers and developing new compact growth centers. Recognizing that the two current village areas contain significant wastewater limitations, the Town is working on developing a community wastewater system. Additionally, the Town may want to consider designating additional areas adjacent to the Villages that are appropriate for more intense development.

The community recognizes the value of working lands to the regional farm and forest products economy and to the local and regional community's ability to conserve and provide stewardship for its cultural heritage and natural resource of fish, wildlife, plants, ecological systems. Therefore, the town will explore all reasonable and feasible opportunities to support and protect working lands that are greater than 25 acres and meet any of the following criteria – (i) enrolled in the Vermont Current Use program; (ii) owned by persons willing to consider the sale and application of a conservation easement; (iii) are being managed in accordance with a forest management plan that has been reviewed and approved by a professional forester, wildlife biologist, or other appropriate and related professional; or (iv) owned by persons willing to consider other non-regulatory mechanisms that promote sustainable forest management or seek to otherwise conserve the lands.

Deleted: The Town of Montgomery, like all other towns, needs to look at the consequences of growth and development for its local community and also with the Region and State. Growth and development can greatly affect the town's land use, and towns need to plan for this potential change. Montgomery is expected to see a steady population growth through the year 2020 of twelve to seventeen percent (see Community Profile) which is a higher rate of growth than is expected for Franklin County. This could affect the future land use patterns as the Town grows to accommodate this new population. ¶

Deleted: One thing that needs to be addressed is sprawl. Sprawl

Deleted: community should identify areas that are appropriate for higher density development.

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Proposed Land Use Districts

The development of the Proposed Land Use Districts are based on existing land use patterns, traffic patterns, the intensity of proposed uses, physical constraints of the land, the community's vision, and several long range planning goals and objectives. To further the goals, policies, and recommendations set forth in this Plan, the following five (5) land use districts and two (2) overlay districts describe the current zoning districts in Montgomery, shown on the Proposed Land Use Map.

Village Districts (Village I and Village II). The Village Districts encompass the historic village areas of each of Montgomery's Village Centers – Montgomery Village and Montgomery Center. The Districts are intended to further growth and economic development in keeping with Montgomery's traditional village character. Consistent with the historic development pattern, development is allowed at higher densities and intensities in the village areas. Historic buildings are a significant contributor to village character and are encouraged to be preserved and adapted for re-use. New development should be consistent in siting and scale with the surrounding historic structures in the villages. Enhancing the pedestrian friendly streetscape is a high priority in the village areas.

The Village I District is used for mixed use development consistent with village character along the main corridors, including single and multi-family residential, commercial and public uses. The District provides access to municipal and community services, including water supply. Enhancing the pedestrian friendly streetscape is a high priority in the Village I District. The Village II District encompasses areas of Montgomery Village and Montgomery Center outside the mixed use core. The density of development remains consistent with the Village I District; however, uses transition to primarily residential. Enhancing pedestrian accessibility is also important in the Village II District.

Rural Residential District. The Rural Residential District provides for rural residential and business land uses at lower densities than the village centers to preserve the traditional working landscape and to maintain Montgomery's rural character. Rural residential, small-scale commercial and light industrial land uses are balanced with the natural landscape of forests, rivers and streams, meadowlands and agricultural fields. Home-based occupations and industries are common throughout the Rural Residential District. The Rural Residential District encompasses the areas outside of the village centers along Class 3 town roads and state highways (excluding those portions of Rt. 58 east of Amadon Road) and including those lands comprising smaller forest blocks in town where natural resource concerns are not a primary concern (as in the Conservation I & II Districts).

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¶ The aim of this plan is guide future development.

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Conservation I District. The purpose of the Conservation I District is to preserve the ecological, cultural and economic value and function of forest blocks and the natural resources they encompass as detailed in this Plan. These include:

- To maintain healthy, viable populations of native wildlife;
- To support active forest management as a means of supporting the local wood products industry;
- To enhance outdoor recreation valued by residents and visitors alike;
- To provide for the protection of source waters which feed rivers and streams, including important aquatic habitats; and
- To maintain the aesthetics associated with the agricultural and forested landscape.

Conservation II District. The Conservation II District consists of forest blocks at 1,600 feet in elevation and above. Placing restrictions on development is essential due to the sensitive resources located there, including wildlife habitat, steep slopes, shallow soils, headwaters, and the potential for development to affect erosion or flood hazards downstream. Protection of these areas also serves the ecological, cultural and economic benefits associated with the rural character as described above.

Hazard Area Overlay. The purpose of this overlay district is to prevent increases in flooding caused by development in flood hazard areas, to minimize future public and private losses due to flood, and to promote public health, safety, and general welfare. This includes all areas in Montgomery identified as areas of special flood hazard on the National Flood Insurance maps located at the Town Office building.

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River Corridor Area Overlay. The River Corridor consists of a floodplain corridor, including the stream and land adjacent to the stream, the dimensions of which are determined using physical relations between the channel width and the meander belt width. It identifies an area where stream processes may occur that enable the stream to re-establish and maintain a stable slope and dimensions over time. A stable stream slope occurs when a channel reaches a certain length. This length is accommodated by a corridor of floodplain area described as the meander belt. The River Corridor is a calculated belt width-based corridor where erosion is minimized when stream equilibrium conditions are achieved. River Corridor area boundaries attempt to capture lands most vulnerable to fluvial erosion in the near term and indicate the type, magnitude, and frequency of fluvial adjustments anticipated during flood events. The area can be mapped, and is based on quality-assured fluvial geomorphic data (i.e., data that describe the physical form and process of a riverine system).

Chapter 8: Transportation

GOAL: TO DEVELOP A FUNCTIONAL AND CONNECTED TRANSPORTATION NETWORK.

Deleted: ENSURE THE DEVELOPMENT OF

Policies

1. Protect the health, safety, and welfare of the traveling public
2. Promote safe, convenient, economic, and energy efficient transportation systems including public transit options and paths for pedestrians and bicycles
3. Promote transportation activities that respect the natural environment
4. Maintain the scenic character of the Town's rural byways
5. Support public transit efforts of the Green Mountain Transit Agency to increase mobility and access of Town residents
6. Provide appropriate provisions for bicycle and pedestrian use on designated routes, including sidewalks, paths, widen shoulders, proper signage and pavement improvements
7. Maintain good quality, safe local roads and streets, sidewalks, bridges, and equipment needed for their maintenance
8. Recognize the link between land use and transportation and coordinate transportation improvements to facilitate and complement the desired type, location, density, and timing of local development

Local transportation planning should have two primary purposes. The first purpose is to ensure that people and goods are able to move freely, safely, and efficiently using all modes of transportation, including by walking or bicycling.

The second purpose of transportation planning is to help guide growth in appropriate locations identified through land-use planning. Transportation investments and improvements should be located so as to encourage growth in the village areas and discourage it in environmentally sensitive areas.

Town of Montgomery is an active participant in the Regional Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC). The TAC serves to advise the Northwest Regional Planning Commission's transportation planning program, acts as a liaison between local communities and the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans), and provides local and regional input regarding transportation issues important to the region.

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Deleted: This includes, where applicable, highways, local roads, railroads, airports, bicycle paths, pedestrian routes, ferry systems, and public transit. Transportation efficiency includes consideration of energy use, economic and social costs, and time. People and goods move with the assistance of more than one mode, therefore transportation planning should consider how the different modes of transportation could complement each other.

Deleted: Growth management can be assisted by directing construction or transportation improvements in coordination with local and regional plans into areas favorable for growth and away from

Public Roads & Bridges

Town Highway System

The Transportation System Map shows the state and local highways; combined the Town and Village have approximately 49 miles of local roads and 14 miles of State Highway along Route 118 and 242. Vermont classifies roads into four categories based on level of importance and use. Class 2 and 3 town roads receive state funds for their upkeep while Class 4 roads do not. Under its current Class 4 Town Road policy the Town provides only minimal summer maintenance to Class 4 town roads. The Town should consider adopting policies to allow for Class 4 roads to be upgraded to Class 3 where appropriate or to support cooperative maintenance agreements.

Miles of Road	
Class 1	-
Class 2	6.68
Class 3	34.87
Class 4	7.44
VT 118	10.50
VT 242	3.82

Many Town and State roads follow freshwater streams and rivers, therefore, a minimum of road salt and sand should be used in winter road maintenance as the runoff goes directly into these waters. Road salt also accelerates the deterioration of paved roads.

Traffic flow will vary depending on various factors such as the time of day, the day of week, the season, the location of the road, and the weather conditions. The major influences on the traffic flow in Montgomery are local businesses, local civic and social functions, recreational activities at Jay Peak Ski Area, and seasonal activities such as hunting, fishing, skiing, hiking, and foliage viewing. The table below shows the annual average daily traffic (AADT) count for Montgomery's major routes. Over the last 10 years, traffic along VT 118 has increased, while traffic on VT 242 has remained relatively constant.

Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) Counts				
Route	Road Segment	2022 AADT	2012 AADT	Change
TH-2 (VT 58)	From the intersection with VT 118- to the intersection with Amidon Rd	581	-	-
V118	From the Belvidere Town Line- to the intersection with Hutchins Bridge Rd	723	590	22.5%
V118	From the intersection with W Hill Rd to the Enosburgh Town Line	2205	1600	37.8%
V242	From the intersection with VT 118 to Westfield Town Line	1257	1300	-3.3%

Source: VTrans AADT Route Log 2022, 2012

The intersection of VT 118 and VT 242 in Montgomery Center is a major safety concern. Traffic speed and limited sightlines create dangerous traffic conditions. This area includes two steep hills that contain the entrances to a church, the Public Safety Building and Library, as well as homes. Access management is also an issue by nearby businesses with open parking areas. Any

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Deleted: based on the role that a road plays in serving the flow of travel through the road network. Factors such as average speed, convenience, access and the adjacent land use, and the types of travel a road carries all affect how the roads function and serve the needs of its diverse users.

Deleted: 16

Deleted: Zoning regulations should encourage growth closer to roads along existing highways. Zoning regulations should be amended to reflect the conclusions drawn from GIS mapping of areas within the Town most suitable for future development. The Town should consider encouraging these areas of development by creating new or extending existing Town roads.

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Deleted: Route 242 had the largest increase in traffic volume from 1994-96 to 2010-2011 with a 103% increase in vehicles along this route which can be tied to increase activity at Jay Peak Resort.

Deleted: A comparison of observed Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) counts % on major highways in Montgomery (1994-2013) [20]

Deleted: Source: VTrans, AADT 1975-2014 for VT State Highways

Deleted: The Town identified the intersection of Route 242 and 118 as being in need of an evaluation to consider options to improve traffic flow and safety.

adjustment to the traffic pattern will require re-locating a substantial portion of parking in Montgomery Center. The Town should continue to seek opportunities to adjust the traffic pattern of this area in coordination with efforts to re-locate parking areas as part of a streetscape planning effort.

