

# **TOWN PLAN**

**ARLINGTON, VERMONT**

TOWN PLAN  
FOR  
ARLINGTON, VERMONT

Adopted January 2015

Planning Commission

Daniel Barber, Chairman  
Christian Heins  
Michael Murno  
Thomas Williams  
John Williams  
Elliott Nachwalter

Board of Selectmen

Keith Squires, Chairman  
Daniel Harvey  
Cynthia Browning  
Kenneth "K. John" Smith  
Reginald Jennings

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## **I. INTRODUCTION**

The Vermont Municipal and Regional Planning and Development Act (24 VSA 117) places considerable emphasis on local planning. Town plans are to provide a basis for the type, location, and extent of future development in a community. These documents also should address thirteen goals ranging from environmental protection to affordable housing, and should be compatible with the Regional Plan and with the plans of other municipalities within the region. They should also reference or incorporate other plans, such as a local hazard mitigation plan. This plan was adopted in accordance with 24 VSA 117 Part 5.

Arlington last prepared an updated Town Plan in 2008. That plan was written to be consistent with the Planning and Development Act and its “Act 200” amendments. An effort was also made to ensure that the plan was compatible with the Regional Plan and with the Town Plans of Sandgate, Sunderland, and Shaftsbury. Town plans are to be updated every five years to reflect changing conditions and focus on current priorities. This Town Plan retains much of the content of the 2008 plan, while incorporating more current data, acknowledging changes that occurred since 2008, and adjusting certain policies and objectives to reflect present day priorities.

In 2011, 24 VSA 4382 was amended requiring that town plans include an economic development element describing current economic conditions and policies, projects and programs to foster economic growth. In 2013, 24 VSA 4382 was amended to add the requirement that town plans contain a flood resilience plan identifying and designating flood hazard and fluvial erosion hazard areas for protection by July 1, 2014. This plan includes both of these required sections.

The Town Plan is intended to serve as a tool to guide local residents in their efforts to control the development of their Town and to ensure that Arlington will continue to be an outstanding community in which to live. The importance of private property rights is recognized by the Plan, as is the need to legally safeguard property values through public actions deemed appropriate by the community. The Plan is to be consulted when making public policy decisions, evaluating public investments, reviewing development proposals, and when considering new or amended bylaws and ordinances. The Plan provides clear guidelines to individuals who propose new developments in Arlington and serves as a regulatory document in Act 250 proceedings, where conformance of a proposed development with the Plan is one criterion required for project approval. Essentially, this Town Plan will serve as the basic planning document for the Town for the next five years.

## **II. PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION**

The Town of Arlington is located in west-central Bennington County in southwest Vermont. Arlington is approximately 43.2 square miles in area and bordered on the north by the Town of Sandgate, on the east by Sunderland, on the south by Shaftsbury and on the west by the towns of Salem, Jackson, and White Creek in New York (Map 1).

The high elevations of Arlington are in the Taconic Range and are comprised of steep slopes exceeding 20%. The valleys located east to west in the north-central part of the town and northeast to southwest in the eastern part of the town have much gentler slopes, and most development is found there. The highest point at the summit of Grass Mountain is 3,109 feet while the lowest elevation is about 525 feet at the western edge of Town where the Batten Kill leaves Vermont. The five highest peaks are Red Mountain, 2,846 feet; The Ball, 2,755 feet; Spruce Peak, 3,033 feet; Grass Mountain, 3,109 feet; and Big Spruce Mountain, 2,338 feet (Map 1).

The Batten Kill, a tributary of the Hudson River, is the main stream draining the area. It enters northeast Arlington from Sunderland and for about two miles flows south-southwest. Its course then arcs around to a generally northwest flow direction between Red Mountain and The Ball and Big Spruce Mountain. This orientation is maintained for some three and one-half miles until it assumes the largely westerly course it follows to the New York State border. With one exception, all other streams in Arlington are tributaries of the Batten Kill. Of these streams, Green River, Roaring Branch, Fayville Branch, Warm Brook, and Dry Brook are the largest; only Dry Brook rises in Arlington. A headwater segment of Little White Creek in southwest Arlington is not a tributary of the Batten Kill. Small swamps and marshes are fairly common along stretches of most streams, and are rather sparse elsewhere. The only ponds in Arlington are manmade, and many of these are subject to rapid siltation (Map 1).

The dominant bedrock in higher elevations consists primarily of Cambrian (500-550 MYBP) phyllite and siltstone while younger and more easily eroded Ordovician (450-500 MYBP) marble and dolostone is found in the valleys (Map 2) Glacial till, which is generally material overridden by glaciers as they advance, covers the higher elevations whereas glacial outwash that results from movement of material in glacial meltwater along with more recently deposited materials from flooding events since the glaciations, cover valley bottoms (Map 3).

Soils derived from till in upper elevations are generally fine textured silts, loams and clays while more coarse soils are found in the valleys, except where wetlands exist or fluvial processes have deposited more fine materials. Dolostone and Marble are calcareous and will create soils with higher pH which in turn creates conditions for higher available soil nutrients than the other bedrock formations.

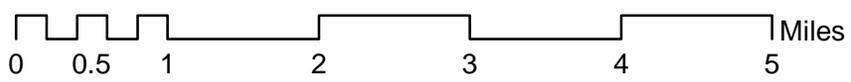
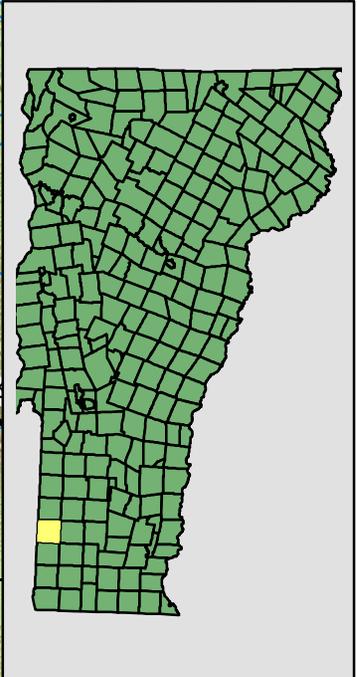
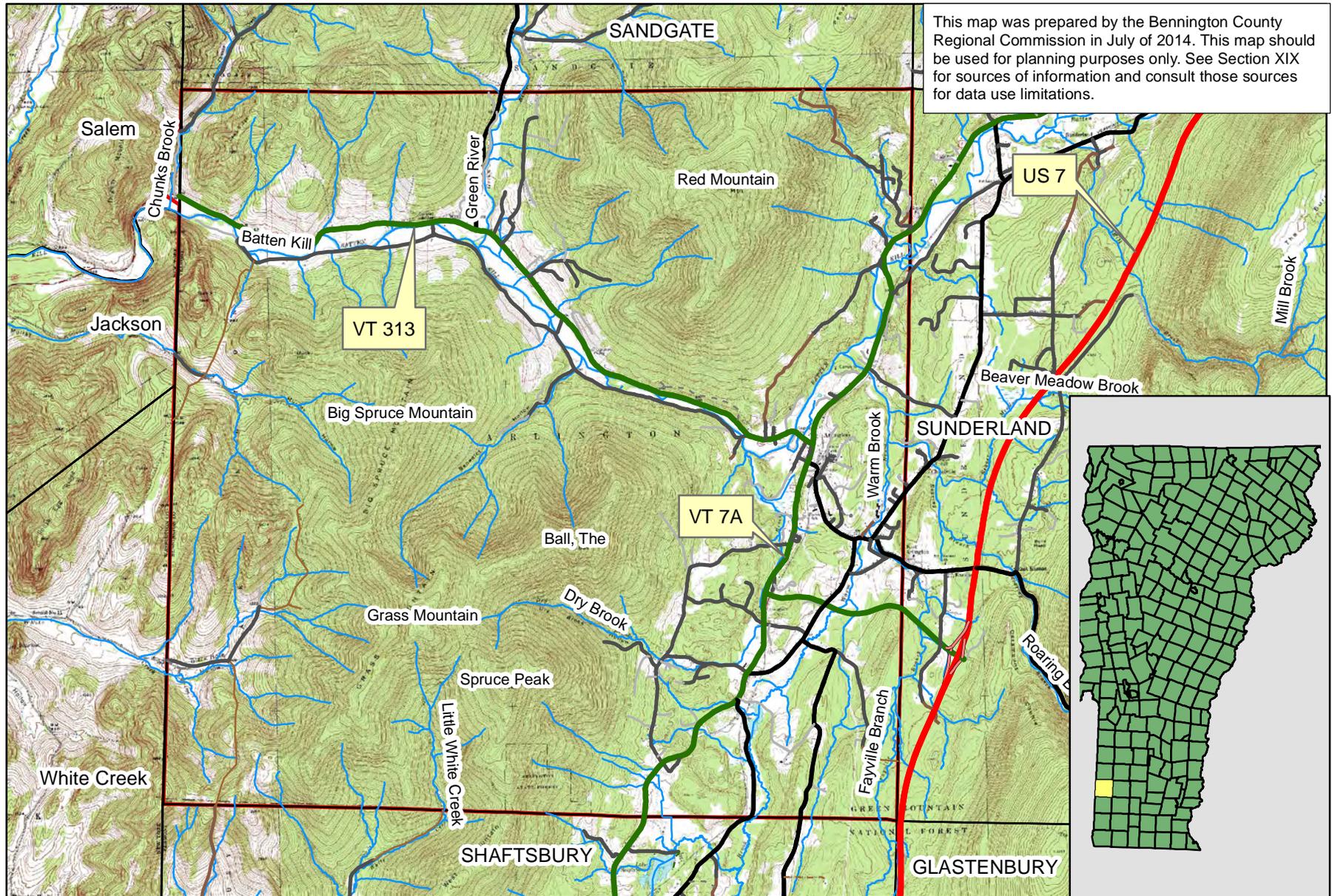
Precipitation is fairly evenly distributed throughout the year. Average precipitation from the Sunderland Cooperative Weather Observer (Sunderland 2, 2013) for the period from 1981 to 2010 is 47.26 inches per year with mean snowfall of 75.1 inches, falling primarily November through March. The annual average monthly temperature ranges from 19.0 in January to 66.5 in July. On average, one day per

year will have a high temperature over 90° while 171.8 will have a low temperature less than 32° and 16.8 days with the low temperature less than zero.

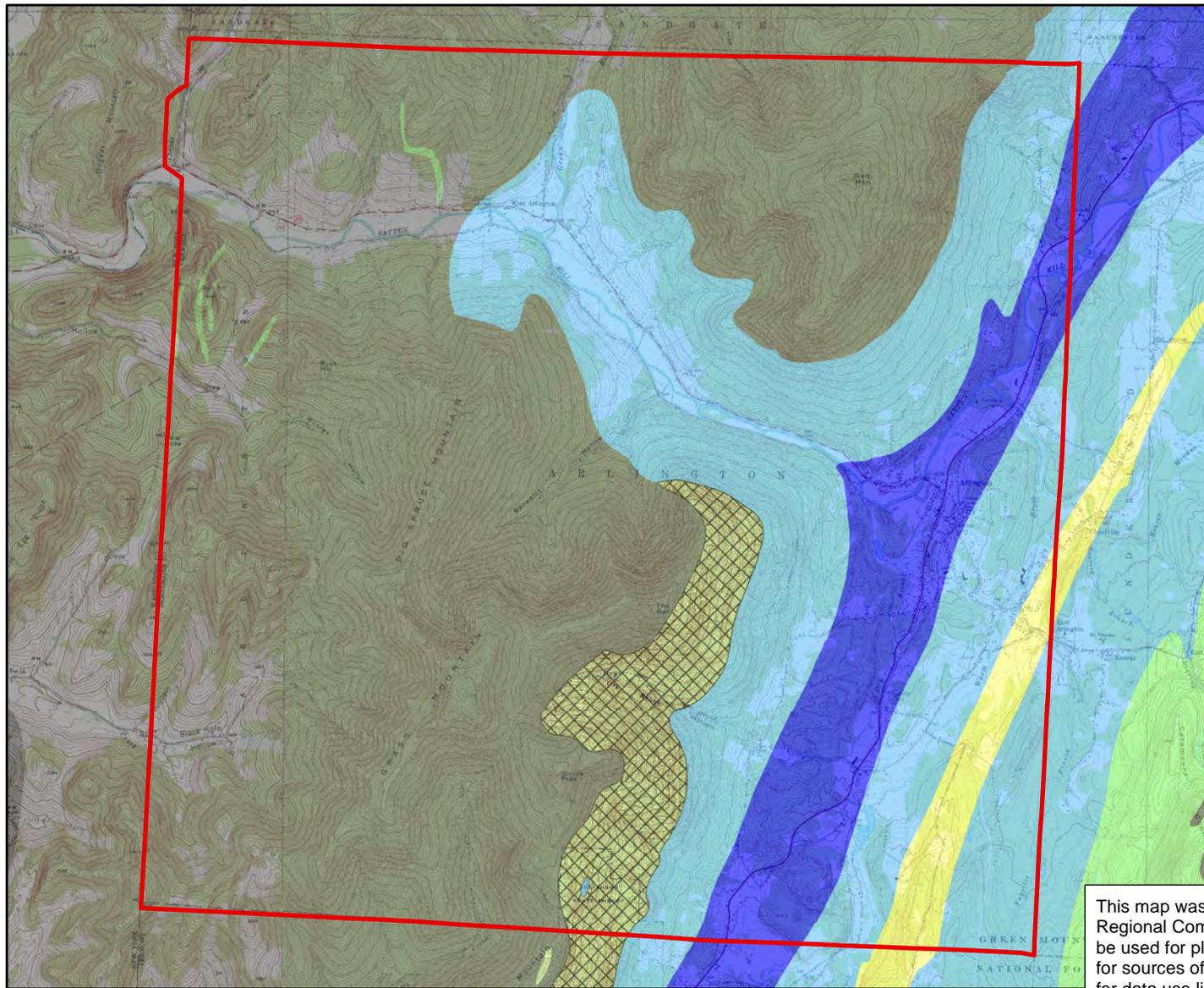
Almost all the land in Arlington is forested. Though none of the forest is primeval, much of it is well grown forest lands of mixed hardwoods and evergreens with interspersed pure stands. In the lower lands, brushy areas are interspersed with open fields. Fields and lawns surround most residences. Cropland is kept open by cultivation, and considerable expanses are used as pasture, or mowed for hay or for scenic reasons (Map 4).