State and Town Bridges

Montgomery has seven State bridges and fourteen Town bridges, six of which are covered and considered historic sites. The covered bridges draw considerable tourist attention and add to the scenic beauty of the area.

The Vermont Agency of Transportation inspects all state highway bridges and town highway bridges that are 20 feet in length or longer every two years unless the bridge condition warrants more frequent inspection. The bridge components of deck, superstructure, substructure, and channel conditions are evaluated and each bridge component is ranked on a scale of zero to nine, with nine indicating an excellent condition and zero a failed condition. A bridge with a rating of four or lower in any of the bridge components is reported as being structurally deficient. There are no bridges over 20' in Montgomery that are structurally deficient. There is 1 span of less than 20' considered structurally deficient, a state-owned span over VT 118.

Maintenance

In addition to the 49 miles of local highways, the Town is responsible for maintaining a network of bridges and culverts that assist in the conveyance of stormwater runoff and ensure the safe passage of motorists, pedestrians, and other travelers. General maintenance of the local transportation network is the responsibility of the Town Highway Department.

The Town Highway Department has 3 employees and owns the following equipment:

2016 International truck	2008 International truck
2022 International CV550 truck	2005 Cat grader 140
2012 John Deere loader 524K	1976 John Deere tractor/mower/broom

A new Public Works building was built in 2010 with 5 bays and accommodates space for the highway department as well as houses the Water Department truck.

To guide highway construction and maintenance, VTrans recommends the adoption of "Town Road and Bridge Standards". These standards have provisions to ensure investments in town highways are protected with proper drainage, ditching and construction techniques while also improving safety, reducing long-term costs and addressing environmental concerns.

Deleted: An all-way stop was recommended by VTrans in the past for this intersection however the Town was not interested in this solution. The Town should work with the State and NRPC to review this intersection and identify potential improvements.

Commented [EK32]: Double checked Black Falls Bridge ext. is over 20 ft but is considered sufficient

Deleted: The Vermont Agency of Transportation uses a sufficiency rating method to evaluate the conditions of the bridges with a numerical score of 0 (low) to 100 (high). This score takes into account bridge condition, geometry, traffic, ability of water to pass underneath the bridge. A bridge with a rating of zero to fifty is eligible for replacement, a bridge with a rating of 50.01 to eighty is eligible for rehabilitation, and a bridge with a rating of 80.01 to 100 is considered structurally sound. A low sufficiency rating does not necessarily mean the bridge is unsafe or in need of immediate repair. A bridge may receive a low rating because of such factors as clearance in width or height as it typically the case for Vermont's covered bridges. Table below shows the Federal Sufficiency Ratings for Montgomery's Town Bridges that have a score below 70.0. The State bridge (B20) along Route 118 over West Hill Brook experiences annual issues with ice dams due to a low bridge clearance.

Deleted: Bridge Sufficiency Ratings for Town Stru... [21]

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Pedestrian & Bicycle Facilities

Existing Pedestrian & Bicycle Facilities

Cyclist traffic in and around the Town has increased over the past 10 years and has become a popular seasonal activity for both residents and visitors. There are no dedicated bicycle lanes in Montgomery, and the shoulder of VT 118 is narrow. Montgomery Center has stretches of sidewalk along both sides of Route 118 in the village. These sidewalks provide safe and accessible routes for pedestrians throughout the village area. In 2004, an off-road path was developed connecting the end of the sidewalk in the Center to the Recreation Center to keep pedestrians off the road at the dangerous curve. Montgomery Village has sidewalks along one side of Route 118. Existing sidewalks lack sufficient curb for pedestrian safety and there are issues with parking on the sidewalk.

Connectivity Between the Villages

Currently the only bicycle and pedestrian access between Montgomery Village and Montgomery Center is the narrow & unsafe shoulder on Route 118. Improving bicycle and pedestrian connections between the villages is a priority for the Town. Adding a mixed-use bicycle and pedestrian off-road path would allow for safer connections between the villages and encourage increased bicycle and pedestrian traffic.

Village Streetscape Planning

During the 2019 Montgomery Thrives Community Visit improving the Village and Center traffic flow and pedestrian safety was one of three key priorities for future actions. Improving safety for vehicles and pedestrians was also a major theme identified during the town Plan Workshop. In 2020, the Town held a municipal vote on moving forward with streetscape planning efforts, which was passed by the voters. The Town is currently actively in the process of planning for streetscape improvements.

Current planning activities are focused on Montgomery Center. The main roads in both Montgomery Center and Montgomery Village are state highways, Vermont 118 and Vermont 242. Currently those highways are controlled and fully managed by the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans), which limits improvements that can be made. The Town considered reclassifying the road to a Class 1 Town Highway, which would allow for more local control over the roadway, but also require that the Town be responsible for regular maintenance and plowing. At this time, the Town is not interested in reclassifying the portions of VT 118 and VT 242 in the Village, although this may be of interest in the future.

The current project will focus on addressing parking issues in the Center, adding a new sidewalk and bike lane from the Recreation Center to the Grange, and reducing the severity of the road curve. Due to the limitations of parking and not having local control, the intersection of VT 242 and VT 118 will not be directly addressed by this project. This project remains an important priority for the Town and the Town should continue to look for opportunities to address this issues.

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Moved (insertion) [11]

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Montgomery has become a favorite destination for both bicycle tours and road riders from Quebec, Canada and other parts of Vermont.

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Moved up [11]: Montgomery Center has stretches of sidewalk along both sides of Route 118 in the village. These sidewalks provide safe and accessible routes for walkers throughout the village area.¶

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Deleted: The Planning Commission noted that the following areas that need to be addressed for sidewalk improvements and/or expansion:¶
Maintain sidewalk facilities for winter use¶

Prohibit cars from parking on sidewalks ¶

Improve the streetscape of the villages to allow for safer travel by pedestrians and signaling to motorists they are entering a village area. In Montgomery Center this could include modifications to create a separation between the roadway and the sidewalk¶

Add facilities (shoulder or sidewalk) to connect to the Public Services Building and Library to ensure that all residents have access to municipal facilities and services¶

¶

In 2011, Vermont enacted "Complete Streets" legislation, mandating that new and renovated paved roads be designed to safely accommodate motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians of all ages and abilities. Roadways that are planned and designed using a Complete Streets approach may include: sidewalks, bike lanes (or wide paved shoulders), comfortable and accessible public transportation stops, frequent and safe crossing opportunities, accessible pedestrian signals, curb extensions, and narrower travel lanes. The community should keep these principles in mind as future road improvements are considered.¶

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In the longer term, the Town would also like to consider possible connections from the Library to downtown, either in the form of an recreation path or sidewalks.

Transit, Air and Rail Facilities

The Town of Montgomery is not serviced by a fixed public transit route; the closest stop is in East Berkshire on the Richford to St. Albans route. Green Mountain Transit, (GMT) provides public transit for Franklin County. GMT also coordinates Medicaid and elderly transportation services. Passenger bus service to destinations beyond Franklin County is available from the GMT LINK Express bus to Burlington.

The nearest airport is the Franklin County Airport in Highgate, which supplies local air service. Larger interstate and international flights are available at the Burlington International Airport, Plattsburgh International Airport, and at Mirabel and Trudeau airports in Quebec.

The nearest rail service for freight is in Richford (Montreal, Maine, and Atlantic Railway) and St. Albans (New England Central Railroad). Amtrak passenger service is available in St. Albans via a route that travels south to New York City and eventually Washington D.C.

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§

TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM TOWN OF MONTGOMERY

LEGEND

Highway Features

- State Numbered Route
- Class 2 Town Highway
- Class 3 Town Highway
- Class 4 Town Highway

Road Surface Features

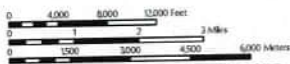
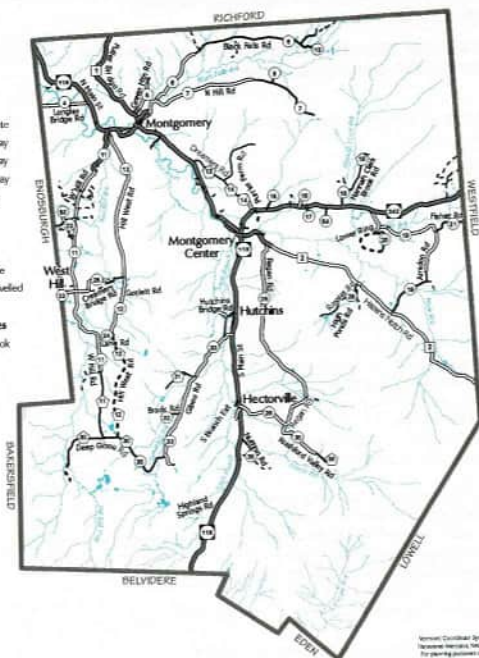
- Surfaced
- Gravel
- Soil or Graded
- Unimproved Primitive
- Impassable or Untraveled
- Unknown

Surface Water Features

- River, Stream or Brook
- Pond

Other Feature

- Town Boundary



Date: 10/10/10 10:10 AM 10/10/10 10:10 AM 10/10/10 10:10 AM 10/10/10 10:10 AM

Approved: [Signature]
Reviewed: [Signature]
For planning purposes only

Prepared by:
Northwest Region
Planning Commission
21 North Street
Montgomery, VT 05759
802-331-2888
www.montgomeryvt.org
January 2010

Location: [Map of Vermont showing the location of Montgomery]

Chapter 9: Community Facilities and Services

GOAL: TO LOOK AHEAD AND PREDICT FUTURE NEEDS FOR PUBLIC FACILITIES BASED UPON COMMUNITY GROWTH AND CHANGE

GOALS: TO PROVIDE MUNICIPAL SERVICES, OR ENABLE OTHER ENTITIES TO MEET THE NEEDS OF LOCAL RESIDENTS OF ALL AGES WITHOUT UNDUE OR SUDDEN IMPACTS UPON LOCAL PROPERTY TAXES

GOAL: TO PROVIDE PUBLIC UTILITIES TO SUPPORT CONCENTRATED COMMERCIAL, AND LIGHT INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

GOAL: TO CREATE A LEARNING COMMUNITY THAT WILL PROVIDE OUR STUDENTS WITH THE TOOLS FOR LIFELONG SUCCESS

Policies

1. Promote efficient and functional use of existing municipal buildings and facilities
2. Provide sufficient space and facilities to carry out essential municipal functions
3. Provide a gathering place for the local population to address town business
4. Conserve Montgomery's recreational resources, discourage incompatible land uses, and protect the scenic qualities that contribute to recreation
5. Promote recreational areas and facilities in convenient and reasonable locations for the use and enjoyment of all residents and visitors
6. Promote the protection and maintenance of public recreation trails within the town on private land, including the Catamount Trail, a cross-country ski trail that runs the length of Vermont
7. Provide space for gatherings, functions, and events to provide educational, social, and civic opportunities to enhance community involvement and identity
8. Provide emergency services to protect the health, safety, and property of local residents
9. Provide library services to enable Montgomery residents access to information, resources, and opportunities for personal and community enrichment
10. Encourage safe and affordable childcare facilities in the community
11. Protect the public water supply by restricting inappropriate development in the source protection area
12. Operate the Montgomery Water System in an economic manner, while providing an adequate source of good potable water for the needs of the Village and Center
13. Promote the expansion of telecommunications and electric facilities provided that infrastructure to develop these opportunities shall be located in appropriate areas; respecting the integrity of residential areas, aesthetic concerns, and natural resource issues

14. Provide appropriate facilities and infrastructure for a variety of academic, athletic, social, cultural and community activities
15. Broaden access to educational and vocational training opportunities
16. Ensure that both motorized and pedestrian access to school is safe and convenient
17. Support use of town lands, facilities, and resources for broad-based educational experiences

Community Facilities

Public Buildings

The Town Office building is located on Mountain Road, Route 242, in the Public Safety Building alongside the Volunteer Fire Department and Town Library. The Town Offices provide a variety of town-related services for residents and non-residents alike. A dynamic team consisting of the Clerk, Assistant Clerk, Zoning Administrator, and Town Treasurer staff the office to take care of business on behalf of the Town and for the Selectboard, in collaboration with various Boards and Commissions.