# Map 1. Town of Arlington

This map was prepared by the Bennington County Regional Commission in July of 2014. This map should be used for planning purposes only. See Section XIX for sources of information and consult those sources for data use limitations.

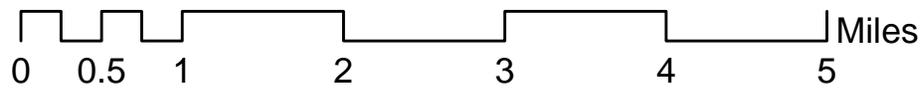


# Map 2. Arlington Bedrock Geology

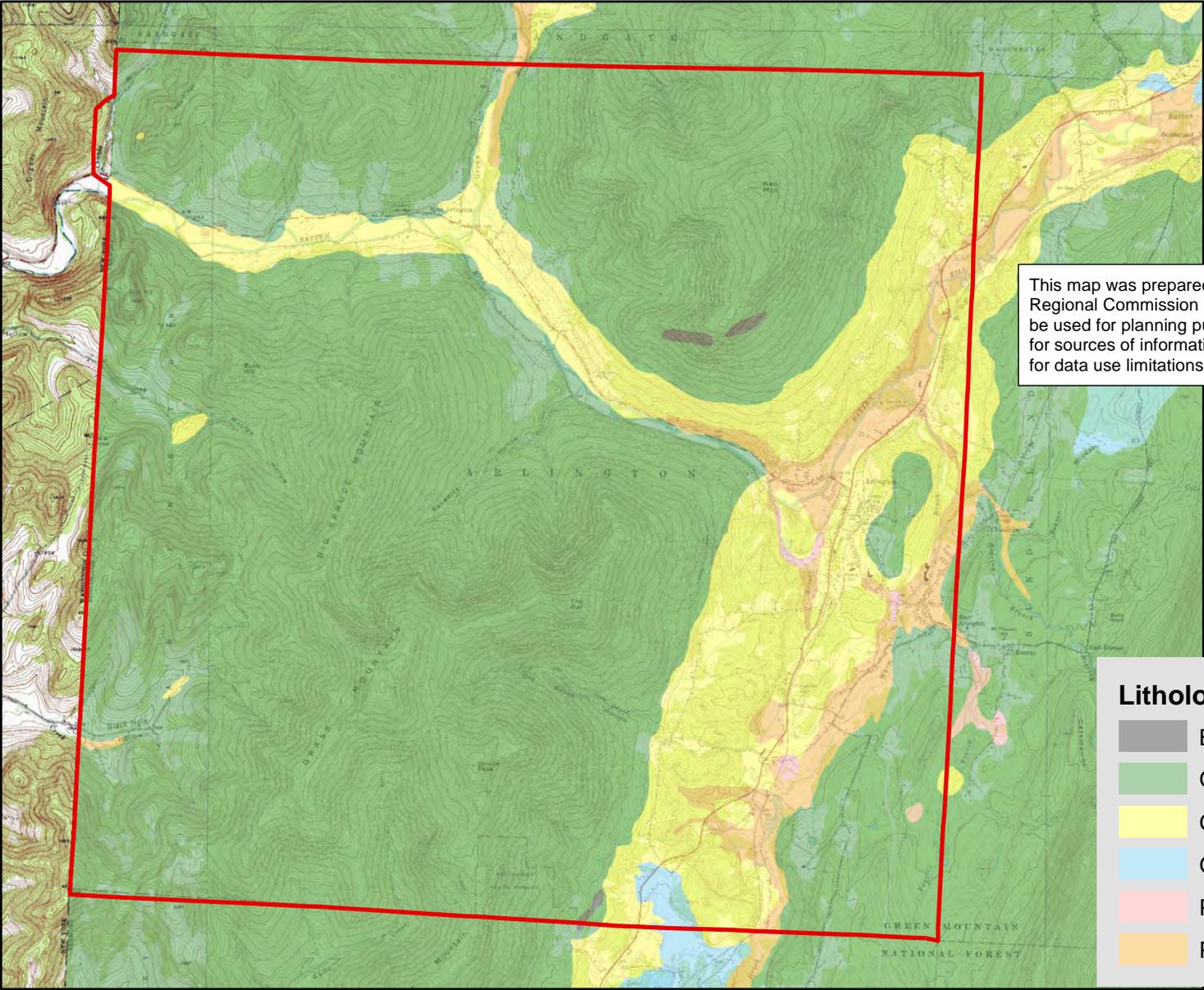


- Conglomerate
- Dolostone
- Marble
- Phyllite
- Quartzite
- Sandstone
- Shale and Phyllite
- Slate

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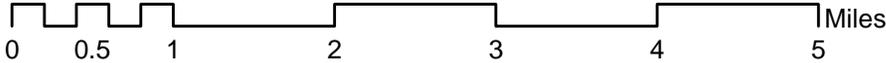
# Map 3. Arlington Surficial Geology



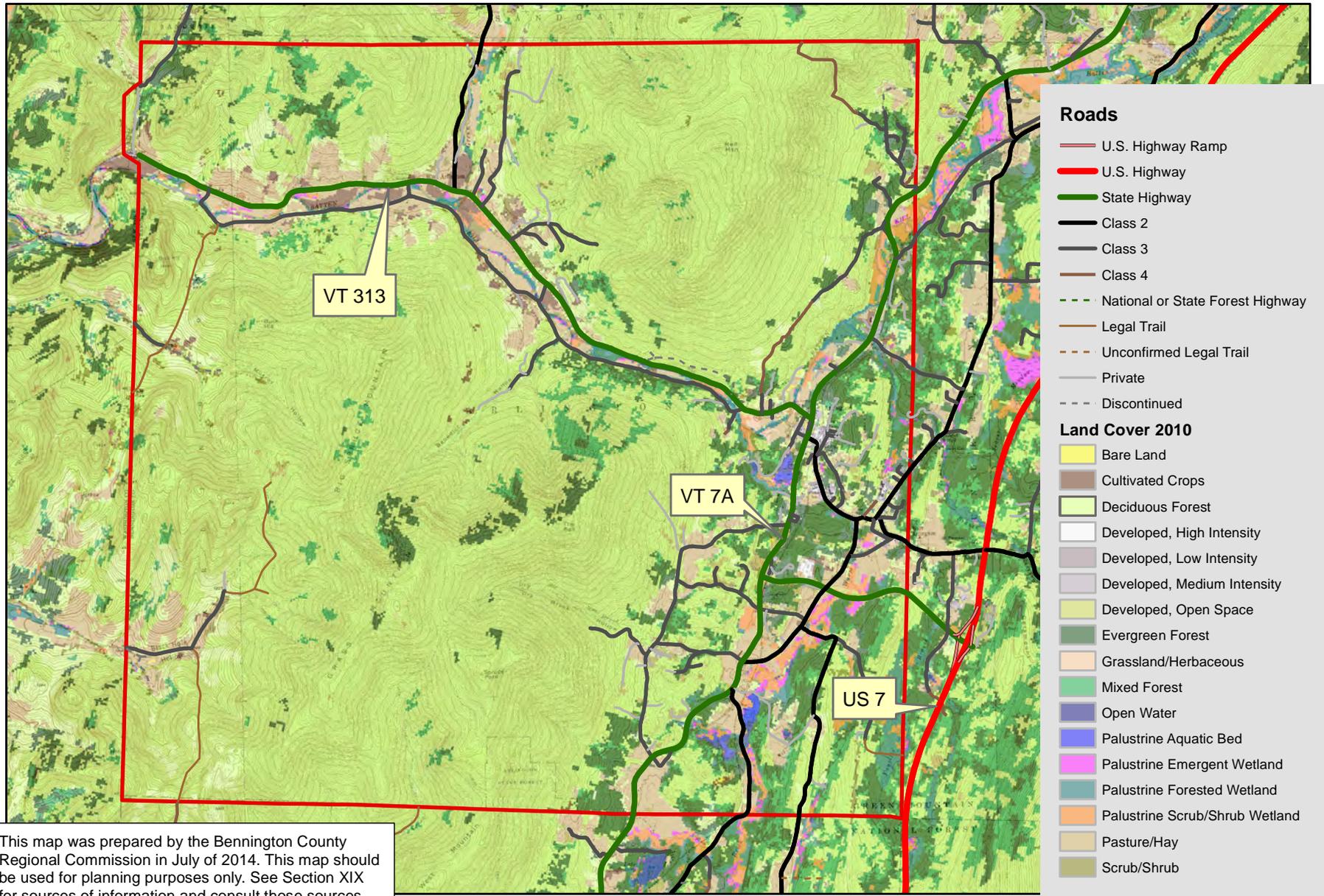
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### Lithology

- Bedrock exposure
- Glacial deposit
- Glaciofluvial deposit
- Glaciolacustrine deposit
- Pluvial deposit
- Postglacial fluvial deposit



# Map 4. Arlington Land Cover



This map was prepared by the Bennington County Regional Commission in July of 2014. This map should be used for planning purposes only. See Section XIX for sources of information and consult those sources for data use limitations.



### **III. HISTORY AND OVERVIEW OF ARLINGTON**

#### Arlington Timeline

- 1761 Arlington Chartered
- 1763 Arlington First Settled by Europeans
- 1778 Vermont Elects First Governor, Thomas Chittenden
- 1791 Vermont becomes a state
- 1859 Western Vermont Railroad
- 1859 First Town Hall
- 1863 First Large-scale Industry
- 1870 Canfields establish Arlington Car Manufacturing Company
- 1880's a period of industry
- 1890-1911 – Arlington Refrigerator Company
- 1895 Arlington Water Company
- 1939 Mack Molding Company increasing local employment and housing
- Major fires altered commercial areas
- Dramatic increase in housing post WW II to the 1990's
- 1982 Modern Route 7 opened
- 1990's Schools expanded
- 1995 Mack Molding Headquarters constructed
- 1996 New town library completed
- 2002 New Happy Days Playschool constructed
- 2013 Pharmacy opened
- 2013 Battenkill Valley Health Center Approved

The Town of Arlington is located in Bennington County in the southwestern corner of the State of Vermont.

The Town of Arlington had been chartered in 1761 by Benning Wentworth, the Colonial Governor of the Royal Province of New Hampshire. New York claimed that the towns chartered by Wentworth belonged to the Royal Province of New York. The contest over land continued during the Revolution and the years following. . In the early years, farming, logging, quarrying, and small crafts were the principal occupations in the area.

The settlement of Arlington began in 1763 with the arrival of several families of European descent from Newtown and New Milford, Connecticut. Nathan Canfield came in 1768 and settled along the Batten Kill where he built a saw and grist mill. Abel Hawley settled near Canfield and opened a popular tavern in his house. Later the Canfield family started the quarrying and milling of marble from outcroppings along the Batten Kill. It was one of the first mills in Vermont.

In 1777 Vermont formed a government and requested admission to the Union. This was denied, but the citizens of Vermont remained loyal to the cause of American liberty; although as an independent government.

In 1778 Vermont elected its first Governor, Thomas Chittenden, who settled in Arlington in that year. He remained in Arlington for nine years. He was re-elected Governor until 1797. Vermont was admitted to the Union in 1791, the first new state following the Revolution.

This period saw the construction of many frame houses and the development of small water-powered industries in and around the Arlington and East Arlington villages.

The railroad era began about 1850 when the Western Vermont Railroad chose a route through Arlington Village. Businesses at that time included a marble works, blacksmith shop, sash and blind shop, a bending mill, broom handle shop, and

various others. Shortly before, Martin Chester Deming, a wealthy merchant and land owner, built his home in Arlington, now the Arlington Inn.

The Town Hall was erected in 1859.

The first large scale industry, a shoe-peg factory, was built in 1863. Much of the plant's output was exported to Germany and Russia. The business operated until 1881. The buildings are now part of Miles Lumber Company.

In the 1870s the Canfields organized the Arlington Car Manufacturing Company to produce railroad cars. The business was not successful and closed in 1877. The manufacture of railroad car wheels followed, but it, too, failed.

The 1880s saw a variety of commercial and industrial enterprises in the area, including a hotel, two general stores, hardware store, wagon shop, chair factory, planing mill, shoe shop, and about 400 inhabitants.

The Arlington Water Company was formed in 1895 and water mains were laid along Water Street (Route 313), north and south on Route 7A for short distances, and on Deming Lane (next to the Arlington Inn). The East Arlington Water Company, established in 1902, merged with the Arlington company in 1912 to provide the two villages with a reliable source of water benefiting residents, commerce and industry, including Arlington's principal industry, the refrigerator company.

Early in the next century the Arlington Refrigerator Company occupied the car shop buildings and in 1910-11 built the Town's largest industrial complex to produce ice-boxes. To house employees, due to a shortage of local housing, the company developed the Munn Terrace neighborhood, the first employee housing in Arlington at affordable prices.

Farming, confined to the valleys, spread westward along the Batten Kill flood plain and lower slopes and southward from the Village along what is now Route 7A. The higher elevations that dominate the Town provided forestry products and a thriving logging industry.

Early in the 20th century Vermont began to attract summer residents and tourists. Many chose homes in Arlington. Some were artists, musicians, and writers, and a few stayed year-round. The best known were artist Rockwell Kent, composer Carl Ruggles who founded the Arlington Choral Society, the popular artist Norman Rockwell and, of course, author Dorothy Canfield Fisher.

The 1920s brought continued building activity in Arlington, mostly residential; however, the refrigerator company, never very profitable, closed in 1929 and the buildings stood empty for many years. This was disruptive economically and socially to the area.

In 1939 large-scale industry returned when the Mack Molding Company acquired the refrigerator company buildings for the production of custom-molded plastics. Increased local employment and housing construction followed.

In the years that followed, Arlington's business district underwent several changes with the demolition of four major nineteenth century buildings, the destruction of the hotel (Flanders Inn) by fire, and the loss of the commercial block at Russell and Main Streets by fire. Also, the altering of several houses for commercial use

changed the appearance of the village center. However, the Town continues to convey a rural and historic character to residents and visitors alike. Local interest in preserving that character is overwhelmingly evident.

Following World War II, Arlington experienced a rapid increase in housing and population through the 1990's. Route 7 was opened in 1982, altering traffic patterns. Regulatory changes required improved septic systems that many properties could not support. These, along with changes in shopping patterns, resulted in the closing of many stores in East Arlington.

Mack Molding opened a new corporate headquarters and manufacturing facility on Warm Brook Road near Route 313 in 1995. This company remains Arlington's principal employer. Orvis also constructed their headquarters in Sunderland, just across Route 7, and is also a major area employer. The new town library was constructed in 1996.

Arlington's architectural heritage reflects its historic past, and some 140 local structures have been placed on the National Register of Historic Places. The Arlington Village Center, East Arlington Village, and the West Arlington Green typify the rural New England pattern that was so prevalent in colonial and early Federal times, and there is a desire by both residents and visitors to retain this setting.

Yet, historic preservation must work hand-in-hand with growth and change. The Town's population has increased less in recent years, with the highest growth rate occurred during the 1970s. At the outset of the 21 century, the Town still qualified as a rural community with a population of less than 2,500, but the concentration of development in a relatively small area along Routes 7A and 313 gives a sense of greater density. A healthy, diverse economy exists along with a strong resident workforce. Housing is in good repair and reasonably adequate for current needs.

Projects undertaken by affordable housing organizations have resulted in the restoration of numerous existing buildings and the construction of twelve new elderly apartment units in the center of Arlington. Many factors must be taken into account to assure that any future growth is in the best interests of the community and its residents.

One factor which contributes to the Town's appeal is its rich and varied natural resource base. The forested peaks and ridges of the Taconic Range, the Batten Kill, Green River, and the Roaring Branch, the lush valley floor between the mountains, and abundant wildlife typify the scenic beauty of Arlington. From these stem recreational and economic opportunities, aesthetic pleasures, environmental quality, and good public health. Town policies and planning activities must be directed toward the preservation and enhancement of these attributes which are part of daily life in Arlington.

A sustainable position between natural resources preservation and reasonable growth and development should be incorporated in a town's land use regulations. Arlington's zoning and subdivision regulations have been designed to promote preservation of the natural rural, agricultural, and scenic qualities of the countryside while providing for growth in a controlled manner. These regulations should be enforced with an eye toward realizing these objectives, but these regulations alone cannot fully implement the goals of this plan. New creative

planning and zoning tools, strategic public investment, economic incentives, and land conservation should all be used together to strike a balance that will sustain the type of community expressly preferred by residents and visitors.

A number of public or quasi-public facilities and services are important to Arlington residents. The most densely populated sections of Arlington are served by the Arlington Water Company system. Because it is unlikely that the Town will have a municipal sewer system at any time in the foreseeable future, it will be particularly important to maintain a safe and reliable public water supply for the village areas. In the problematic area of solid waste management, Arlington must continue to work cooperatively with other area towns to develop long-term disposal solutions. The Town's public buildings and land represent both community assets and limited resources; careful planning is needed to ensure that adequate facilities will be available to support municipal functions in the coming years. Finally, the Arlington Fire Department and Rescue Squad are efficient and relatively low cost (to taxpayers) services that must receive continuing support from the community.

Arlington's transportation system is confined to the valley areas. State Route 7A runs north and south along the east side of the Town, while Route 313 runs east and west from Sunderland to New York. A network of town roads service residential and business locations off the arterial highways. The Vermont Railroad roughly parallels Route 7A to the east. Arlington has made great progress in providing needed pedestrian facilities: sidewalks now connect the village centers of Arlington and East Arlington and safe walking to the schools, Post Office, Town Hall, and public library is now available. The Green Mountain Community Network, the regional public transit provider, operates the Green Mountain Express, which provides medical and demand-response as well as fixed route service. The Batten Kill's lengthy flow through Arlington necessitates a number of bridge crossings requiring State and Town care and expense. Signage and public transit are other transportation concerns. Providing these services involves a substantial capital investment and high operating costs paid largely from tax dollars. Routine maintenance to avoid costly repairs and prudent expansion of the system into new areas are important concerns for the Highway Department, the Select Board, and the property owners.

Arlington, with its kindergarten through twelfth grade school system, is fortunate in being able to provide high quality in-town educational services for all of its children. Extensive improvements to Fisher Elementary School and a new wastewater disposal system for the schools were completed in the 1990's. Renovations have also been made to the High School, and a new Happy Days Playschool building was constructed in 2002. The District will continue to work with the Town to ensure that new capital projects will not overburden the Town's taxpayers.

Few towns have the recreational opportunities afforded to those living in Arlington and their friends and guests. The Batten Kill alone is a recreational treasure, to say nothing of the woods, fields, and mountains rising from its banks. Along its banks, too, is the Arlington recreational park for golf, tennis, soccer, swimming, and picnicking. Cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, hunting, and hiking are just "out the backdoor" for most in Arlington. The recreation scene is not trouble-free, however; nor is it without some effort and expense for those who enjoy it. The recreation park, used by many, must be managed and maintained, by volunteers and the town. The Batten Kill is often victim of overuse, and a system of limiting use at times may be necessary. Select Board participation to assure public access

to natural areas may involve Town funds and dedication. Citizen interest (i.e. Batten Kill Watershed Alliance, etc.) is a must.

As mentioned previously, Arlington's housing stock is in good repair and reasonably adequate for current needs. As elsewhere, housing costs are high and often beyond the reach of local citizens. State and Federal Governments encourage municipalities to resolve housing shortages, but the lack of funds for subsidizing affordable housing puts the burden on the local taxpayer and remedial actions seldom get off the drawing board. The recent affordable housing projects have made some progress in improving this situation, and there has also been a Habitat for Humanity house in the town, but more can always be done. The Town should continue to cooperate with affordable housing developers to assess the need and potential for developing or rehabilitating additional housing with projects such as the one noted earlier.

Arlington, as any modern community, utilizes many forms of energy - fuel oil, propane, gasoline, electric power, and wood. Few renewable energy sources other than wood are used. In view of rising energy costs and diminishing supplies, it behooves residents and visitors alike to practice energy conservation measures in their modes of transportation, housing, work, and play. Public policy must also reflect this behavioral pattern.

Health care in Arlington is more than adequate. A family medical practice, a general dental practice and pharmacy are located in the village center. A local nursing service and a rescue squad serve the Town, and a full-service hospital is a few miles away in Bennington. Medical and dental specialists are close by, also. Rising health care costs are a concern of the practitioner as well as the patient. Local, State, and Federal governments must come to grips with this problem in due course if the present level of care is to continue. Additionally, community support for current health care services must be sustained.

The Town of Arlington is governed by a five-member Select Board and a number of other elected and appointed officials. Funds for running the Town's affairs are generated largely from local taxes. Additional funds come from the State, from local services provided to residents and to neighboring towns and, in small measure, from the Federal Government.

Local taxes are levied on residential, commercial and industrial property owned by those living in Arlington, and by those living elsewhere. Town expenses involve administrative services, appropriations for support agencies and capital items, fire protection, highway construction and maintenance, Town Hall facilities, and law enforcement. The Select Board is responsible for preparation of an annual operating and capital expense budget for review and approval by the voting public. In a similar fashion, the Arlington School Board is responsible for the school system and the funds required to run it. As with the Town, school budgets are reviewed and approved by the voters. Town and school costs are rising and have been over the recent past. Dependence on property taxes for funds will become increasingly burdensome to property owners. Maintenance of service levels is essential, but costs must be continually scrutinized to ensure economical management of Town affairs.

The principal objective of the Arlington Town Plan is to ensure that the wishes of the majority of Arlington residents are realized.

## **IV. GOALS**

This section lists the planning goals which are deemed important for the Town of Arlington. Some goals may be realized by continuing with current policies and directions; others may only be attained with new policies, regulations, investments, or other strategies. Each goal, however, will remain important and relevant for the Town over the coming years.

### **4.1 Develop an Effective Planning Process**

Residents of Arlington should be encouraged to play an active role in planning the future of their Town. Planning activities that include and promote citizen participation should be emphasized.

The inter-municipal impacts of growth and development are particularly evident in Arlington. Issues include the availability of clean groundwater, use and water quality of the Batten Kill, educational facilities, emergency services, and residential development related to area job centers. Cooperation and consultation with neighboring towns and the Bennington County Regional Commission should occur.

### **4.2 Effectively Manage Future Growth**

The new growth that will assuredly occur in Arlington may positively or negatively affect the Town. An effort should be made to influence the type, location, intensity, and rate of new growth, thus ensuring that this growth will result in a net benefit to the Town.

New housing development should occur at densities that are appropriate for the different parts of the Town, and should be planned to protect natural resources and agricultural land. New development should also provide a range of housing opportunities for Arlington residents, while minimizing the need for expenditure of public funds.

Commercial and industrial development should provide goods, services, and employment opportunities for residents, with accommodations for the traveling and vacationing public in appropriate areas. Commercial and industrial uses should be planned to minimize any conflicts with nearby residential uses.

Resources should be allocated to encourage a rate of growth which does not exceed the long-term historical rate for the Town. The rate of growth should not outstrip the ability of the Town to pay for the added services necessitated by new development. Future development should bear its fair share of municipal capital and maintenance costs.

New development should reinforce historical development trends, and be compatible with Arlington's rural character.

Growth which will impart an economic benefit to the community, while being consistent with the goals of maintaining historical development patterns and preserving natural resources, should be encouraged.

### **4.3 Maintain the Rural Character of the Town**

Forested mountains, the free-flowing Batten Kill surrounded by open fields and pastures, small rural settlements, and the village centers of Arlington and East Arlington all combine to give the Town its unique rural appeal. Preservation of this rural landscape, with its attendant cultural, historical, recreational, and aesthetic benefits is a priority for the Town. Of particular importance is the maintenance of

an open rural landscape outside the villages along the main highway approaches to the Town.

#### 4.4 Protect Important Natural and Cultural Resources

The Town's natural and cultural resources must be protected to maintain or enhance the quality of life for residents of Arlington. Important resources should be identified and protected, including but not limited to significant natural and fragile ecological areas, important features, scenic roads, streams, wetlands and water bodies, historical sites, wildlife habitat, groundwater recharge areas, and agricultural lands.

#### 4.5 Maintain and Enhance Recreational Opportunities

The municipal recreation center is an outstanding resource for Arlington residents. Continued maintenance of this park and all of its facilities is fundamental to the Town's recreation needs. New recreational opportunities and facilities should be provided as deemed appropriate. Mechanisms for maintaining or expanding public access to recreational resources such as streams, trails, and forests should be explored.

#### 4.6 Promote Opportunities for Adequate Housing to Meet the Needs of All Residents of Arlington

The Town should work cooperatively with public and private housing organizations to foster affordable housing. Existing bylaws should be examined to determine regulatory changes which would encourage affordable housing.

#### 4.7 Support Desirable Economic Growth

Economic development should provide maximum economic benefit to the community with minimal environmental cost.

#### 4.8 Provide Outstanding Educational and Childcare Service to the Community

Continued availability of quality educational services for Arlington residents is a fundamental objective of the Town. Access to child day care should be encouraged for working parents.

#### 4.9 Develop Appropriate Plans for Roads, Other Capital Investments, and Necessary Services

Capital investments should be planned to meet significant existing needs and support development in designated growth areas. Roads should be maintained and improved to provide a safe and convenient transportation system. Critical public services such as the fire department and rescue squad must also be supported.

#### 4.10 Wastewater Disposal

Options should be developed to provide adequate wastewater disposal for all properties currently with inadequate systems for Arlington and East Arlington.

#### 4.11 Water Supply

Surface and groundwater resources should be protected to assure an adequate water supply for residents and commercial establishments.

## **V. HISTORIC PRESERVATION**

### 5.1 Introduction

The Town of Arlington, with its distinctive villages, contains structures and areas that vividly reflect the Town's rich history and architectural heritage. The preservation of Arlington's historic character has many benefits. The existing rural village character attracts tourists to the Town, thereby providing a valuable revenue and employment base. Arlington's unique character also provides residents of the Town with an important sense of their heritage and a link with the past, thus promoting a sense of identity and cohesiveness within the community.

### 5.2 Historic Sites

There are two historic districts and one structure, the Arlington Green Covered Bridge that have been recognized in the National Register in Arlington. The National Park Service is responsible for administration of the "National Register," with coordination in our State through the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation within the Agency of Commerce and Community Development. Designation on the National Register resulted in the generation of a wealth of valuable information, will open the door for some financial benefits for the restoration of historic properties, and will enhance local awareness and pride in the Town's history. A third area was included in the State Register of Historic Places, also administered through the Vermont.

A brief discussion of each is included below.

#### 1. Arlington Village

Local interest in preserving the historic structures in Arlington Village (Map 5) resulted in the designation of the Arlington Village Historic District in the National Register of Historic Places in 1989. The total area is approximately 180 acres with 140 structures considered to be "contributing" to the village character and 29 considered "noncontributing" as they are less than 50 years old or have been altered to the extent that their historic character has been lost.

The Town's first settlers established themselves in the area of the present Arlington Village in 1763. Over the next two centuries Arlington Village remained a center for commerce and civic functions. As the early families became established they built more comfortable and stately dwellings, so that by 1869 most of the historic buildings we see in Arlington Village today include a variety of architectural styles that together create the area's unique historic character. The boundary was designed to encompass the village that was developed prior to 1940. The floodplain to the west limited the village at that time and subsequent development.