In 2016, the Town Office staff adapted the old spaces at the Public Safety Building into a temporary office location, following the departure from 98 Main Street due to environmental concerns with the building. These adaptations included: retrofitting closets for IT setup, buying gun safes to store Land Records to provide some manner of fire protection, and utilizing an empty truck bay to set up additional office space. It has been seven years since this transition, and office staff have taken a great deal of time to condense and organize operations as much as possible while trying to remain in compliance with various Statutory records retention requirements and accommodate the growing permanent collection of public records. In doing so, it has become clear that the Public Safety Building is a more suitable choice for office staff, residents, attorneys, and title searchers to conduct their business. That said, the current office space still does not meet the full needs of the Community. Given the square footage of the current building and with some reconfiguring of the layout, however, the PSB can sustain Town Office needs for the future. It is a practical and cost-effective approach to address Fire & Safety compliance, air quality in the building, and the long-standing need for a proper Vault to house all the Land Records for the Town for many years to come. It will also negate the need for any new construction, which was previously considered by the community. Office Staff continue to work on obtaining grant funding to pursue renovations to the building space to achieve these goals.

The former **Grange Hall**, located on Main Street in the Center, is now referred to as the Town Hall. It is used for Town meetings, Elections, by individuals and groups for social functions, large gatherings, and fundraisers.

The **Public Safety Building**, a one-story building located on Route 242, houses the Fire Department, Rescue Squad, Health Office, and Montgomery Town Library.

Deleted: Main Street in the Center. One half of the main floor of the one story building provides space for the Town Clerk's office with a walk in vault, and a large conference room which also serves as the Listers and Zoning Administrators offices. The remainder of the main floor is leased by the US Postal Service. The basement has a walk in vault for storage of Town records, and it has a furnace room; this space has been deemed unusable for records storage due to flooding concerns. The Town has identified that the current Town Office is not meeting the needs of the Community; there are space constraints in the Town vault, office space for staff and additional meeting space is needed. The Town is currently considering options for relocating the Town Office.

- The **Fire Department** has three large bays for trucks and equipment.
- There is also a kitchen, conference room, small first aid room, electrical room, utility room, and ample bathrooms.
- The **Library** consists of one large room and a storage room, a portion of which has been modified for a children's area. The library Board of Trustees would like to pursue an expansion project to provide additional space for the growing collection of books, audios and videos; additional computers; a reading room for adults; and a larger children's area.

Deleted: The Rescue Squad has one ambulance bay and space for storage. ¶

A **Public Works Building** was built in 2010 for the Town Highway Department. This building consists of a five-bay building and replaced the previous building from the 1970's. The building accommodates office space for the highway department and additional space for the highway equipment and the Water Department truck. The current site of the town garage is in the floodplain, the building was flood-proofed by elevating the building prior to reconstruction.

Recreation Facilities

Maintaining and developing Montgomery's natural beauty and resources for recreational purposes is an important part of the Town Plan. Montgomery has some of the most beautiful hiking, hunting, and fishing areas in the State and the Town should make a concerted effort to preserve these.

- Water quality, for swimming and fishing, should be protected against adverse impacts from development adjacent to streams and rivers.
- Commercial development that compromises recreational resources should be discouraged.
- Montgomery should encourage the development of recreation areas in the regions defined as suitable in the land use plan, as long as appropriate standards of attractiveness and supplemental protection are maintained.

Currently, the Recreation Board manages the Town's formal recreational activities. They work with other volunteer groups in town to provide and maintain recreational facilities for use by the entire town. For the purpose of this Plan, recreation is divided into three equally important categories: sport recreation, wildlife recreation, and other outdoor recreation.

Sport recreation involves activities such as tennis, baseball, and soccer. The recreation center, located near Montgomery Center on Route 118, has town tennis courts, a baseball/soccer field, outdoor ice rink, basketball court, and limited room for other activities. There is also a one-story log cabin with rest rooms and space for storage of equipment. A two-story memorial pavilion has been built. There is a ball field/volley ball court in Montgomery Village.

Wildlife recreation involves activities such as hunting, fishing, trapping, and wildlife viewing. The Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife administers over 95,000 acres of wildlife management areas which are open to the public for hunting and other outdoor recreational activities.

Potential users of these areas are responsible for making themselves familiar with all rules, regulations, and restrictions before they can hunt or fish. Avery's Gore, located in the southern part of the Town, is one of these areas. It contains a total of 259 acres and has many different types of game available for hunting. Such game includes black bear, deer, wild turkey, gray squirrel, rabbit/hare, partridge, and woodcock.

Outdoor recreation activities include skating, downhill skiing, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, snowshoeing, hiking, swimming, mountain biking, and road biking. Within the borders of Montgomery, there exists Little Jay (elevation 3180 feet) and Big Jay (elevation 3780 feet). There are several natural swimming holes in Montgomery.

Recognizing Special Resources. Fifty miles of the upper Missisquoi River and 20 miles of the Trout Rivers were designated in 2014 as a Wild and Scenic waterbody. This designation excludes the section of the Missisquoi River with the Enosburg Falls dam. The National Wild and Scenic Rivers System was created by Congress in 1968 (Public Law 90-542) to preserve certain rivers with outstanding natural, cultural, and recreational values in a free-flowing condition for the enjoyment of present and future generations. This designation encourages river management that crosses political boundaries and promotes public participation in developing goals for river protection. In addition, it enables access to federal funding for projects to preserve the recreational, scenic, historic, cultural, natural, and geologic resources of these rivers. It should be noted that designation neither prohibits development nor gives the federal government control over private property; recreation, agricultural practices, development and other uses are permissible in this designated area.

There are several public and private recreational resources available to the community:

The **Hazen's Notch Association** maintains about 40 miles of trails on over 2,000 acres. These trails are used in summer and fall for hiking and in winter for cross-country skiing and snowshoeing. The Association acts both as a local land trust for the Town of Montgomery, as well as a stewardship partner with other regional and statewide land trusts. The 300-mile Catamount Trail is a winter-use cross-country ski trail that passes through Montgomery as it traverses the length of Vermont from Massachusetts to Canada.

The **Covered Bridges Snowmobile Club** maintains an extensive snowmobile trail network throughout the town and works with landowners to maintain these trails and the permission for use by snowmobilers.

The Towns of Jay and Westfield, located to the east of Montgomery, are home to the **Jay Peak Ski Area** (elevation 3861 feet) which offers downhill skiing, cross-country skiing, and snowboarding. Jay Peak is an important asset to the area because of the amount of tourism activity that goes on at it. Although located in Jay, the Jay Peak Ski Area brings in more potential tourists to their town and its bordering neighbors like Montgomery. Jay Peak owns approximately 2,600 acres; of which 1,500 acres will remain forever wild by Jay Peak's choice and 1,100 of which is to be used for some type of development based on the Jay Peak Master Plan.

Presently, Jay Peak has built an 18-hole golf course, an indoor ice rink, and an indoor waterpark since 2005. A four-season operation is vital to Jay Peak's future and will have a very positive impact on all of its neighboring communities as they provide more year round employment for its staff, many of whom reside in or around Montgomery. Hiking is possible throughout the Town and there are many trails for people to enjoy.

The **Long Trail** extends the length of the State of Vermont from Massachusetts to Canada. The local chapter of the Green Mountain Club maintains hiking trails associated with this trail.

Catamount Trail is a 300-mile, winter-use trail open to the public for skiing and snowshoeing.

Community Services

Police, Fire and Rescue

The Vermont State Police (VSP) is the primary law enforcement agency responsible for public safety in Montgomery; services are out of the St. Albans Field Station.

Fire Protection and Rescue Services

Firefighting and rescue services are two services that are absolutely essential for communities to function. The Town of Montgomery currently has the following fire and rescue vehicles:

- 2010 Pumper
- 2020 Freightliner 4-WD Tanker Pumper
- 2020 International Fire Truck (Tanker)
- Rescue Truck (1995 International Ambulance)

Montgomery has a volunteer fire department located in the Public Safety Building on Route 242. There are currently 17 volunteer members who serve on the fire department. The equipment consists of two pumper trucks, one tank truck, one rescue van, and assorted smaller equipment, which is capable of fighting a fire in any accessible area of the Town. The Fire Tanker was replaced in 2020. The Fire Department also has volunteers that are trained first responders. Ambulance service is contracted out by the Town.

Montgomery has a Local Emergency Operations Plan (LEOP) to help organize the Town in case of an emergency. The LEOP contains basic emergency preparedness essential for responding to local emergencies. It includes critical phone numbers, contact persons, and critical facilities. Steps are listed in the Plan as to what to do in case an emergency arises. These plans also provide a framework that allows municipalities to work collaboratively to assist each other during a widespread event.

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Deleted: <@-Tanker: #1 1,500 gallons, 1 drop tank 1500 gallons, 1-4" 500 GPM, and 1-2 1/2" 250 GPM portable pumps
Deleted: <@-Fire Protection Suits
Deleted: 2
Deleted: The smaller pumper is almost 40 years old and will need to be replaced within the next five years. The other future needs of the fire department include the replacement of the rescue van and purchase of new fire protection suits for the members.
Deleted: The Town of Montgomery currently maintains an ambulance squad providing emergency medical services to Town residents and the surrounding area as needed. At the beginning of 2010, Montgomery Rescue had eight active members, all volunteer EMTs or First Responders. Richford Ambulance Service is contracted to provide EMS service to the Town when Montgomery Rescue does not have an available crew. The squad maintains an ambulance stocked with supplies and equipment to deliver advanced life support, and a rescue van with additional equipment used for incidents with multiple patients or hazardous scenes.

Library

The Montgomery Town Library Services includes five public access computers with high-speed internet, printer, free Wi-Fi, copy and fax machine, and digital projector with large screen. The library houses approximately 9,000 items that range from books, audio books, movies, puzzles and maps. There is also an inter-library loan service, a community bulletin board, and year-round programming for all ages. At present the library is open seven days a week, which is made possible by the library director, budgeted at 22 hours a week, and 13 volunteers.

Deleted: high speed

Deleted: year round

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Deleted: including volunteer staffing.

The Town library meets public library standards set by the Vermont Department of Libraries. The Library is supervised by a seven member board of trustees.

The library serves as a gathering spot for community groups to meet, sponsors art shows, hosts guest speakers, and participates with other local organizations in planning community events. Some examples of current offerings include:

- Family friendly presentations throughout the summer at the Rec Center
- A monthly Book to Film in the winter for young adults.
- A story hour playgroup for parents and young children, sponsored by Building Bright Futures.
- A weekly crafting night for all ages, hosted on Wednesdays
- "Technology Troubleshooting" is offered Monday and Wednesday 10 am – 3 pm, 4 – 7 pm.
- Summer reading program for all ages from June to August that's called Book Genre Bingo.

Deleted: potluck supper and film showing

Deleted: moms

Deleted: A fenced in play yard for young children on the library lawn was completed in Spring of 2010.

Municipal Website

The Town maintains a basic municipal web site at <http://www.montgomeryvt.us>. Information is available about a variety of Town Officers and Boards, including Warnings, Agendas and Minutes of Meetings, as well as ordinances, policies, permits, etc.

Deleted: This site should be continued and expanded, as time and expense allow, in order to better inform the public and improve communication.

Deleted: trash and recyclables

Deleted: Additionally, the district conducts special events for the disposal of problem wastes, such as tires, metals, bulky, and household hazardous wastes. The district accepts computers and peripherals, other electronic waste, and fluorescent bulbs at its Georgia facility.

Deleted: It is the intent of the

Deleted: Town of Montgomery and the NVSWMD to improve solid waste management programs. This commitment will be aided by Act 148, the Universal Recycling law, that was passed in 2012 that aims to further reduce the amount of waste going to landfills by banning recyclables, food scraps and yard or leaf debris to be landfilled by 2020. The State, Municipalities and Waste Management Districts will have to identify changes to their services and programs in order to obtain this goal.

Solid Waste Disposal

Montgomery has been a member of the Northwest Vermont Solid Waste Management District (NVSWMD) since the district's inception in December 1987. The district operates a waste drop off every Saturday at the Public Safety Building. Certain types of wastes, such as car batteries, must be dropped off at the NVSWMD's Georgia Facility.

The NVSWMD works to divert recyclables and food waste from the landfill whenever possible, in 2022 over 1,565 tons of waste were diverted from the landfill in the district. The NVSWMD also supports composting, and in 2022 collected 700 tons of food scraps in the district.

Water & Wastewater

Water Supply/Systems

From 2005-2014, Montgomery completed a nine year, multi-phase municipal water project. Phase 1 and 2 extended the municipal water distribution system from Montgomery Center to Montgomery Village where customers were previously served by a privately owned and operated water system. Phase 3 added a new well was found on Town-owned property off the Fuller Bridge Road in 2004. It was certified by the State and then the Town built a new reservoir and a treatment plant on the property, supporting control systems and infrastructure, including new pump stations on Route 58 and near the school, and new water meters for the Center.

Montgomery now has a system certified for about twice the capacity of the previous system, and has improved water quality, since the new source is low in iron, and manganese is being removed. There is also potential for even greater capacity if the need develops, but it would require additional State certification and possible expansion of the treatment facility.

The Town has set aside a portion of its federal ARPA funds to the extension of dedicated power to the Regan Road water pump.

The following description is from the system Source Protection Plan: The Montgomery Water System is a Public Community Water System that serves 189 connections to both residences and businesses. Each of the service connections has an individual water meter. There are approximately 45 fire hydrants connected to the distribution system.

Wastewater Disposal/Sewage Systems

Throughout the Town (including both the Village and the Center), the disposal of raw sewage is controlled on an individual basis, primarily by the use of septic tanks. For subdivisions it will be the developers responsibility to provide water and sewage facilities. The State of Vermont regulates the minimum standards for new septic systems.

The lack of a centralized sewage disposal facility is an to be an impediment to appropriate commercial development and higher densities of residential development in the village district. Over 10% of village wastewater systems are failing, but 92% of existing systems are on lots too small for a replacement option. The Town is in the process of determining the final design for a municipal Wastewater System in the Center and Village. The system will have the capacity to replace 165 existing septic systems in the Village and Center, as well as additional capacity to support further growth. The current project timeline is for construction in the Village to begin Summer of 2024.

Telecommunications

Telecommunications have become increasingly important to the security and economic needs of residents and businesses in the northwest region of Vermont as well as in all other sections of the State.

Deleted: Since adoption of the 2005 Town Plan,

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1

Deleted: The Town purchased the abandoned Montgomery Village Water Works from its owner for the sum of one dollar in 1999. This portion of the project was done in two phases; extending the main line between the two population centers, and then replacing the feeder services to approximately 63 Village customers. This latter portion of the project was completed in 2003. Phase 1 and 2 of the project was funded by a bond paid by local taxes, user fees, and a grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

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Deleted: Funding for most of this portion of the project was from a combination of the remaining balance of the USDA grant, a new low interest USDA loan, monies reprogrammed from an Environmental Protection Agency waste water grant, and a new USDA grant. Completion for this phase was Spring 2009, although the Town and principals worked on several warrantee issues through October 2009.

Deleted: 65

Deleted: It is comprised of a submersible Gould 3-phase pump (10 HP) used in Well R. The raw water mains only include the 2-inch galvanized iron and 4-inch ductile iron supply line from the well into the treatment building to the filter system. There is no raw water storage. The distribution system is composed of 8-inch cement lined ductile iron water main, 4-inch cement lined water mains, and 2-inch copper service lines.

Commented [EK33]: Still working on getting info as to whether further capacity is needed.

Deleted: The water system has three storage facilities:

Deleted: Tank #	Tank Name	Size
ST001		[22]

Deleted: has set minimum standards for new development, and to meet them, professional consultation must be sought by developers on an individual basis. [23]

Deleted: Presently there are no plans for a public treatment system. Sewage disposal is an issue in the [24]

Deleted: has also been and continues

Deleted: such as restaurants,

Commented [EK34]: Still working on getting greater specifics here

Deleted: As technologies improve, the town of Montgomery should continue to explore opportunity [25]

Many areas of Town lack cellular service. This can be a concern during power outages, as when landline phone service and internet is not available there is no way to contact emergency services in parts of the Town.

Telecommunication towers and related infrastructure require careful consideration. These structures tend to be located in highly visible locations such as on mountaintops and ridgelines. The need for additional facilities is projected to increase dramatically in the coming years. Proper siting of telecommunications towers is necessary to protect the Town's historic character, rural nature, and aesthetic beauty. New telecommunications towers shall not have a negative impact on the scenic resources identified in Chapter 3.

Consolidated Communications is the primary provider of landline, telephone and internet access in Montgomery. High-speed fiber internet is available in the villages and adjacent areas. Satellite internet, such as Starlink, is also available in Montgomery. The majority of rural Montgomery residents do not have access to high-speed internet. The Town is a member of Northwest Fiberworx, a regional municipal entity working on expanding fiber access across Northwest Vermont.

Education & Childcare

Elementary School

Montgomery Elementary School, located on School Drive, is the sole public school facility in town. The school houses pre-kindergarten through eighth grade, and was built in 1992-1993 with an official capacity of 125 students. An addition was built during the 2005-06 school year, increasing the capacity to 185. The building has eleven classrooms, one science lab, and space for one-on-one instruction. The State Education Department calculates that the Franklin Northeast Supervisory Union, of which Montgomery's Education Spending per Equalized Pupil for Elementary School is \$9,672.00, lower than the statewide average of \$15,521.

Since there is no high school in Montgomery, parents choose to which school they send their children. Data for the high school choices of Montgomery students is not available. Across the four-town school district consisting of Sheldon, Berkshire, Bakersfield and Montgomery, the most common high school choices were Enosburg Falls Middle/High School, BFA St. Albans and Richford Jr-Sr High School.

In the Fall of 2022, 139 students were enrolled in the Elementary School. The student population has stayed fairly constant over the past two decades. The pupil to classroom teacher ratio for

Commented [EK36]: Section 248a overrides municipal zoning authority on telecommunications structure, but the Town Plan is granted substantial deference.

Deleted: The Federal Telecommunications Act of 1996 placed severe limitations over municipal control of these structures; however within those confines, in 2005, Montgomery approved a Telecommunications Facilities Bylaw to protect the Town's historic character, rural nature, and aesthetic beauty. Both AT&T and Verizon have cellular facilities at Jay Peak.

Deleted: Fairpoint New England

Deleted: ocal

Deleted: access in Montgomery and provides the physical infrastructure (wires and switches) used for phone related services (long distance, DSL, etc). Comcast is upgrading their system, providing broadband cable service, which can be used for digital telephone service. Both companies provide broadband services but do not service all areas of Town. Broadband is also available from satellite and cellular providers. Comcast is the sole provider of cable television service in Montgomery but does not reach many rural areas. Satellite services are available as well as alternate internet services provided by Hughes Net.

Deleted: Fairpoint does not provide any pay phones in Montgomery. This remains a concern to townspeople since cellular phone coverage has significant gaps and can be unavailable during an emergency. ¶

Deleted: \$11,168.

Deleted:

Deleted: below both the county and statewide averages

Deleted: There are currently thirteen faculty members, eight para-educators, and fourteen substitute staff.

Commented [EK37]: Confirmed this data is no longer available in school report.

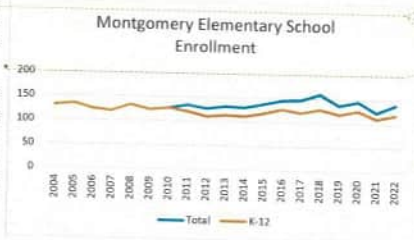
Deleted: In the fall of 2014, Montgomery's fifty-two high school students attended the three Franklin County high schools as well as other public and private schools across the state. Table 14 shows the area high schools that Montgomery students attend, as well as the current enrollment and billed tuition.

Deleted: 14

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2022 was 10.6:1. The Montgomery Elementary School has Internet access and all of its classrooms are equipped with it.

The cost of educating Montgomery's students is covered by revenue raised through state assessed property taxes, state general fund transfers, federal grants, and some local income.



Deleted: 2014-2015

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Deleted: and the average class size was fourteen students

Deleted: The total student to computer ratio for 2014 was 1:1.