#### 2. East Arlington Village

As one approaches East Arlington Village (Map 6) from Ice Pond Road, there is a definite feeling that the scene before you represents the quintessential

rural Vermont village. Indeed, the neat white church buildings and restored residential, commercial, and civic buildings framed around a cascading stream, do form an ideal image of the Town's rural village heritage. This area was placed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1996. At the time of designation, there were 157 “contributing” structures, and 53 noncontributing structures. The architectural classifications include Greek Revival, Queen Ann and Colonial Revival. Development of the area was related directly to the availability and exploitation of water power for industrial purposes (U.S. Department of the Interior 1996).” The total area is approximately 140 acres.

### 3. Arlington Green Covered Bridge

The Arlington Green Covered Bridge was added to the National Register in 1973. The bridge consists of a single span, approximately 80 feet long and 17.5 feet wide and was constructed in 1852 (Map 7).

## 5.3 Historic Preservation Policies and Actions

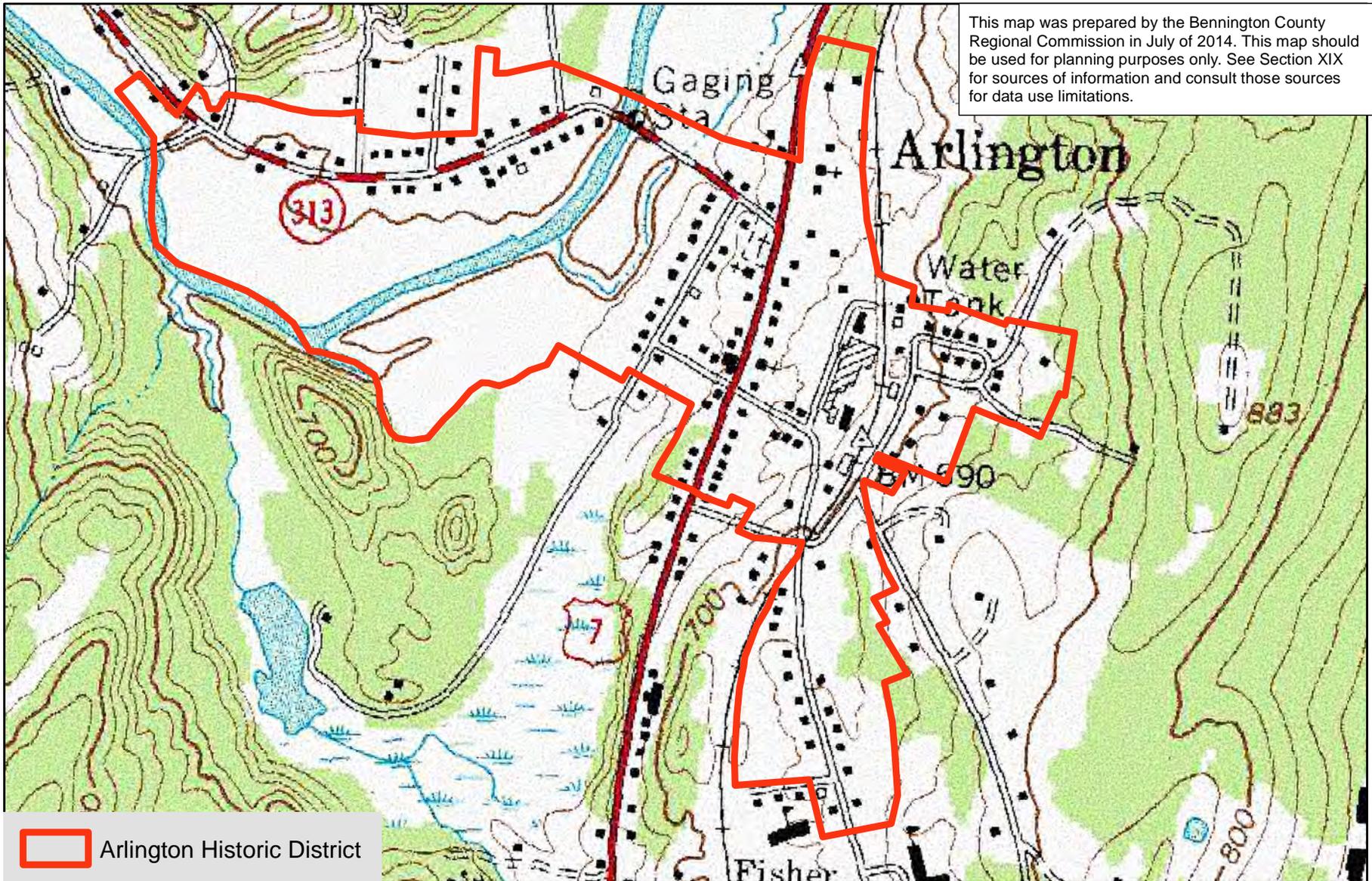
Historic Preservation Policy: Historic structures should be preserved, renovated and adaptively reused to the maximum extent practicable and developments near such structures should be compatible in their design.

Historic Preservation Actions;

1. The Town should actively support the preservation of buildings and sites of historical or architectural merit.
2. New developments should be located and designed to be compatible with existing historic buildings and development patterns.
3. The Town should actively encourage the renovation and adaptive re-use of historic structures which might otherwise be lost to deterioration.
4. Developers should incorporate historic sites near proposed developments into their plans and provide compatible architectural designs and/or screening and buffers, as appropriate.

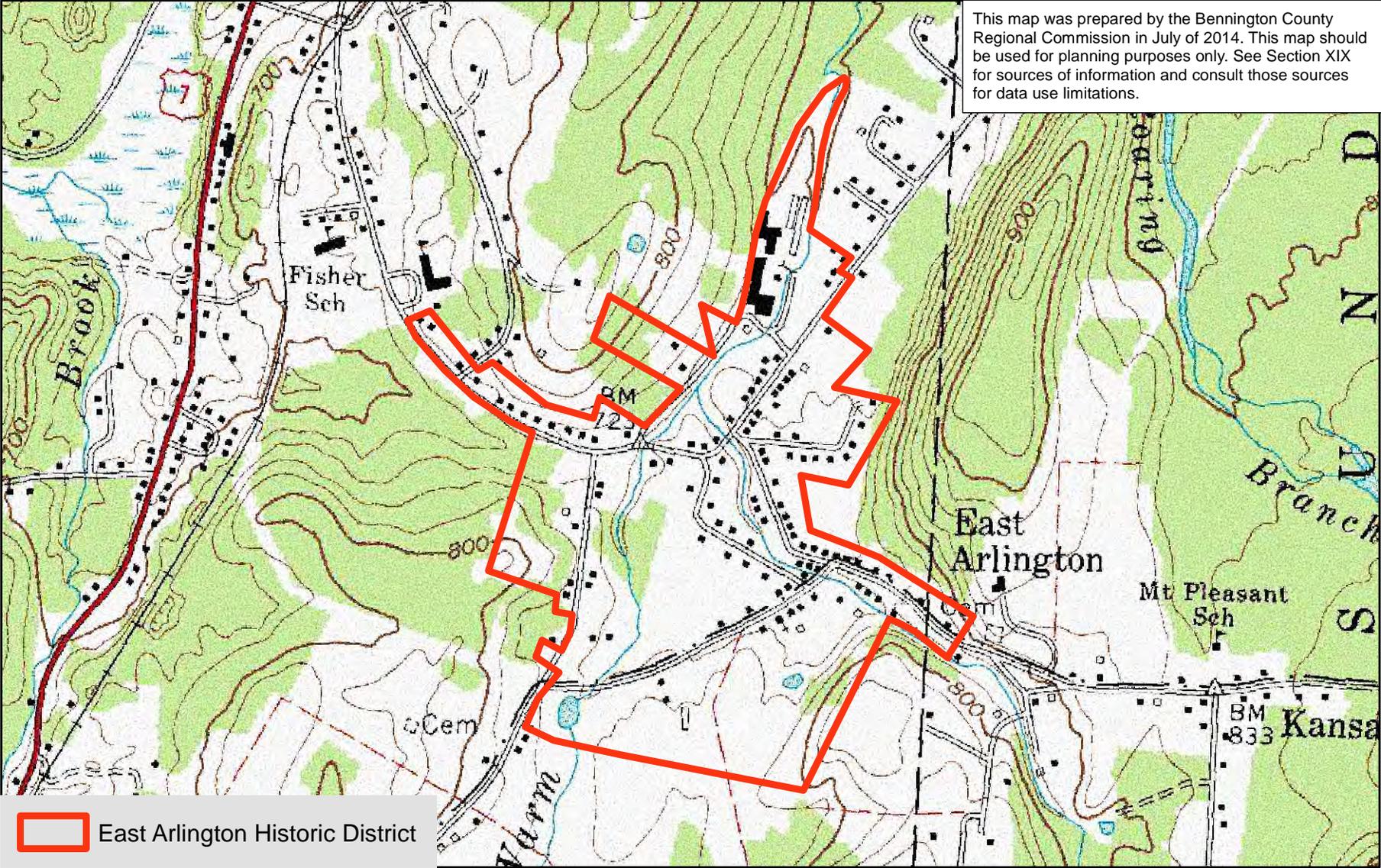
# Map 5. Arlington Historic District

This map was prepared by the Bennington County Regional Commission in July of 2014. This map should be used for planning purposes only. See Section XIX for sources of information and consult those sources for data use limitations.



# Map 6. East Arlington Historic District

This map was prepared by the Bennington County Regional Commission in July of 2014. This map should be used for planning purposes only. See Section XIX for sources of information and consult those sources for data use limitations.

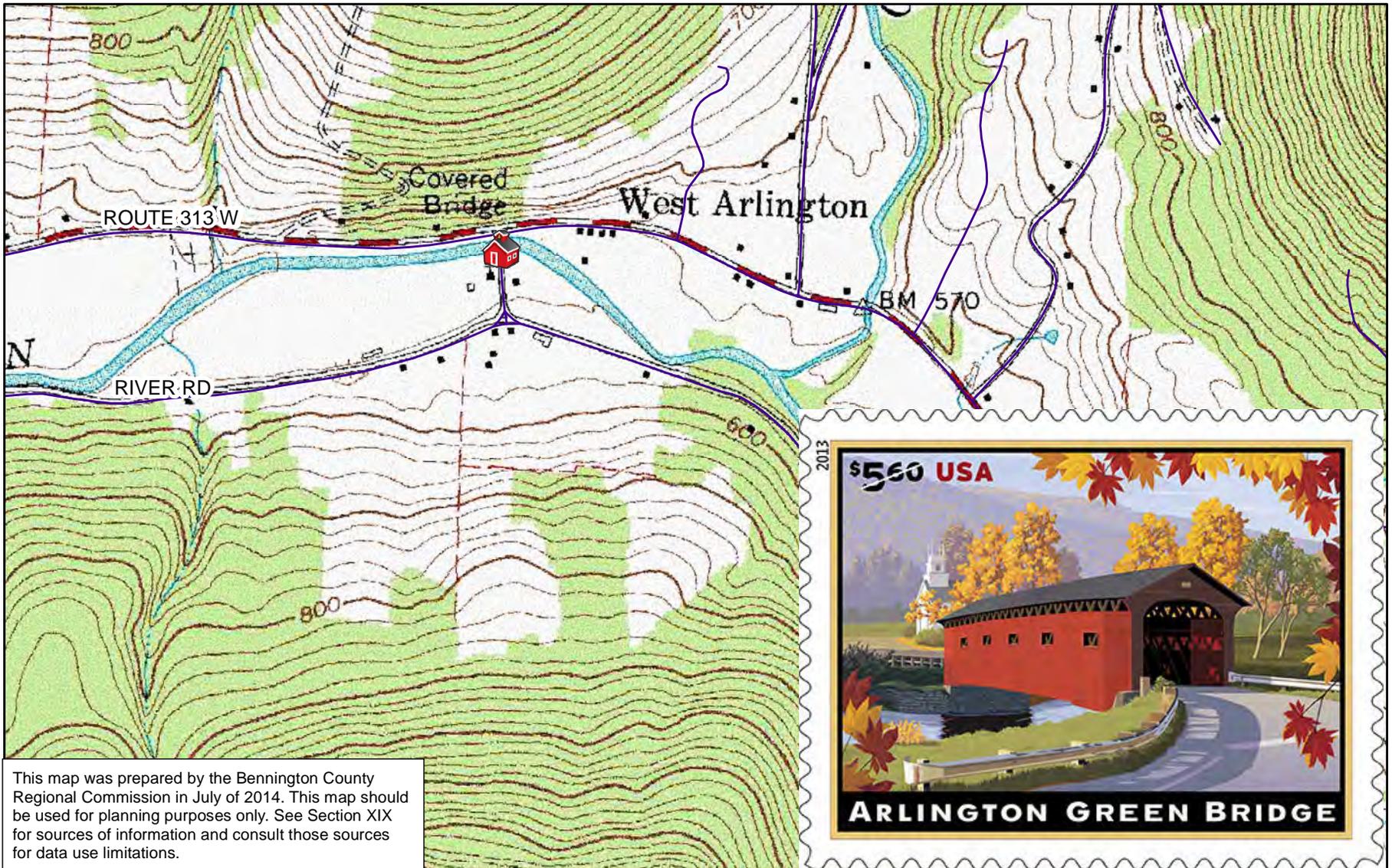


East Arlington Historic District



0 1,000 2,000 3,000 4,000 5,000 Feet

# Map 7. Arlington Green Covered Bridge



## VI. POPULATION, HOUSING, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

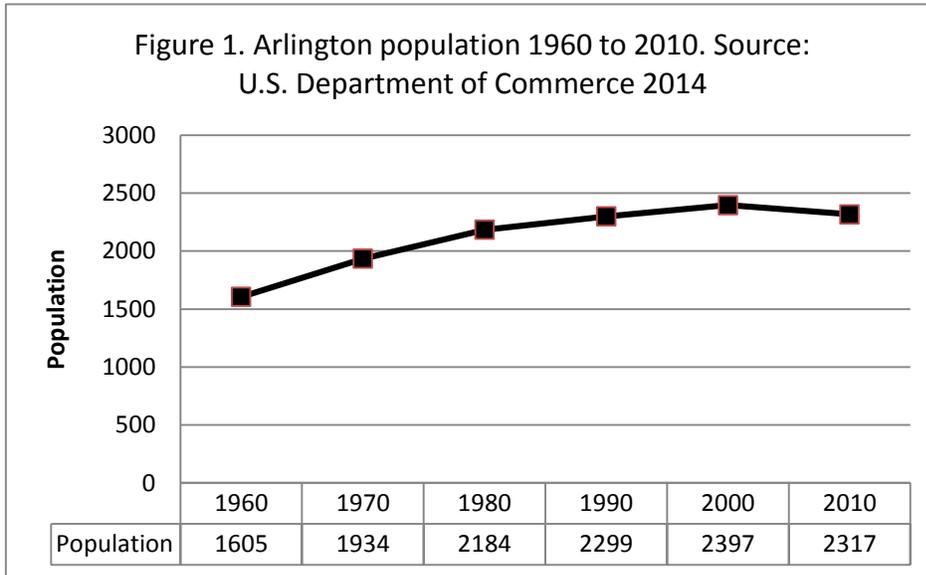
### 6.1 Population Trends

Table 1 below provides the total population by town for each of the towns in Bennington County and the three towns adjacent to Arlington in New York from 1970 to 2010. All towns except Bennington, Readsboro and Searsburg experienced increases in population through 2000. Arlington, Dorset, Peru, Pownal, Readsboro and Shaftsbury experienced small declines in population from 2000 to 2010. The overall Bennington County population increased from 1970 to 2010. The small population in Glastenbury likely did not change as much from 2000 to 2010 as indicated.