Other Educational Opportunities

The Northern Mountain Valley Unified Union School District of which Montgomery is a member does not have a high school, therefore the District pays for tuition for students to attend other high schools in the area.

Community College of Vermont (CCV) offers courses and degree programs in Burlington, St. Albans, and Newport. CCV is part of the Vermont State College System and has links to other higher education facilities around the State. The University of Vermont, St. Michael's College, and Champlain College are located in the Burlington area, and Northern Vermont University-Johnson is in Johnson. Vocational education is offered at the Cold Hollow Center in Enosburg Falls. The Center offers a wide range of programs for high school students, as well as providing evening classes for adults.

Childcare

Although full-time childcare is not a service provided by the community, it is a concern for existing and prospective families, both in regard to finding quality services and the cost of these services. The Recreation Center does provide free day camp three-days per week in the summer.

According to State data, Montgomery does not currently have a registered home childcare provider. Montgomery elementary houses a pre-kindergarten program established by the Franklin Northeast Supervisory Union (FNESU) in the fall of 2007. There are several unregistered providers in Town.

According to the 2021 American Community Survey data there are 179 children age 0-17 in Montgomery. Sixty-seven percent of households with children under 6 have all parents in the home working.

Data on other options, such as out-of-town childcare providers, family care providers, and unregistered childcare homes, are not available. On a county-level, Let's Grow Kids estimates that

Deleted: Johnson State College

Deleted: During the 2014, Montgomery had 11 registered home-school students in the K-8 program. No numbers are available for high school-aged home school students. Montgomery's public school system supports home-schooled students by providing curriculum support, use of school facilities and access to course offerings. A home study student can legally take up to 40% of their classes at a public school. Access is also available to sports and other extra-curricular activities. To enroll as a home study student you must provide the Vermont Agency of Education with a minimum course of study for them to deem complete or incomplete.

Deleted: High Schools Attended by Montgomery Students Fall 2014

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Deleted: 280 children from birth to age 17 living in Montgomery.

Deleted: Sixty-nine percent of households with children under the age of 6 are in households where adult providers are working. Similarly, 67% of households with children 6-17 have working parents. The question remains whether the needs of children are being met in the community or forcing parents to find services outside the community.

Deleted: stay at home parents

Deleted: or other in-home childcare options

as many as 74% of infants, 54% of toddlers and 57% of preschoolers that likely need care do not have access to regulated programs. Therefore, it is likely that many Montgomery families face challenges in accessing childcare. The Town encourages the development of home-based and center childcare facilities.

Youth Activities

Students in the Franklin Northeast Supervisory Union, of which Montgomery is a part, have substance use rates that are significantly higher than state averages (2021 Youth Risk Behavior Survey). The Vermont Youth Project has identified having youth-specific spaces that are safe and substance free as an important priority to combat these trends.

Montgomery has previously provided a Teen Center as a safe, supervised space for Montgomery youth grades 6 and up; it was available 2-3 days a week for around 10 hours a week. The Teen Center closed in 2014 due to lack of financial support and reduced attendance when the Center moved out of the Town Office and off of Main Street due to a mold and mildew issue from a flooded basement. Currently, youth programs are offered at the Montgomery Library. Should adequate facilities be available in the future, the community should revisit the need for a Teen Center to provide services to area youth.

Deleted: Montgomery and Franklin County both have alarmingly high rates of underage drug and alcohol abuse. Franklin County shares staggering rates of underage alcohol and drug use with the rest of the state, with 12% of 8th graders having consumed alcohol in the last 30 days and 4% of 8th graders having consumed marijuana in the past 30 days. These rates shoot up to 29% of 10th graders and 47% of 12th graders having consumed alcohol in the last 30 days and 16% of 10th graders and 27% of 12th graders having consumed marijuana in the past 30 days (Data from 2013 VT Youth Risk Behavior Survey). While these numbers were down compared to the 2009 survey results, this information shows teens are still at risk for alcohol and drug abuse. It is important to prevent early use not only because of the problems it can cause with intellectual and emotional brain development, but also because the earlier a person begins to use alcohol and substances, the more likely they are to develop a dependence issue.

Deleted: On average there were about 15-20 teens in attendance each day. Programs like the Teen Center, SAP programs in schools, church youth groups and the youth program being offered at the library, as well as community involvement and caring adults have been linked to reduction in early use. The Teen Center participated in many activities including movie nights, dances, and summer day activities. The Teen Center closed in 2014 due to lack of financial support and reduced attendance when the Center moved out of the Town Office and off of Main Street due to a mold and mildew issue from a flooded basement. While the center was relocated to the Recreation facilities, there are no pedestrian facilities that link it to the village so walking to access the program was unsafe.

FACILITIES & SERVICES TOWN OF MONTGOMERY

LEGEND

Facilities & Services Features

- ★ Facility
- Electric Transmission Line
- State Forest
- Town Forest
- Wildlife Management Area
- Natural Recreation Area
- Atlas Timberlands Partnership

Transportation Features

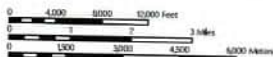
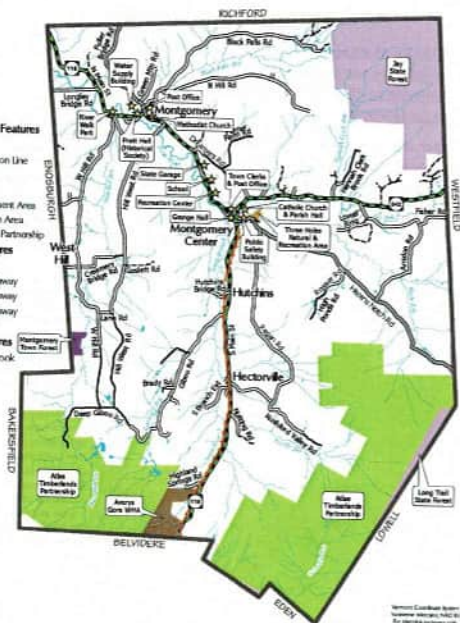
- State Highway
- Class 2 Town Highway
- Class 3 Town Highway
- Class 4 Town Highway
- Private Road

Surface Water Features

- River, Stream or Brook
- Pond

Other Feature

- Town Boundary



Note: Boundary of the town of Montgomery is shown in black. All other boundaries are shown in gray.



Source: Copyright 2000 by the Town of Montgomery, New York.

Chapter 10: Energy

GOAL: PLAN FOR INCREASED ELECTRIC DEMAND WITH THE SUPPORT OF EFFICIENCY VERMONT AND LOCAL ELECTRIC UTILITIES.

GOAL: REDUCE ANNUAL FUEL NEEDS AND FUEL COSTS FOR HEATING STRUCTURES, TO FOSTER THE TRANSITION FROM NON-RENEWABLE FUEL SOURCES TO RENEWABLE FUEL SOURCES, AND TO MAXIMIZE THE WEATHERIZATION OF RESIDENTIAL HOUSEHOLDS AND COMMERCIAL ESTABLISHMENTS.

GOAL: HOLD VEHICLE MILES TRAVELED PER CAPITA TO 2011 LEVELS OR LESS BY REDUCING THE NUMBER OF SINGLE OCCUPANCY (SOV) TRIPS, INCREASING THE NUMBER OF PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE TRIPS, PROMOTING FORMAL AND INFORMAL RIDESHARING AND PUBLIC TRANSIT RIDERSHIP.

GOAL: FOCUS GROWTH WITHIN AND ADJACENT TO THE VILLAGES.

Policies

- Montgomery supports energy conservation efforts and the efficient use of energy across all sectors.
- Montgomery supports the reduction of transportation energy demand, reduction of single-occupancy vehicle use, and the transition to renewable and lower-emission energy sources for transportation.
- Montgomery supports patterns and densities of concentrated development that result in the conservation of energy. This includes support of public transit connections from Montgomery to other parts of the region and considering access to public transit when reviewing Act 250 applications.
- Montgomery supports the development and siting of renewable energy resources in the Town that are in conformance with the goals, strategies, and mapping outlined in this plan. This includes language in the above mapping section about the preferred size and colocation of solar facilities. Development of generation in identified preferred locations shall be favored over the development of other sites.
- Montgomery supports the conversion of fossil fuel heating to advanced wood heating systems or electric heat pumps.
- Montgomery will support local farms and the local food system.

Enhanced Energy Plan

The intent of this section is to meet the municipal determination standards for enhanced energy planning enabled in 24 V.S.A. 4352. The purpose of enhanced energy planning is to further regional and state energy goals, including the goal of having 90% of energy used in Vermont come from renewable sources by 2050 (90 x 50 goal), and the following:

- A. Vermont's greenhouse gas reduction goals under 10 V.S.A. § 578(a);
- B. Vermont's 25 by 25 goal for renewable energy under 10 V.S.A. § 580;
- C. Vermont's building efficiency goals under 10 V.S.A. § 581;
- D. State energy policy under 30 V.S.A. § 202a and the recommendations for regional and municipal energy planning pertaining to the efficient use of energy and the siting and development of renewable energy resources contained in the State energy plans adopted pursuant to 30 V.S.A. §§ 202 and 202b (State energy plans); and
- E. The distributed renewable generation and energy transformation categories of resources to meet the requirements of the Renewable Energy Standard under 30 V.S.A. §§ 8004 and 8005.

A positive determination of compliance with the requirements of enhanced energy planning, as provided by the Regional Planning Commission, will enable Montgomery to achieve "substantial deference" instead of "due consideration" in Section 248 applications for energy generation facilities (ex. wind facilities, solar facilities, hydro facilities, etc.) under Criteria (b)(1)-Orderly Development. In short, this means that Montgomery will have a greater "say" in Certificate of Public Good proceedings before the Vermont Public Service Board about where these facilities should or should not be located in the community.

To receive a positive determination of energy compliance, an enhanced energy plan must be duly adopted, regionally approved, and must contain the following information:

- A. An analysis of current energy resources, needs, scarcities, costs, and problems.
- B. Targets for future energy use and generation.
- C. "Pathways," or implementation actions, to help the municipality achieve the established targets.
- D. Mapping to help guide the conversation about the siting of renewables.

This chapter will include the required analysis, targets, and mapping. The "pathways," or actions, have been included in the implementation section of the municipal plan.

Energy Resources, Needs, Scarcities, Costs and Problems

The following subsection reviews each energy sector of energy use (thermal, transportation, electricity) and generation in Montgomery.

Thermal Energy

An estimate of current residential thermal energy demand in Montgomery, based on data from the American Community Survey (ACS 2016-2021), is shown in Table 10.1. Fuel oil and propane

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are estimated to heat 60% of homes in Montgomery with wood heating an additional 38% of homes in Montgomery. There is no access to natural gas in Montgomery.

It should be noted that this data from the American Community Survey accounts for only the primary heating source in a household. The data does not account for backup heating sources or secondary heating sources. Many homes in Montgomery have a backup heating source that can provide heating in an emergency or a secondary heating source that can be used to provide heat in conjunction with the primary heating source (ex. a home may be heated primarily by a woodstove but may also have an oil secondary heating source that turns on during the night when the woodstove is not being filled).

Fuel Source	Montgomery Households (ACS 2016-2021)	Montgomery % of Households	Municipal BTU (in Billions)
Natural Gas	0	0.0%	0
Propane	200	38.3%	21
Electricity	0	1.7%	1
Fuel Oil	115	22.0%	13
Coal	0	0.0%	0
Wood	197	37.7%	26
Solar	0	0.0%	0
Other	1	0.2%	0
No Fuel	0	0.0%	0
Total	522	100.0%	61

Estimates for commercial and industrial thermal energy use are more difficult to calculate. An estimate of total commercial energy use (thermal and electricity) is provided in Table 10.2. Based on data from the Vermont Department of Labor (VT DOL) and the Vermont Department of Public Service (VT DPS). According to NRPC, it is assumed that the majority of this energy use, 20 billion BTU per year, is likely to be for thermal energy needs. This number is likely an overestimate of thermal energy use, as the average business in Montgomery is smaller than the state overall.¹

¹ By average number of employees per business, the average business in Montgomery is 1/3 the size of the statewide average.

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Table 10.2 - Current Montgomery Commercial Energy Use

	Commercial Establishments in Montgomery (VT DOL)	Estimated Thermal Energy BTUs per Commercial Establishment/year (In Billions) (VT DPS)	Estimated Thermal Energy BTUs by Commercial Establishments in Montgomery/year (in Billions)
Municipal Commercial Energy Use	62	0.725	45

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Transportation

Table 10.4 contains an estimate of transportation energy use in Montgomery. It's estimated that Montgomery residents drive approximately 10.8 million miles per year and spend about \$1.6 million on transportation fuel expenses a year. This calculation does not include expense for commercially owned and operated vehicles. Total vehicle miles travelled has increased since 2016, however increased vehicle fuel efficiency has resulted in lower total energy use. According to the Vermont Agency of Transportation, there are 21 electric vehicles and plug-in hybrid vehicles registered in Montgomery, representing roughly 2% of all vehicles in Montgomery.

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Table 10.4 - Current Municipal Transportation Energy Use

Transportation Data	Municipal Data
Total # of Gasoline Passenger Vehicles (ACS 2016-2021)	900
Average Miles per Vehicle (VTrans)	11,722
Total Miles Traveled	10,594,800
Realized MPG (2019 - VTrans 2021 Energy Profile)	23.4
Total Gallons Use per Year	452,769

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Transportation BTUs
(Billion)

55

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Average Cost per Gallon of
Gasoline in 2023 (NRPC)

\$3.50

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Gasoline Cost per Year

\$1,584,692

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Electricity Use

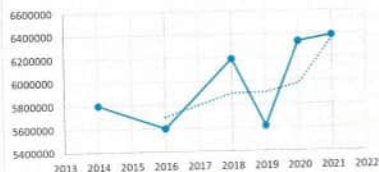
An estimate of current electricity use in Montgomery is shown in Table 10.3. This data is from 2016 and is available from Efficiency Vermont. Montgomery electricity use has increased from 2014 to 2021 (see Chart 10.1). It is difficult to determine whether electricity use is increasing as the result of increased use of electricity for thermal and transportation uses.

Montgomery is served by one electric utility: Vermont Electric Cooperative.

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Deleted: Most of this reduction in use has come from residential accounts. According to Efficiency Vermont, the average residential usage per household has decreased from 5,951 kWh per year to 5,809 kWh per year between 2014 and 2016. Montgomery's average residential usage in 2016 was more than 1,000 kWh lower than the average regional residential kWh use. Some of this lower use could be due to the relatively high number of seasonal dwellings in Montgomery that do not use electricity year-round.

Electrical Energy Use



The solid line shows electricity use over time, the dashed line shows average trend in electricity use.

Table 10.3 - Current Montgomery Electricity Use

Sector	Current Electricity Use in Montgomery - 2021 (Efficiency Vermont)	Current Electricity Use (in Billion BTUs)
Residential (kWh)	4,787,053	16
Commercial and Industrial (kWh)	1,598,119	5
Total (kWh)	6,385,172	21

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Electricity Generation

There is currently 21 MW of electricity generation capacity from renewable generation facilities in Montgomery. This capacity results in approximately 255.8 MWh of electricity

Table 10.5 – Existing Renewable Electricity Generation

Generation Type	MW	MWh
Solar	0.21	255.8
Wind	0.00	0.00
Hydro	0.00	0.00
Biomass	0.00	0.00
Other	0.00	0.00
Total Existing Generation	0.21	255.8

generation per year. This is roughly equal to the annual electricity use of about 38 households in Vermont based on information available from the U.S. Energy Information Administration (558 kWh per VT household per month).

Table 10.5 organizes information about existing generation in Montgomery by type of facility.

There majority of solar generation in Montgomery is small rooftop systems.

Montgomery generally has limited access to electricity transmission lines and three-phase distribution lines. This type of infrastructure is only available on state routes VT 118 and VT 242.

These types of electrical lines are used to transmit large quantities of electricity and are needed to serve large industrial users and commercial centers. The Transmission & 3 Phase Power Infrastructure map in Appendix A shows the electricity transmission and three-phase distribution infrastructure in Montgomery. Renewable generation in Montgomery is further restricted due to constraints in the electrical transmission grid. After the addition of the Kingdom Community Wind plant in the Town of Lowell, the Sheffield-Highgate Export Interface (SHEI) was created to monitor the system and flows in relation to system capacity in Northern Vermont. Generation resources in this area are often required to curtail their output due to the lack of capacity to export power. These constraints will need to be addressed at a statewide level for Montgomery to reach its energy goals. Access to renewable generation resources, such as solar and wind, will be addressed below in the mapping section.

Targets for Energy Use and Electricity Generation

Northwest Regional Planning Commission worked with the Vermont Energy Investment Corporation (VEIC) and the Vermont Department of Public Service in 2016 to develop regional targets for future energy use and generation to meet the State of Vermont's 90 x 50 goal. The targets represent only one scenario that would meet this goal. There may be many different ways that would also enable Vermont to achieve the 90 x 50 goal. For more information about the regional targets, please see the Northwest Regional Energy Plan (www.nrpcvt.com).

Tables 10.6, 10.7 and 10.8 show the targets for future energy use for Montgomery by sector (totals are cumulative). These municipal targets are based on regional targets that have been disaggregated.

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The thermal targets for Montgomery in 2050 is to have 85.8% of structures be heated by renewable sources. Much of this transition is likely to come in the form of electric heat pumps as the primary heating source for single family homes as the technology becomes more readily available and affordable. The target also relies on wood heating being a continued source of residential heating. There are also high targets for the weatherization of residential households and commercial structures (78% and 73% respectively in 2050).

Table 10.6 - Thermal Targets

Thermal Targets	2025	2035	2050
Percent of Total Heating Energy From Renewable Sources - Heating (BTUs)	44.8%	58.0%	85.8%
New Efficient Wood Heat Systems (in units)	0	0	3
New Heat Pumps (in units)	54	123	230
Percentage of municipal households to be weatherized	5%	42%	78%
Percentage of commercial establishments to be weatherized	25%	49%	73%

The transportation energy targets for Montgomery are similarly ambitious. By 2050, 91.1% of transportation energy is targeted to come from renewable sources. This will primarily be done through conversion to electric vehicles from fossil fuel vehicles for light-duty, passenger vehicles. However, it will also mean conversion of heavy-duty vehicles from diesel to biodiesel sources. The biodiesel technology and infrastructure will certainly need to advance and evolve in order to meet this target.

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Table 10.7 - Transportation Targets

Transportation Targets	2025	2035	2050
Percent of Total Transportation Energy from Renewable Sources - Transportation (BTUs)	11.0%	33.6%	91.1%
Electric Vehicles	75	562	1336
Biodiesel Vehicles	165	330	638

Targets for electricity use are more complex to interpret. Electricity use is targeted to double by 2050 (Table 10.8). This will likely be driven by conversions to electric heat pumps and electric vehicles. These consumer changes will cause electricity use to grow. At the same time, total energy use (energy, not electricity) will become more efficient. This is because electric

cars and electric heating sources are more efficient than using other energy sources, such as fossil fuels.

Table 10.8 - Electricity Targets

Electricity Targets	2025	2035	2050
Electricity Use Growth (Efficiency and Conservation in BTUs)	25.2%	48.3%	100.7%

Table 10.9 shows the electricity generation targets for Montgomery in 2025, 2035, and 2050. All new wind, solar, hydro, and biomass electricity generation sites will further progress towards achieving the generation targets (in MWh). Given the difficulty of developing additional hydro generation, and the constraints upon wind development, it is likely that solar generation will need to be a substantial component of meeting these generation targets. Meeting the generation targets will take considerable effort over the next 30 to 35 years. The 2050 generation target (9,312.9 MWh) is about 100 times larger than the current generation capacity (85.85 MWh) within the Town of Montgomery.

Table 10.9 – Renewable Electricity Generation Targets

Renewable Generation Targets	2025	2035	2050
Total Renewable Generation Target (in MWh)	3,073.3	6,146.5	9,312.9

Montgomery has sufficient land and access to renewable electricity sources to meet the above generation targets. Based on mapping and calculations completed by NRPC, Montgomery has access to the generation capacity outlined in Table 10.10. This generation capacity was calculated using the “base” layers for solar and wind. For an explanation of what constitutes a “base” layer, please see the mapping subsection below.

Table 10.10 - Renewable Electricity Generation Potential

Resource	MW	MWh
Rooftop Solar	1	715
Ground-mounted Solar	231	282,738
Wind	38	117,451
Hydro	0	0
Biomass and Methane	0	0

Other	0	0
Total Renewable Generation Potential	269	400,904

Montgomery supports NRPC's position regarding "commercial" and "industrial" wind facilities. The NRPC Regional Plan finds that the construction of new "industrial" or "commercial" wind facilities within the region does not conform to the Regional Plan (NRPC considers any wind facility with a tower height (excluding blades) in excess of 100 feet tall to be considered an "industrial" or "commercial" wind facility).

Mapping Energy Resources and Constraints
Montgomery has incorporated maps provided to them by NRPC. These maps show data as required by the Department of Public Service

Figure 10.1 – Solar Electricity Generation Potential in Montgomery

SOLAR POTENTIAL
Montgomery

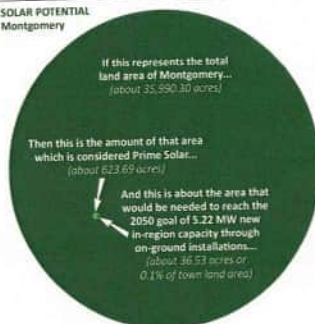


Figure 10.2 – Rooftop Solar Potential

Rooftop solar was estimated by using methods suggested by the Vermont Department of Public Service. The methodology estimates that 25% of residential and commercial structures in Montgomery could be suitable for rooftop solar generation. This results in 112 residential structures and 7 commercial structures in Montgomery. It is then estimated that the average residential rooftop system is 4 kW in size and the average commercial rooftop system is 20 kW in size. The resulting estimated generation capacity is .58 MW of solar generation. This would account for a little more than 10% to the approximately 5.22 MW from solar generation needed to hit the overall generation targets.