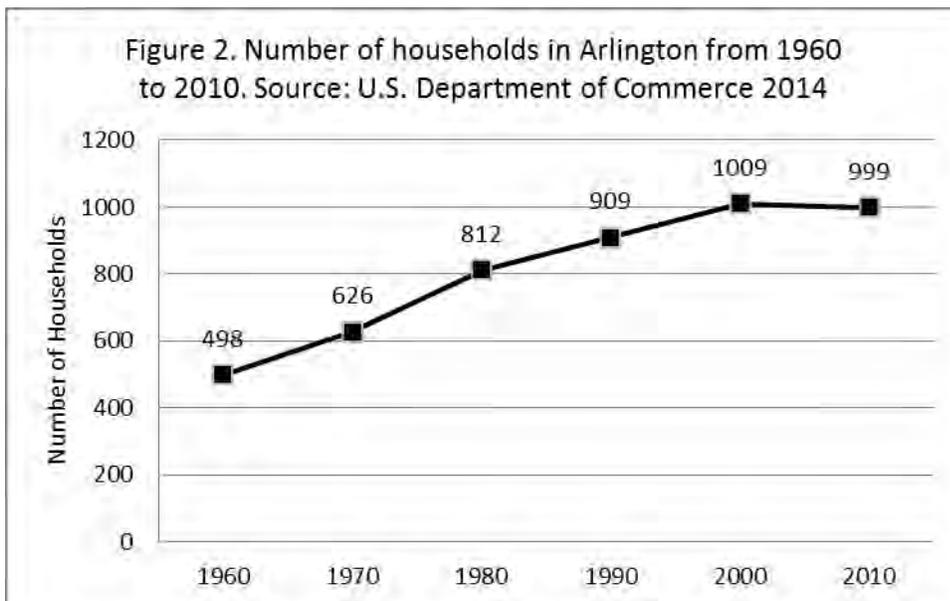
Table 1. Population trends in Bennington County and adjacent New York. Sources: U.S. Department of Commerce 1980 a and b, U.S. Department of Commerce 1990, U.S. Department of Commerce 2003, U.S. Department of Commerce 2014,					
<b>Bennington County Towns</b>	<b>1970</b>	<b>1980</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2010</b>
Arlington	1,934	2,184	2,299	2,397	2,317
Bennington	14,586	15,815	16,451	15,737	15,764
Dorset	1,293	1,648	1,918	2,036	2,031
Glastenbury	-	3	7	16	8
Landgrove	104	121	134	144	158
Manchester	2,919	3,261	3,622	4,184	4,391
Peru	243	312	324	416	375
Pownal	2,441	3,269	3,485	3,560	3,527
Readsboro	638	638	762	805	763
Rupert	582	605	654	704	714
Sandgate	127	234	278	353	405
Searsburg	84	72	85	96	109
Shaftsbury	2,411	3,001	3,368	3,767	3,590
Stamford	752	773	773	813	824
Sunderland	601	768	872	850	956
Winhall	281	327	482	702	769
Woodford	286	314	331	414	424
<b>Total</b>	<b>29,282</b>	<b>33,345</b>	<b>35,854</b>	<b>36,994</b>	<b>37,125</b>
<b>Vermont Total</b>	<b>444,732</b>	<b>511,456</b>	<b>562,758</b>	<b>608,827</b>	<b>625,741</b>
<b>New York Towns</b>	<b>1970</b>	<b>1980</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2010</b>
Jackson, NY			1,571	1,718	1,800
Salem, NY	2,346	2,377	2,608	2,702	2,715
White Creek, NY	2,644	2,988	3,196	3,411	3,356

Following a slight decline in population in 1940, Arlington's population has grown at a fairly high rate since 1950, with increases of 20.5% from 1960 to 1970 and 12.9% in 1970 to 1980. The rate of population increase then declined to 5.3%

from 1980 to 1990 and to 4.3% from 1990 to 2000. The 2010 Arlington population is 2,317 representing a decline of 3.3% from 2000. For comparison, the population growth from 2000 to 2010 in Bennington County was 0.35% and 2.8% in the State of Vermont.



Since 1960, the number of households, which consists of one or more people living in the same dwelling, has also increased though the number declined in 2010. Given both the decline in population and in households since 2010, it is difficult to project the 2020 or future populations. Barring a major change such as loss or gain of a major employer, the development of a municipal sewage treatment plant or other action that would alter development patterns, the 2020 population is likely to be relatively unchanged compared to 2010.



As can be seen in Table 2 below, the population of Arlington is aging, a trend that is linked to the reduction in population and households.

Table 2. Changes in age distribution from 2000 to 2010.  
Source: U.S. Department of Commerce 2014

Age Group	2000		2010	
	Proportion	Number	Proportion	Number
<5 Yrs	5%	121	5%	118
5-19 Yrs	20%	489	16%	367
20-44 Yrs	30%	713	25%	572
45-64 yrs	28%	679	34%	791
65+ Yrs	16%	395	20%	469
total	100%	2,397	100%	2,317

Census data provides a snapshot of household characteristics. Figure 3 shows the number of households in families vs with single parents with and without children as well as nonfamily households and householders living alone, based on a total estimate of 1,108 households in the period 2008 to 2012. Family households consist of people related by birth, marriage or adoption while nonfamily households consist of single individuals or unrelated people living together.

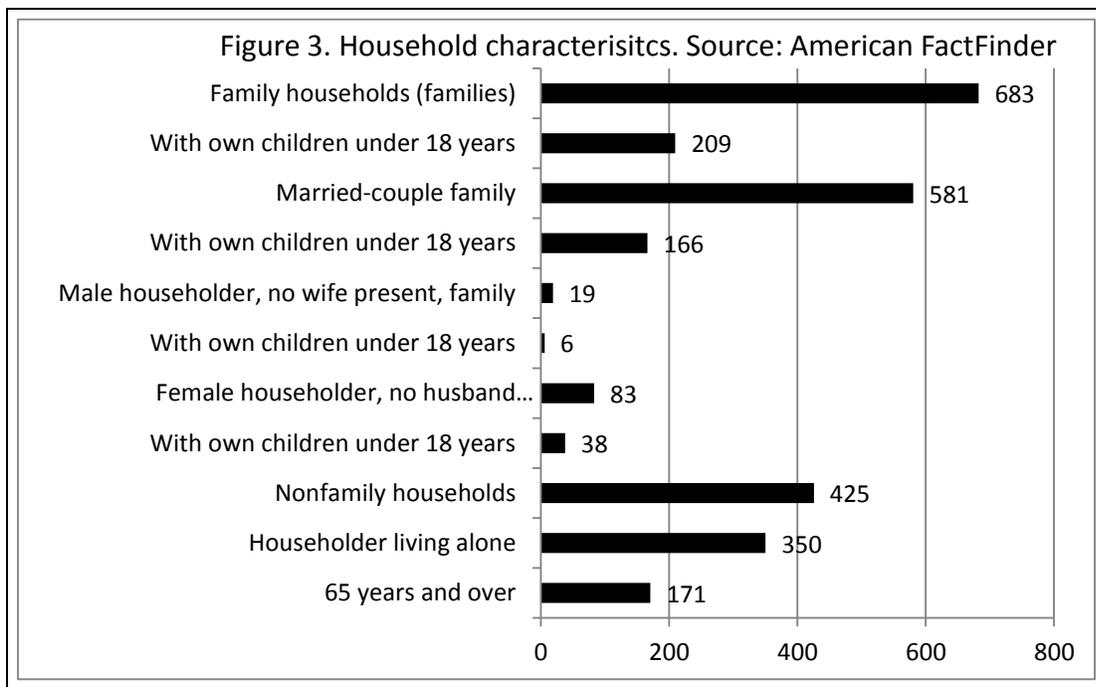
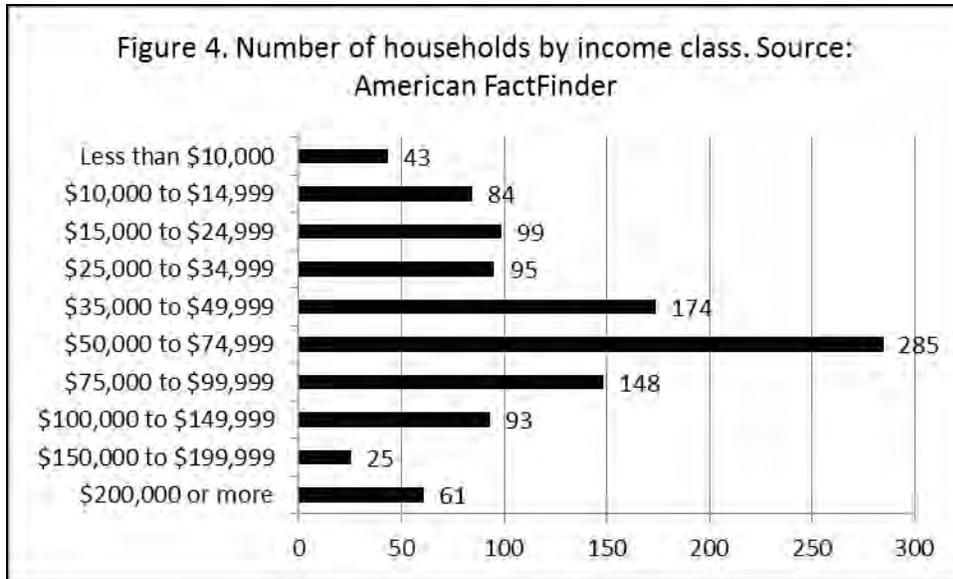


Figure 4 shows the number of households by income from the same American FactFinder data.



Relatively small percentages of households received Supplemental Security Income (3.8%) or cash public assistance (1.7%) while 10.7% received food stamps during that period.

## 6.2 Housing

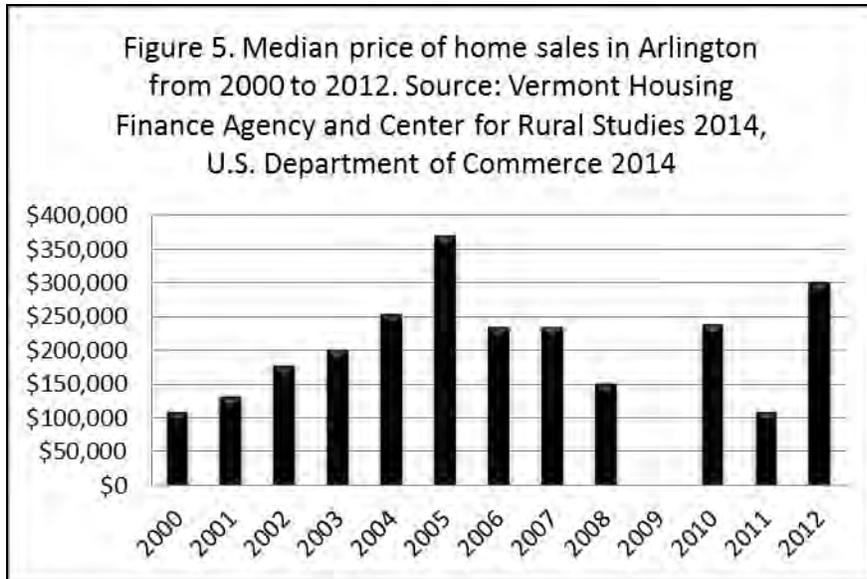
Table 3 shows the number of housing units by type from 1950. Data for all categories was not available, and the totals do not match to the total number of units listed. There has been a steady increase in the number of units, though owner occupied units have stabilized while seasonal units have continued to increase in number.

Table 3. Number of housing units by type in Arlington, VT. Source: Vermont Housing Finance Agency and Center for Rural Studies, University of Vermont 2014

Year	# Units	Total	Owner	Rental	Vacant		
					Seasonal	Rental	Sale
1950	514						
1960	603						
1970	792	619	462	157			
1980	990	868	605	207	41	12	3
1990	1136	1111	678	240	168	14	11
2000	1200	1175	761	248	138	15	13
2010	1285	1243	761	238	204	21	19

So, even though population declined from 2000 to 2010, the number of units increased.