Determination Standards, including access to energy resources and constraints to renewable development, and are a

required element of enhanced energy planning. All maps may be found in Appendix A.

The intent of the maps is to generally show those areas that may be good locations, or may be inappropriate locations, for future renewable generation facilities. However, it is important to note that the maps are a planning tool and do not precisely indicate locations where siting a facility is necessarily acceptable. When a generation facility is proposed, the presence of all natural resources constraints on site shall be verified as a part of the application.

Mapping Methodology

Spatial data showing the location of energy resources formed the basis of the maps developed by NRPC. This is the data that shows where there is solar, wind, hydro, and biomass "potential."

"Known" and "possible" constraints were subsequently identified on the maps. Known constraints are conservation resources that shall be protected from all future development of renewable generation facilities. Possible constraints are conservation resources that shall be protected, to some extent, from the development of renewable generation facilities. The presence of possible constraints on land does not necessarily impede the siting of renewable generation facilities on a site. Siting in these locations could occur if impacts to the affected possible constraints are mitigated, preferably on-site.

A full list of known and possible constraints included on the maps is located in Table 10.11. The known constraints and possible constraints used to create the maps include constraints that are required per the State Determination Standards from the Department of Public Service and regional constraints that were selected by NRPC. The Forest Reserve and the Protected District for Montgomery and Enosburg Falls were included as regional possible constraints.

Solar and Wind

The solar and wind maps show both "base" and "prime" areas. Base areas are areas with generation potential, yet may contain possible constraints. Prime areas are areas that have generation potential that do not contain known or possible constraints. Areas that do not contain generation potential, and areas that contain a known constraint, are shown as white space on the map.

Montgomery has fairly limited solar resources compared to other municipalities in the region. This is due primarily to its mountainous terrain. The solar map indicates a general concentration of prime and base solar areas along VT Route 242 towards Westfield and Jay. Montgomery has identified the following preferred locations for solar generation facilities: rooftops, parking lots, and landfills. Abandoned quarries, gravel pits and sand pits will also be considered preferred locations for solar generation facilities. Lastly, confirmed brownfield sites located outside of the village are considered preferred locations for solar generation facilities in Montgomery.

Montgomery has a strong preference for solar facilities that have less than 5 MW in generation capacity. This preference is a reflection of the community's dedication to preserving the aesthetic and rural qualities of Montgomery by restricting the geographic size of solar facilities. In addition, Montgomery prefers that solar facilities greater than 150 kW in generation capacity to be sufficiently separated from other similarly sized solar facilities to "break up" the visual impact of two or more solar facilities located next to each other. All solar facilities shall include proper screening. Montgomery hopes to adopt a municipal solar screening ordinance in the near future. Solar should not be built in areas where traffic sightlines would be impeded.

There generally isn't much land available in Montgomery that has base and prime wind resources. These areas are generally concentrated off Hazen's Notch Road, but are small in size.

Hydro and Biomass

The biomass map is somewhat similar to the solar and wind maps. The biomass map also displays "base" and "prime" areas. However, these categories are not necessarily indicative of generation. They instead indicate areas of contiguous forest that may be used for the harvesting of woody biomass for use in either thermal or electric generation.

The hydro map is unique from the other types of generation maps. It shows existing dam sites used for electricity generation. It also shows existing dam sites that are not used for electricity generation but could be retrofitted to provide generation capacity. Data about these dams comes from a study commissioned by the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources. The hydro map also shows some known and possible constraints that could impact the redevelopment of some dam sites.

Montgomery does not have any existing active dam sites, there is one small defunct dam. Future hydro development would be difficult given that the largest river in Montgomery, the Trout River, is a Designated National Wild and Scenic River.

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Equity

Reaching Montgomery's energy goals will bring both environmental and economic costs and benefits. The equity issues related to who will bear those costs is of continuing concern to Montgomery. A just energy transition requires that all residents have equitable access to the benefits and costs of the energy transition. The efficiency of green technologies offers savings for consumers as seen with electric vehicles, electric heat pumps, newer appliances, residential solar, etc. These technologies often require upfront investment, making them more difficult to access for residents with lower income. On average, Montgomery residents spend some of highest percentage of their income on energy costs in the entire state (Efficiency Vermont 2023 Vermont Energy Burden Report). However, comparatively few residents have used Efficiency Vermont's rebates and programs. This suggests that existing programs are not adequately meeting the gap between available income and the upfront cost of green technologies that could provide long term savings.

Low-income workers in Vermont also tend to work in industries that are more susceptible to the effects of climate change such as tourism and agriculture and are often disproportionality impacted by natural disasters like flooding. Equity for all residents will be considered in every decision about energy.

Conclusion

Achieving the 90 x 50 goal, and the other energy goals in state statute, will be difficult. Montgomery is committed to playing its part in working towards accomplishing these goals and in creating a more sustainable, less costly, and more secure energy future.

Chapter 11: Compatibility with Neighboring Municipalities

The Town of Montgomery is located in the northwestern part of the State in Franklin County. Seven different towns border Montgomery.

Land use patterns in all of these towns can affect one another in many different ways. It is important that all of their development patterns and future development plans are compatible with each other. Montgomery's plan is compatible with the adjacent town plans as well as the relevant Regional Plans.

Compatibility with Richford

The Town of Richford borders Montgomery to the north. Richford designates the land along its border with Montgomery as Agricultural and Forest/Conservation, while Montgomery designates its land as Rural Residential, Conservation 1 and Conservation 2. These land uses are generally compatible with a focus on low-impact development and protection of agricultural soils and forest habitats.

Compatibility with Enosburgh

The Town of Enosburgh borders Montgomery to the west. Enosburgh designates the land along its border with Montgomery as Agricultural and Rural Residential, while Montgomery designates its land as Rural Residential and Conservation 1. These land uses are generally compatible with a focus on preserving open space and low-density development.

Compatibility with Bakersfield

The Town of Bakersfield borders Montgomery to the west. Bakersfield designates the land along its border with Montgomery as conservation, while Montgomery designates its land as Conservation 2. These uses are compatible, with both focusing on conserving forested lands with steep slopes.

Compatibility with Westfield

The Alpine Haven residential area spans the Town of Montgomery and Westfield. Westfield includes the area as part of its Recreational-Residential district, while Montgomery includes its portion of the area in its Village 2 designation. Montgomery's Village 2 District is slightly smaller in size but calls for more dense development than the Recreational-Residential District. However, these areas are broadly compatible. The remainder of the land on the Westfield-Montgomery border is designated as Rural-Agricultural District in Westfield and a mix of Rural Residential,

Deleted: Eight different towns, three of which are in Franklin County, border it. The Town of Richford borders Montgomery to the north, the Town of Bakersfield borders Montgomery to the south, and the Town of Enosburgh borders Montgomery to the west.

Deleted: It is also important that each town's future development plans do not adversely affect their bordering neighbors' plans. The Montgomery Town Plan does not propose any major changes to its land use districts, and because of this, no substantial conflicts with adjoining town plans should arise.

Population growth or decline is an important aspect that needs to be taken into account when planning a town's future. It can greatly affect how a town does its land use planning. The decision to develop the land should depend on its physical characteristics, projected needs of the community, existing municipal services, and compatibility with existing land uses. The following sections discuss the land use patterns of the seven towns that border Montgomery - Richford, Enosburgh, Bakersfield, Westfield, Lowell, Eden, and Belvidere. Though the land use patterns in each town may be referred to by different names, each town does have a plan that is compatible with that of Montgomery.

Deleted: divides its land use into the following districts: Agricultural, Commercial, Commercial and Industrial, Conservation 1, Conservation 2, Industrial, Rural Residential, Village Residential, and Water Supply Protection. The majority of the Richford side of the shared border is zoned Conservation 1, while the remaining portions are Agricultural. Montgomery's proposed uses and minimum lot sizes are compatible with Richford's existing and proposed land uses.

Deleted: Enosburgh is expected to see a slightly lower growth rate through the year 2015 than Montgomery is. Because of the larger population, it is expected that Enosburgh will have more residential areas in town. While the Enosburgh Town Plan has divided their land into four following proposed land use districts, only the Forest and Conservation and Rural/Agricultural Areas are adjacent to Montgomery.

1. Wellhead Protection Area
2. Forest and Conservation
3. Rural/Agricultural Area
4. Flood Hazard Area

Deleted: has seen much more of a population change since 1970 than the Town of Montgomery. Even though their populations were relatively the same back in 1970, the Town of Bakersfield is expected to see much more of a population change than Montgomery. Bakersfield has divided its land use into eight different zones. They are the following:

1. Aquifer District
2. Conservation District
3. Flood Hazard District
4. High Density Residential

Conservation 1 and Conservation 2 in Montgomery. These uses are compatible, as all focus on preserving open space and allowing only rural densities of development.

Compatibility with Lowell

The Town of Lowell does not currently have a Town Plan. According to their Zoning Regulations, the area bordering the Town of Montgomery is in the Conservation-Mountain District, which calls for limited development. Montgomery's plan designates this area as the Conservation 2 District. These land uses are compatible.

Compatibility with Eden

The Town of Eden designates its border with Montgomery as part of the Forest District in its Town Plan, while Montgomery designates this area as Conservation 2. These uses are compatible because both focus on preserving forest resources.

Compatibility with Belvidere

The Town of Belvidere has not established zoning bylaws, but it has identified specific districts in their town plan. The districts that border Montgomery are the Forest District and the Development District. The Forest District is generally compatible with Montgomery's Conservation 1 and 2 Districts, which focus on preserving forest lands. The Development District encourages more residential growth than is allowed in Montgomery, however given limited development pressure and lack of water/wastewater infrastructure in the area it is unlikely that significant development would occur along the border with Montgomery, therefore these districts are not in conflict.

Compatibility with the Regional Plan

Montgomery is part of the Northwest Vermont Region, whose Regional Plan was adopted in July of 2023. Montgomery's Town Plan is compatible with the goals and policies of the Regional Plan. The Regional Plan designates Montgomery's land use as primarily Conservation & Forest Resource Planning Area, with portions being identified as Rural Residential Planning Area and Agricultural Resource Planning Area. Montgomery's two villages are identified as areas where more concentrated development is appropriate. The Town's Plan is compatible with these land use designations, as the majority of land in Montgomery is designated for conservation and only low-density development, while the village areas are targeted for future development.