Figure 5 below shows trends in the median price of all home sales. There appears to have been some recovery since the recession that started in 2007. However, the small number of sales likely creates wide fluctuation in these numbers.



Historic development patterns in Arlington have been dictated largely by topographic conditions. Existing developed areas are located along Route 7A, in East Arlington, and along Route 313 and the Batten Kill valley through West Arlington (Map 8). So while the Town’s population is less than 2,500, the population density on developable land is relatively high.

Table 4 shows the number of residential building permits issued from 1998 to 2012. The effects of the recession that started in 2007-2009 and the aftermath are clearly reflected in the reduction in new building.

Table 4. Number of building permits for houses issued from 1998 to 2012. Source: Town of Arlington Land Use Administrator

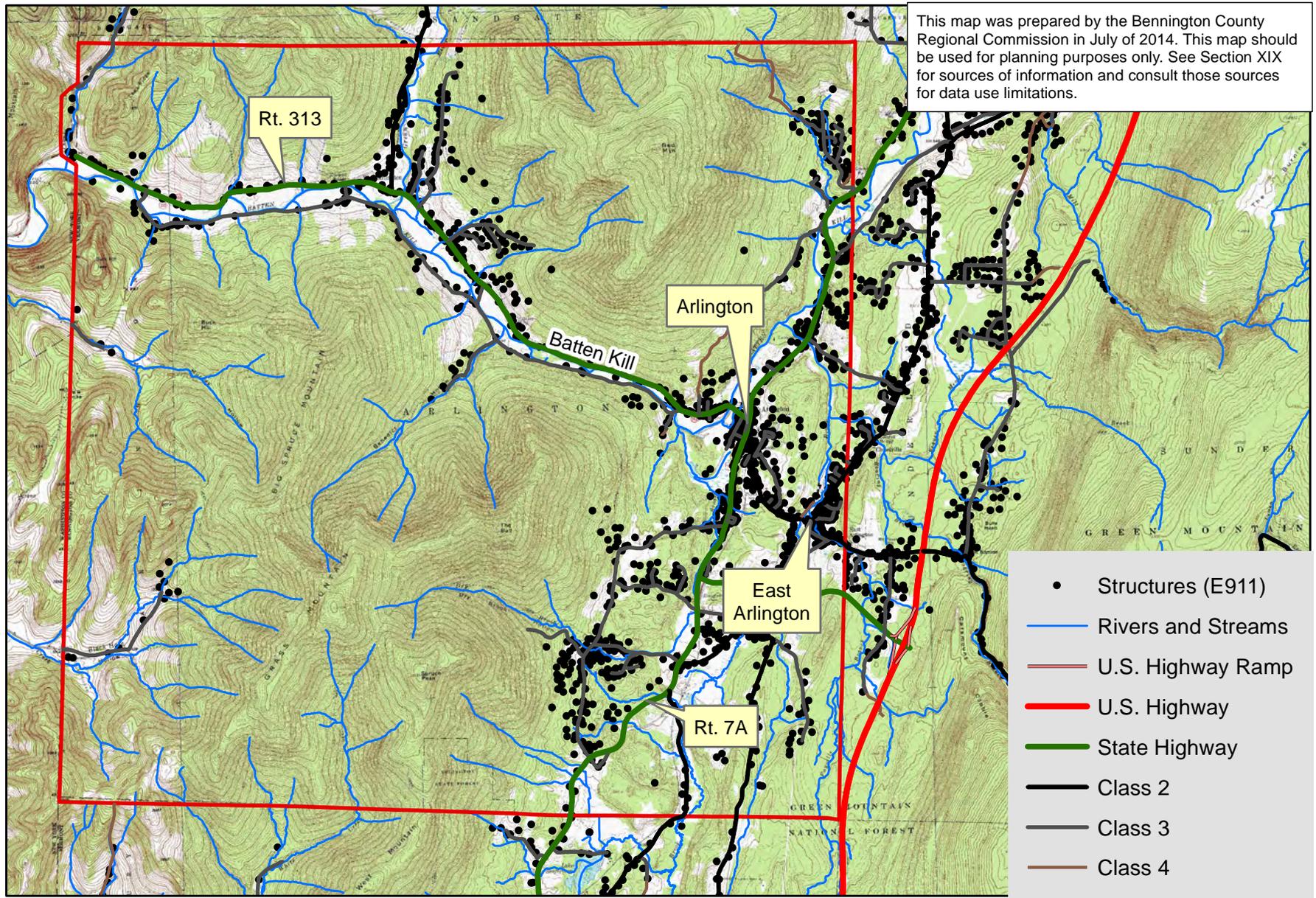
Year	# Permits Issued	Year	# Permits Issued
1998	7	2005	16
1999	3	2006	14
2000	20	2007	12
2001	14	2008	4
2002	12	2009	3
2003	15	2010	6
2004	13	2011	3
		2012	1

### 6.3 Economy

The Vermont Department of Labor estimates that the workforce in Arlington varied between 1200 to 1360 during 2012 and 2013.

Arlington has a fairly diverse economy for a small rural community with major manufacturing employers such as Mack Molding and Quadra-Tek. There are also

# Map 8. Arlington Development Patterns



major employers nearby within the County such as Orvis, Vermont Country Store, Southwestern Vermont Medical Center and the many schools. As can be seen in Figure 6, most are employed in social services, health care, education, retail and lodging and entertainment. The Town's natural resource base provides some employment opportunities in forestry, recreation, and agriculture.

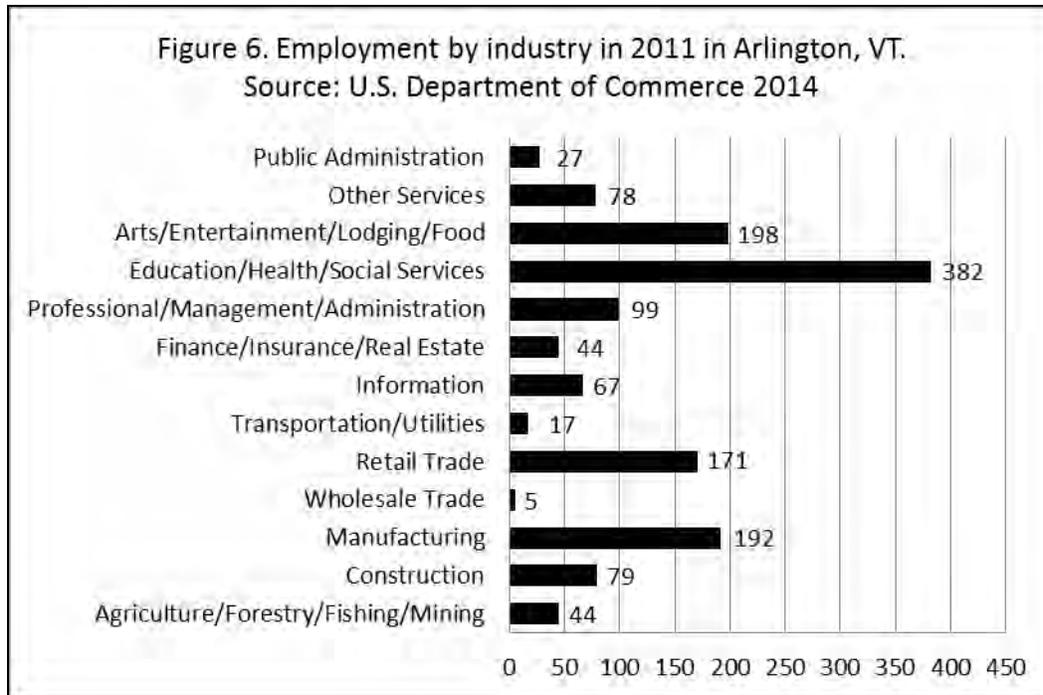
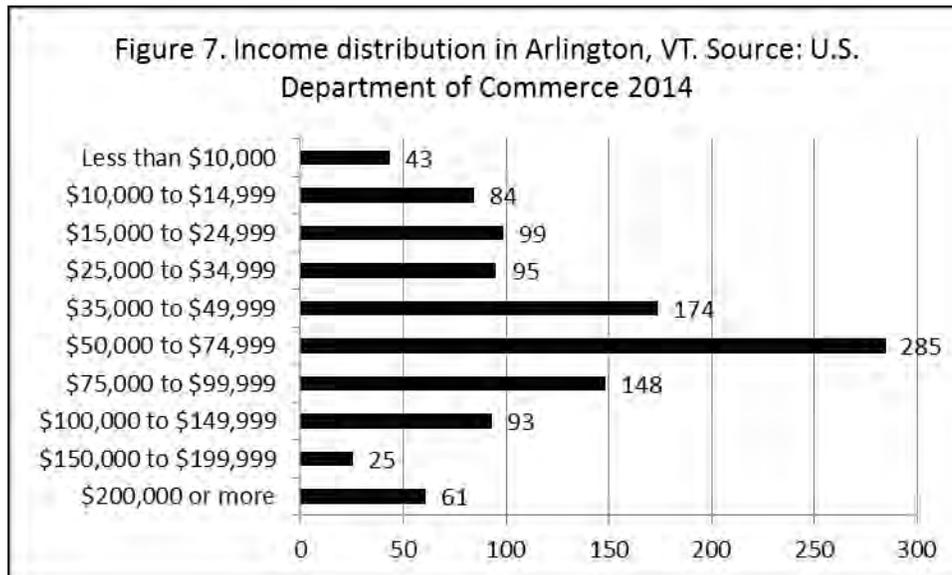


Figure 7 shows the distribution of incomes by class, using data from American FactFinder for the period 2008 to 2012. The median household income was \$54,250. The proportion of households receiving Supplemental Security Income was 3.8% and the proportion receiving public assistance was 1.7%. During the same period, 10.7% of households received food stamps.



#### 6.4 Arlington and East Arlington Villages

The Town of Arlington is developing applications to designate Arlington and East Arlington as village centers through a program of the Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development. Arlington and East Arlington represent the two core commercial centers in the Town of Arlington. Arlington Village includes several stores including Paulin's, Stewarts, Miles Hardware, the post office, the Town Hall and several inns and restaurants. East Arlington also has a post office, the Arlington Fire Department, and some existing and other vacant stores. Up until the 1990's, East Arlington was a vibrant and diverse commercial center, but is now dominated by vacant stores. While the reasons for this decline are not clear, space for adequate on-site septic systems limits development opportunities here.

Arlington and East Arlington are within walking distance of numerous residences as well as Arlington Memorial High School and Middle School, Fisher Elementary and the Martha Canfield Library. Clearly there is a need for a greater diversity of shopping, dining and entertainment to revitalize these village centers.

The Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development has a Village Designation Program that could assist with tax credits and other incentives that might spur redevelopment. Designated villages and town centers are also priorities for other state funding opportunities.

Designation of these two centers would support Goal 4.2 of this plan by encouraging commercial and industrial development that would provide goods, services and employment opportunities located in appropriate areas and reinforcing historical development patterns. Designation would also support Goal 4.3 by helping maintain the rural character of the town. Designation would help improve the ability of these historic villages to attract residents and businesses, enhance their livability and unique sense of place and expand access to employment, housing, education and other public services. These villages would also promote healthy, safe and walkable centers for people of all ages and incomes and reduce the combined costs of housing and transportation.

#### 6.5 Economic Development Policies and Actions

Economic Development Policy: The Town should continue to support a mix of economic activities, and should seek to attract new businesses which provide rewarding jobs and good wages while not adversely impacting the quality of the natural environment.

Economic Development Actions:

1. The Town should apply for designation for both Arlington and East Arlington Villages.
2. Public sector planning and investments should promote growth in village areas and discourage development that would degrade the Town's rural character, particularly along principal approaches to the town, or which would result in the loss or fragmentation of important forest lands.
3. For East Arlington, the Town should investigate the possibility of a small sewage treatment plant to serve the area in order to promote redevelopment of the commercial area.

4. Events that encourage recognition and use of the Villages could be held throughout the year. These events could draw both local people and tourists to the village centers. The Arlington Fire Department is active in community events, and the building provides space for community functions when needed. Events could include tours of historic buildings, athletic events and events which draw upon and highlight the cultural assets of the community.
5. The Town should promote the Green Mountain National Forest as a recreational attraction, particularly those forest lands within the town itself.
6. Increased public access to the Batten Kill should be provided and interpretation of resources and unique ecological values of that river provided.
7. Broadband and cellular communications should be expanded to cover the entire Town. High speed access to the internet is critical to many businesses and residents as well as for school and library programs. Training in the use of broadband technologies should be made available to the public to increase utilization.
8. Many areas of Arlington and East Arlington have sidewalks for pedestrians, but there are some gaps, such access to the Town Park. The two villages are within easy walking distance of one another. The Town should provide for greater pedestrian access so that visitors are encouraged to maximize the amount of time they spend in the community.
9. The Town should encourage uses that will attract visitors including establishments offering entertainment and light meals as well as more expensive restaurants. Some possibilities include a “brew pub,” a café, and establishments that attract people in 25-44 age range. Shops need to be varied as well so that visitors have a range of experiences and opportunities within the two commercial areas.
10. Arlington is midway between Bennington and Manchester and in close proximity to both Cambridge and Salem in New York. Cooperative actions with area chambers of commerce to market the community should be explored to promote local businesses and employment.
11. The Town should foster the use of local forest and agricultural products. While these represent a small part of the labor force, they involve large land areas. Continued use and conservation of agricultural and forest resources should be encouraged.
12. Existing uses such as the American Legion should be promoted as community resources for events.
13. Small farms that can provide food for residents and local restaurants should be supported.

14. To accomplish these actions over the next five years, the Town should consider hiring a part-time economic development coordinator to develop and implement a more specific economic development plan.

## **VII. NATURAL RESOURCES AND FLOOD RESILIENCE**

One of Arlington's greatest assets is its rich and varied natural resource base. The mountains and forests of the Taconic Range, the Batten Kill and its tributaries, valleys, agricultural land, clean air and water, and abundant wildlife all contribute to the Town's appeal. These resources provide recreational opportunities, serve aesthetic values, protect environmental quality and public health, including providing for flood resiliency, and support a host of economic opportunities. This section will identify and briefly describe these resources, and outline strategies to protect their positive values.

### **7.1 Surface Water Resources**

Arlington drains toward the Hudson River, and most of the town drains to the Batten Kill. Small portions in the southwestern part of town drain to Owl Creek and Little White Creek, both of which drain to the Hoosic River. Map 9 shows rivers and streams surface waters and riparian areas and wetlands:

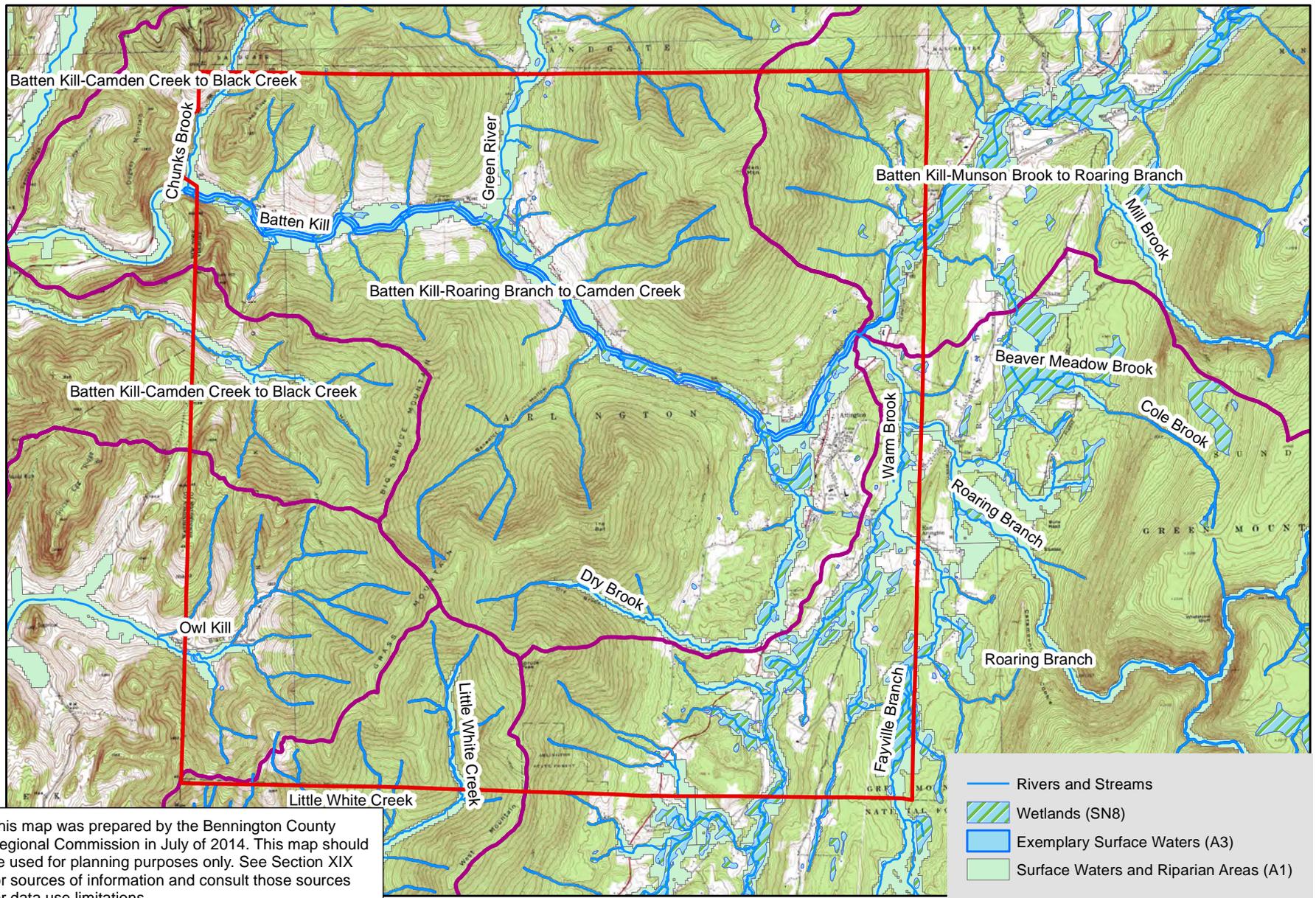
Rivers and streams provide connections between the upland, terrestrial forests and the valley bottoms. Except for the Owl Kill and Little White Creek, the small tributaries from these uplands flow into the Batten Kill.

The Batten Kill, a trout stream of state and national significance, is one of the most prominent and important natural features in the Town. The Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department characterizes the Batten Kill as a "large coldwater stream" and has mapped it as an Exemplary Surface Water, supporting species, such as trout, that require cold water temperatures, high alkalinity and cold baseflow from groundwater. The Batten Kill was designated an outstanding resource water in 1991. Rising in northern Bennington County, the "Kill" bisects the Taconic Range as it flows through the heart of Arlington toward its confluence with the Hudson River in New York State. The river's characteristics in Arlington — a swift current, cool clear water from mountain tributaries, a gravel substrate, and the unspoiled beauty of the surrounding landscape - make it an ideal resource for fishing, swimming, canoeing, "tubing," sightseeing, and other recreational activities. The Green River, Roaring Branch, Fayville Branch, Warm Brook, Dry Brook, and numerous minor streams afford a similar array of opportunities to residents and visitors.

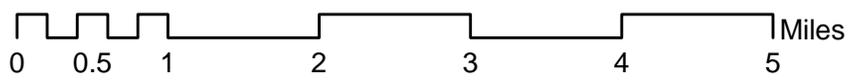
The Batten Kill and its watershed is a regional resource requiring regional cooperation in river planning and management. Continued vigilance is needed in enforcing environmental regulations for new and existing development to protect the quality of this resource. As a regional recreational resource, the problems of potential overuse and conflicts between different users also need to be addressed through regional planning and management.

One major regional issue has been the decline of the wild trout population, which has been attributed to past river channel alterations and encroachments, the

# Map 9. Arlington Surface Water Resources



This map was prepared by the Bennington County Regional Commission in July of 2014. This map should be used for planning purposes only. See Section XIX for sources of information and consult those sources for data use limitations.



reduction in cover due to the loss of forested areas and the removal of woody debris that provides cover. Cover is critical for trout to avoid predation and stresses from flooding events or winter mortality (Cox 2010, 2011). The Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department imposed “catch and release only” rules on the river that will remain in effect through 2017. The local non-profit river group, the Batten Kill Watershed Alliance, has partnered with the state and federal officials to restore habitat for the fishery. The goal is to restore the fishery to a level of productivity that will allow sustainable harvesting. Such a recovery would presumably lead to the return of the seasonal influx of anglers that has been an important revenue source for local businesses.

Restoration has involved adding structures along the stream to provide for cover, primarily by implanting large woody debris in the banks and allowing that to collect materials over time. Thus far, studies (Cox 2011 and annual reports) indicate significant increases in juvenile trout and modest increases in larger (10-19.9”) in areas where cover has been enhanced. The study also indicated that habitat cover along the Batten Kill is well below optimal levels.

Water quality based primarily on macroinvertebrates indicate that water quality is good to excellent, but that impairments from both point and nonpoint sources exist (Nolan 2005, NYSDEC 2004). Many of these occur upstream of Arlington where the Batten Kill goes through more developed areas (Vermont Agency of Natural Resources 2002).

Cooperation among principal users will become increasingly important, as noted in Section XII, Recreation. The Town, in concert with Dorset, Manchester, Sunderland and the New York Towns of Salem and Jackson, must exercise appropriate control over land development near rivers and streams to prevent degradation of recreational and scenic values.

Surface Waters and Riparian Areas are both valley bottoms, containing stream courses and buffers to protect those streams. The continued viability of species that depend on these streams and rivers is directly dependent on the quality of those areas in close proximity, known as riparian areas, as well as the contributing watersheds. Natural vegetation helps in stabilizing banks, moderating temperature fluctuation by providing shading, provision of cover for aquatic species and filtering of sediments and pollutants from water draining from roads and other human uses. Many bird species, such as migrating warblers, mammal species, such as mink and otter, and reptiles, such as wood turtles, use these riparian areas for habitat. They also provide connectivity for these species as they move across the landscape and/or from one stream to another. Finally, they provide an area for the natural meandering of streams, particularly those connected to a floodplain. Streams migrate and meander as the channel shifts with the removal of material from erosion and the consequent deposition of material elsewhere. These areas were mapped as valley bottoms and flood plains using a GIS model and include a 100 foot buffer for higher order streams and 50 foot buffer for lower order streams.

Nearly the entire length of the Batten Kill has been altered by bank armoring, culverts and bridges, encroachment into buffers and erosion (Field 2007). The most significant changes have resulted from straightening that likely occurred 80 years or more ago. Straightened sections create higher velocities and scouring of the streambed. Bridge and culvert constrictions can have similar effects. The

excessive energy and sediment movement that result destabilize the banks removing cover needed by trout and other organisms (Field 207). Erosion rather than inundation has been the primary cause of property damage in previous storms such as Tropical Storm Irene and increased velocity exacerbates erosion. There is a clear need for areas where the Batten Kill can meander to dissipate energy and for flood waters to be retained and allowed to drain.

There are numerous wetlands in Arlington, but the largest are along the Batten Kill and in particular along both the main stem of the Batten Kill and along Warm Brook (Map 9). Wetland mapping is based on both the National Wetland Inventory and mapping by the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources. However, other data suggests more extensive wetlands, again primarily along the rivers. Wetlands are aquatic systems transitional between uplands and lakes and river. They are permanently or periodically flooded, dominated by hydrophytic vegetation that is adapted those conditions and having soils with physical and chemical characteristics of low or no oxygen conditions created by saturation with water. They provide important ecosystem services including flood storage, groundwater discharge and recharge, nutrient absorption and nutrient recycling as well as habitat for numerous flora and fauna.

## 7.2 Flood Hazard Zones and River Corridors

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) developed the first flood hazard map for Arlington in 1974. These maps identified properties that could be threatened by flooding. The National Flood Insurance Program provides insurance to those property owners within flood hazard zones to protect owners from financial loss as private insurers will not provide such coverage. Arlington joined the National Flood Insurance Program in 1975. The current map was adopted on July 17, 1986.

FEMA has developed revised flood hazard maps based on a more accurate measure of topography using LIDAR, a method using lasers to determine elevations within a few centimeters. FEMA has produced new flood hazard zone maps that are currently under review (Vermont ANR undated). The Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, the Bennington County Regional Commission and the Bennington County Conservation District have cooperatively completed a series of studies of the Batten Kill resulting in mapping of river corridors, formally known as Fluvial Erosion Hazard (FEH) Areas. Map 10 shows the following flood hazard zones and the FEH areas:

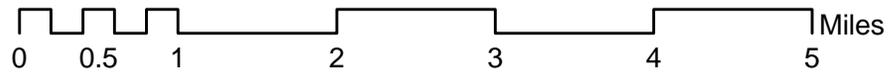
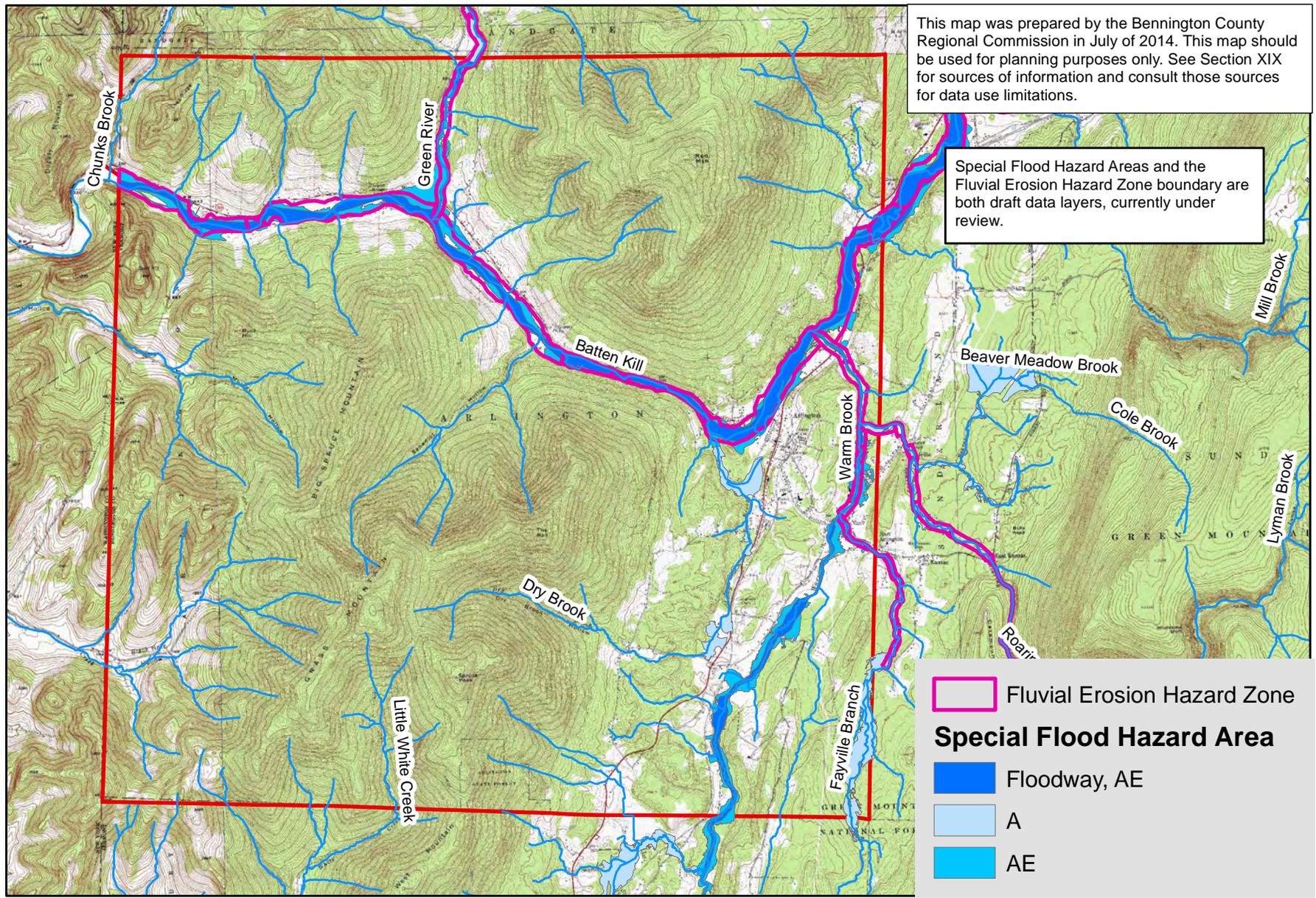
A: areas subject on inundation by a one percent annual chance event. This is also known as the 100-year flood zone as the area could potentially flood once in 100 years or as the “base flood.”