Montgomery is adjacent to the regions of the Lamoille County Planning Commission and the Northeastern Vermont Development Association. The Lamoille County Planning Commission's Regional Plan future land use map designates the area adjacent to Montgomery as Working Lands - Forest State Forest, with a small portion along Vermont 118 being designated as Rural

Deleted: The Town of Westfield has divided its land use into three different districts, Village, Recreational-Residential, and Rural-Agricultural Districts. Their Recreational-Residential district is adjacent to Montgomery's Conservation II district. The remaining adjacent portions of Westfield are classified as the Rural-Agricultural district, which are border on Montgomery's Agriculture/Residential, Conservation 1 and Conservation 2 districts.

Although Westfield's Recreational-Residential district allows slightly more intensive development, the existing and proposed land uses do not conflict.

Deleted: has divided its land use into four different zones, including Village, Rural Residential/Agricultural, Conservation-Mountain, and Industrial districts. Only the Conservation-Mountain District borders with the Town of Montgomery's Conservation 2 District.

Both Montgomery's and Lowell's existing and proposed land uses are compatible with each other.

Deleted: While technically the Towns of Eden and Montgomery are adjacent, they share only a small border. Further, Eden does not identify or propose specific land uses or districts. Because this area of Montgomery is designated as Conservation 2, the uses are seen as compatible.

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Deleted: Though the goals and policies listed in the Regional Plan are consistent with the goals and policies that each town has listed in their own plans, they may be tailored somewhat to each town. This includes the Town of Montgomery, and because of this, the Montgomery Town Plan is considered compatible with the Regional Plan.

and Working Land. These planning areas call for protection of open-space and limited development that is consistent with the Town of Montgomery's land use planning on the border of the region. The Northeastern Vermont Development Association's future land use map designates the area adjacent to Montgomery as Rural areas suitable only for low-density growth outside of village areas, which is compatible with the Town's land use planning efforts.

Appendix A: Volunteer Community Groups

Churches

St. Isidores Church (Catholic)

Services 9:30 a.m. Sunday

Wednesday Eve Rosary 7:00 p.m., Mass 7:15 p.m.

Montgomery United Methodist Church, Inc.

Services 9:30 a.m. Sunday

Sunday School during service

Grateful Treads Mountain Bike Club

The Grateful Treads is a mountain bike and trails advocacy group based in the villages of Montgomery, Jay and Westfield, sixty members strong, and growing. TGT is busy building new trails, maintaining existing trail networks, and working with local officials and landowners to develop new opportunities for riding.

Hazen's Notch Association (HNA)

The Hazen's Notch Association is a non-profit, member-supported, conservation organization located in Montgomery. From its office at the HNA Welcome Center on Vermont Route 58, the Hazen's Notch Road, the Association serves 40 communities in northern Vermont.

The HNA was founded in 1994 to promote and engage in:

- Conservation of Forest and Agricultural Lands and Recreational Trails
- Environmental Education Programs for Schools and the Public
- Recreational Trails for Hiking, Snowshoeing, and Cross-Country Skiing
- Stewardship of Natural and Historic Cultural Resources
- Research of the Environment

The cross country ski touring center at Hazen's Notch is blessed with a topography that is ideally suited to Nordic skiing - rolling meadows, soft hills, our own 2,800' mountain and views of mountains in all directions. Forty miles of groomed and marked trails pass through 2,500 acres of mixed maple, birch and evergreen forest and across gentle, open meadows.

As a conservation land trust and environmental education center, HNA designs and manages its x-c ski trails to be in harmony with the landscape. Monthly moonlight snowshoe walks are also offered during the winter months.

The Hazen's Notch Association maintains a network of 15 miles of trails and woods roads for hiking in summer and fall. The trails pass through a variety of interesting habitats that include meadows, forests, orchards, and beaver ponds. Trails range from restored woods roads that have gentle to moderate grades to narrow footpaths with steep climbs.

Summer Day Camp is offered for ages 6-12, and Overnight Camp for ages 10-14 are offered in the summer. The Hazen's Notch Summer Camp has gained a reputation for excellence in developing in children an awareness and respect for the environment, outdoor skills, self-confidence, cooperation and leadership. Summer Camp programs provide healthy outdoor recreational activities designed to stimulate inquiring minds, develop friendships, and create lasting positive memories of each child's summer camp experience.

Missisquoi River Basin Association

The **Missisquoi River Basin Association (MRBA)** is an active non-profit group of volunteers dedicated to the restoration of the river, its tributaries, and Missisquoi Bay, and to the clean, healthy state they once enjoyed. We bring together diverse interest groups within the community – teachers, farmers, summer residents, loggers, business owners, environmental experts, and outdoor enthusiasts; municipal officers, woodland owners, and concerned citizens. MRBA members sit on the current Upper Missisquoi and Trout River Wild and Scenic Study Committee, that also includes appointed representatives from Montgomery and other surrounding towns.

Our activities are many and varied – from fieldwork to stabilize stream banks, and planting trees in buffer areas, to assessing stream bank conditions. We clean up trash along the banks, cost-share with farmers in a nutrient management program, lend educational tools to local teachers, and are launching a volunteer-led water sampling program.

Montgomery Cares for our Seniors

Montgomery Cares for our Seniors is a community organization that offers a monthly community luncheon and brings in guest speakers.

Montgomery Conservation Commission

The Montgomery Conservation Commission's mission is to "To promote land as a community to which we belong". The Commission has five principal functions as described below.

Deleted: Montgomery Area Community Alliance (MACA)[¶]
Formed in 2009, MACA is a non-profit corporation that encourages business, economic development and employment in the Montgomery / Jay Peak area. In the first few months of operation, MACA was instrumental in getting the Montgomery area registered as a major focal point for persons utilizing the Northern Forest Canoe Trail. ¶

¶ This group is currently inactive. For more information please call 802-326-4306. ¶

- **Inventories** - The Commission may prepare and maintain an inventory of the natural resources of the Municipality.
- **Land Acquisition** - The Commission may, on the basis of the inventories or other appropriate study, recommend to the legislative body the purchase of, or the receipt of as a gift, specific land and/or property rights (including easements) or other property for the purposes set forth in Article II of the Commission's bylaws.
- **Land Management** - The Commission shall exercise stewardship responsibility for properties and/or rights acquired by the Municipality for conservation purposes.
- **Public Presentation** - To the extent permitted by law, the Commission may represent the public interest in any matter which it determines may have a significant impact on the natural or social resources of the Municipality.
- **Education and Information** - The Commission shall be responsible for the conduct of educational activities pertaining to local natural and social resources.

Montgomery Covered Bridges Garden Club

The Covered Bridges Garden Club is organized for charitable and educational purposes to further our knowledge of all aspects of gardening and use our knowledge and industry in our homes and community, and to encourage an interest in gardening and good environmental practices.

Community projects include maintaining the Historic Garden at the Montgomery Village Green and the Town Library Garden, planting the Flower Barrels and Bridge Flower Boxes in the Village and the Center, supporting the Junior Gardeners Program at Montgomery Elementary and sponsoring the August Harvest Fest.

The Covered Bridges Garden Club is a member of the Federated Garden Club of Vermont and the National Garden Clubs.

Montgomery Historical Society

The Society is located in Pratt Hall, a former Episcopal church (built in 1835), which houses its collections of photographs, albums, tools, and items of local interest. The Society's mission is to:

- Preserve Pratt Hall, artifacts, structures and memorabilia of historical interest
- Provide a venue for local exhibits and artisans to share their talents
- Sponsor programs that assist in preserving town history and cultural events
- Award scholarships to students on an annual basis

The Society maintains and preserves the church which is used for a variety of community programs. Activities include historical speakers, programs, summer concerts, art shows, exhibits, an annual Christmas carol, and a scholarship program. Pratt Hall is renowned for its stained glass windows and is

also made available to the community for wedding ceremonies and memorial services. The society was formed in 1974 and is open to all upon payment of the annual dues.

Montgomery Town Association

The mission of the MTA is to work toward preserving the former First Baptist Church building while simultaneously moving toward having the Church property converted to the general use and benefit of the community at large.

Montgomery Quilting Circle

Everything about quilts for quilt lovers of all ages, beginners to expert. Meet at the Public Safety Building Conference Room. Meet every second Thursday of the month at 6:30 p.m. Small fee per meeting.

Riverwalk Community Garden

In the spring of 2010, at the request of community members, the Town Selectboard agreed to dedicate a portion of land at the bottom of West Hill to a community garden.

Several volunteers agreed to serve on the initial board and as of this writing plans are underway to develop 12 plots for local residents who wish to grow fresh vegetables. The plan is to be as organic as practicable.

Appendix B: Workshop Summary

The Town Planning Commission held a public outreach event on the Town Plan on June 20 at the Montgomery Recreation Center Pavilion. The outreach event was advertised online at the Town website & on Front Porch Forum. Flyers were distributed through the Elementary School, at a senior lunch, and posted at locations across town. Roughly 25 residents attended the outreach event. A full list of resident comments is included as an attachment. Common themes are summarized below.

Land Use

Some residents identified the village areas as areas to increase density of affordable housing, although others noted that commercial building height should be capped at 2-3 stories. Zoning enforcement & limitations on short-term rentals were discussed.

Transportation

The Montgomery Center intersection of VT 118 and VT 242 was identified as a major safety concern. The current streetscape project was not able to fully address the needs of this intersection because any change would have impacts on parking for local businesses. Many residents pointed to the need for a bicycle and walking path or lane from Montgomery Center & Montgomery Village. Other areas identified were the need to protect and define the existing bike path by the recreation center and adding a bike path from the library to the riverwalk. Transit from Montgomery to Jay Peak was also mentioned.

Municipal & Community Facilities & Services

Many residents noted that there was a need for more community & youth spaces, such as a theater camp, skate park, outdoor recreation equipment, and a community orchard. Several residents mentioned using the opportunity of streetscape improvements to bury utilities in the villages. Other resources that were needed or discussed were a food shelf, mental health & healthcare providers. There were several comments about adding to town staff capacity, particularly someone who could apply for grants.

Natural & Historic Resources

There were several comments about access to natural resources for recreation, including preserving or formalizing hiking access & access to swimming holes and brooks. Protecting the Trout River & Missisquoi River and associated watershed were a key priority for many residents, including ensuring flood resiliency. Protecting forest areas as part of the "Cold Hollow to Canada" wildlife corridor was also an important priority. Residents noted that springs on private property used by members of the public should be protected.

Energy & Climate Resilience

There was interest in a municipal solar project. Several comments addressed the vulnerability of Montgomery Village to flooding and the need to preserve floodplain and wetlands.

Housing

Many residents identified the need for senior housing in the villages, particularly Montgomery Center. Affordable housing was also identified as a need in the centers.

Economic Development

There was interest in food co-ops and a professional kitchen space that would allow for microbusinesses.

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