AE: areas as with A but where detailed methods have been used to create base flood elevations, which is used in determining insurance premiums

Floodway: the channel of a river or other watercourse and the adjacent land areas that must be reserved to discharge the base flood without cumulatively increasing the water surface elevation more than the designated height.

The Floodway and Zones A and AE constitute the Special Flood Hazard Area.

# Map 10. Arlington Flood Hazard Zones and River Corridors



500 Year Floodplain: areas subject to flooding on a 500 year or 0.2% annually. These are for information purposes and insurance is not mandatory under the NFIP program.

River Corridors: this is the area, also known as the Fluvial Erosion Hazard or FEH zone, is where vertical and horizontal adjustments of the stream as it meanders to disperse energy and sediment would occur to maintain stable slope and dimensions over time. Stability is determined at the watershed scale as the amount of water, sediments and woody debris moving in and through the stream cause the stream to alter course to adjust to these materials. These areas are subject to fluvial erosion hazards, from gradual stream bank erosion to catastrophic channel enlargement, bank failure, and change in course, due to naturally occurring stream channel adjustments, have been identified and mapped by Shannon Pytlik of Vermont ANR (personal communication), based on studies completed under contract to the Bennington County Conservation District and the Bennington County Regional Commission (Field 2005; South Mountain Research and Consulting 2009) for the Batten Kill and the Roaring Branch (Map 10) in accordance with accepted state fluvial geomorphic assessment and mapping protocols.

The Floodway, Zones A, and AE address hazards from flooding due to inundations. However, most flood damage in Vermont streams is the result of erosion. Development in the FEH zone will not be sustainable over the long term as the river meanders and will decrease the functions of the corridor for protection of water quality and movement and habitat of organisms.

Table 5 below shows the number of structures by type from E911 data that are in the special flood hazard zone or outside of that zone but within a river corridor. E911 data represent a GIS layer showing the location of structures, including single family homes, commercial businesses, government buildings and other types and is updated by the Enhanced 9-1-1 Board in Montpelier, VT. These numbers are really estimates as the E911 points are not always located exactly where structures are. For the most part, the two boundaries correspond, but there are areas where the river corridor goes beyond the special flood hazard zone, thereby affecting more properties. Several of those structures in the river corridor are also in the 500-year flood zone.

Type	SFHA and Corridor	River Corridor Only
Single family	63	27
Multi-family	1	0
Mobile home	4	4
Commercial	6	3
Lodging	0	3
Fire station	0	1
Other	6	3

Table 6 provides information from the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources on the number of insured properties. As of March of 2011, 18% of properties in the SFHA were insured.

Policies in Force (3/31/2011) 1	18
Property Insured	\$3,078,200
Policies in Zone A or AE	13
Percent structures in SFHA also insured (3/31/2011)	18%
Structures within river corridors (FEH)	

There are properties in either or both the special flood hazard zone or the river corridor that are vulnerable to flooding or to erosion or both and that are not currently protected through the National Flood Insurance Program. Properties that have flood insurance that are damaged due to erosion may or may not be able to collect on a policy depending on whether or not the erosion can be attributed to a flood event.

### 7.3 Surface Water and Flood Resiliency Policies and Actions

Surface Waters Policy: The ecological and hydrological integrity of rivers, streams and wetlands should be maintained to provide key ecosystem services such as water purification, pollutant abatement, nutrient dispersal and cycling and flood water retention. Rivers, streams and wetlands should also be protected to allow for continued recreational use and to provide valuable scenic resources. Development within identified special flood hazard, fluvial erosion and river corridor protection areas should be avoided.

#### Surface Waters Actions:

1. The Town and other partner organizations including the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, the Batten Kill Alliance, the Bennington County Conservation District and others should work together to maintain and enhance the ecological integrity of the Batten Kill and tributaries.
2. An undisturbed buffer of natural vegetation should be established between rivers, streams and other water bodies to reduce nutrient input and attenuate overland flow. This buffer should be at least 50 feet for streams with minimal potential for lateral or vertical adjustment or 100 feet for streams with significant potential for such adjustment (see Vermont ANR 2005). For wetlands, the buffer should be 100 feet for Class I wetlands and 50 feet for Class II wetlands as determined by Vermont ANR.
3. Developments or activities that would adversely affect the quality of the Town's surface waters shall be prohibited.

Flood Resiliency Policy: To protect the public health, safety and welfare, new development should be avoided in identified flood hazard, fluvial erosion hazard and river corridor protection areas.

Flood Resiliency Actions:

1. The Town has adopted a Flood Hazard Bylaw to regulate development in flood hazard areas. These Bylaws permit residential and non-residential structures in the Special Flood Hazard Area provided a conditional use permit is granted by the Zoning Board of Adjustment. Encroachments that are above grade and less than one foot above the base elevation are prohibited in the floodway unless it can be shown there will be no increase in flood levels during the base flood.

These regulations are designed to protect property and the health and safety of the population against the hazards of flood water inundation, and to protect the community against the costs which may be incurred when unsuitable development occurs in areas prone to flooding. Development in flood hazard areas must be carefully controlled in accordance with the Town's flood hazard regulations.

2. The Planning Commission and the Zoning Board of Adjustment should assure that any new development in either Special Flood Hazard Areas or the Fluvial Erosion Hazard Area is avoided where possible. Any new development that does occur be designed and sited so as to avoid any increase in flooding or erosion.

3. The Town should acquire lands or easements or work with conservation organizations to acquire lands or easements to assure protection of buffers and fluvial erosion hazard zones on the small first, second and third order tributaries.

4. As proposed in the completed river corridor assessments and plans (Field 2005, 2007 references), buffer planting should be implemented from the Arlington town line on the west to the Sunderland town line on the east on the main branch of the Batten Kill. The Town should work with the Batten Kill Alliance, the Bennington County Conservation District and interested landowners to implement buffer planting.

5. As proposed in the completed river corridor assessments and plans (Field, 2005, 2007), buffer planting and corridor protection is needed along both Warm Brook and the Green River where bank armoring, limited natural buffers and other forms of encroachment have occurred. Upgrading culverts following a hydraulic study to determine the necessary size, providing for more lateral adjustment, and removing berms are needed in several segments of these tributaries.

6. Where buffer planting is needed, protect the riparian areas (Map 9) through land acquisition or acquisition of easements to provide flood storage and to allow for the river to adjust laterally within the fluvial erosion hazard area.

7. Arlington has adopted the most recent Town Road and Bridge Standards from the current 2014-2016 VTrans Orange Book: Handbook for Local Officials and should adopt updates as they are developed. Bridge and culvert repairs and replacements should be designed following hydraulic studies to avoid constrictions that would accelerate flow and to allow for passage by aquatic organisms.

8. The Town should work with the Vermont Agency of Transportation to replace the Route 313 bridge to increase the height and length so as to not impede flow, particularly during flooding events such as Tropical Storm Irene.

9. The Town should encourage farm and forest owners along the river as well in upland forested areas to enroll in the Current Use Value program so as to provide for planted buffers and to maintain the forested upland watershed.

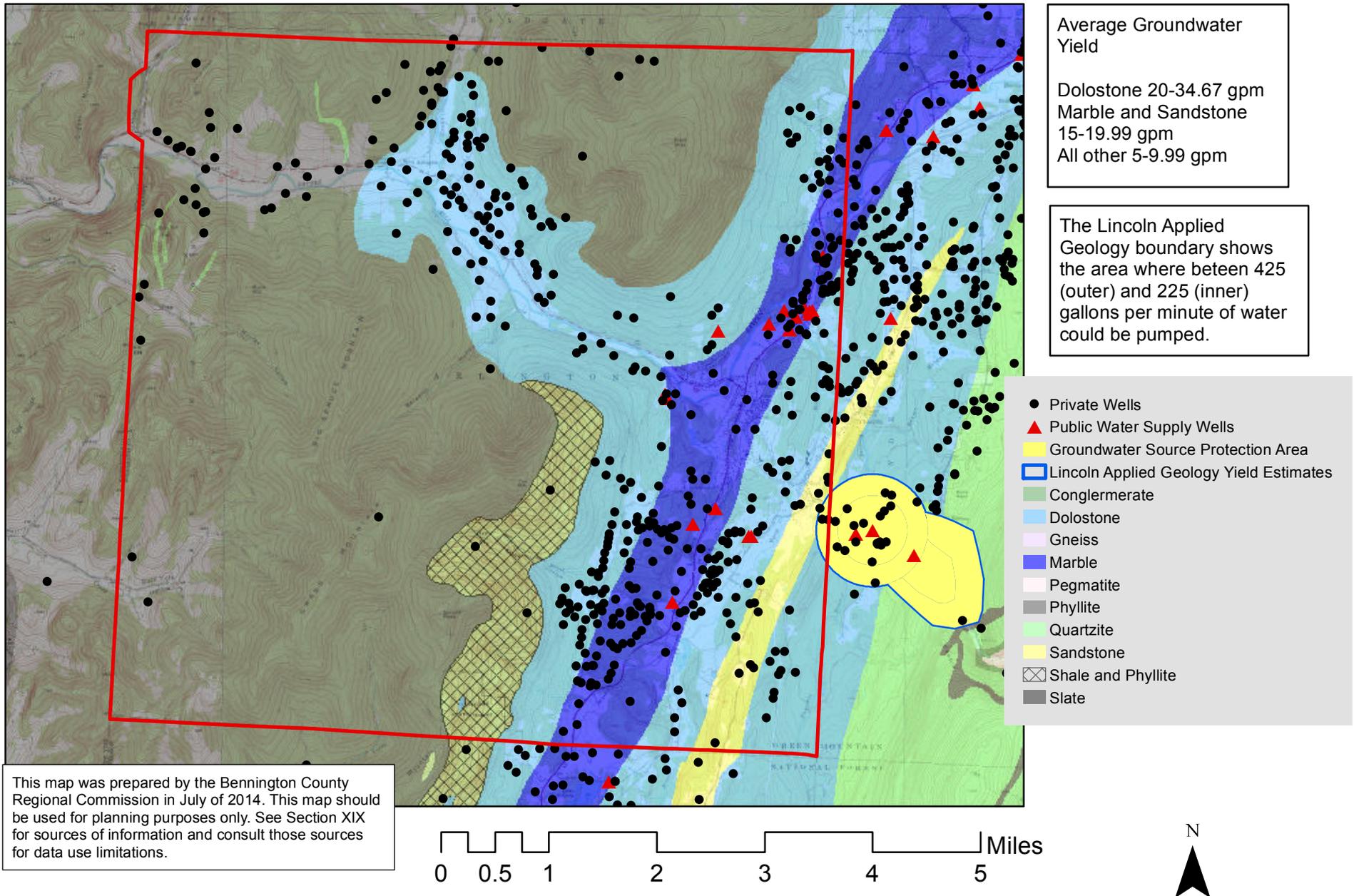
10. Forested lands should be protected to assure that precipitation can be absorbed by forest soils and litter and the peak flow attenuated. Acquisition of land or easements or Current Use assessment should be used to protect these areas, especially along the tributaries.
11. The Town should collaborate other municipalities, the Bennington County Regional Commission, and the States of Vermont and New York in planning for the use and protection of regional water resources such as the Batten Kill. This could involve an intermunicipal agreement between these towns and communities in New York State for the long-term protection of the Batten Kill for both resources and to address flood hazards.
12. The Town and partner organizations should continue to monitor use of the Batten Kill and work with other interested groups to implement actions that will ensure ecological integrity and quality of the river environment and of the aesthetic, recreational and cultural resources of the Batten Kill watershed.
13. The Town should provide outreach to owners within the flood zones to support flood proofing or buy-outs of structures subject to repeated flooding and eligible for funding under the FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program.
14. The Town should participate in the Community Rating System program by implementing projects that would ultimately lead to rate reductions in flood insurance premiums for residents and businesses.
15. The Town should encourage owners in flood hazard zones to secure propane tanks, fire wood, boats and other items that could float away in a flood, thereby creating hazards for those downstream.
16. The Town should adopt a Local Emergency Operations Plan that provides for emergency response and flood preparedness.
17. The Town should maintain an updated hazard mitigation plan that fulfills FEMA requirements.

#### 7.4 Ground Water Resources

The water supply system for Arlington consists of private wells, several public systems, also from well, and a private water company that draws well water. A sufficient supply of clean groundwater is crucial to existing homes and businesses in Arlington, and to any future development in the Town. The Villages of Arlington, East Arlington, and the Chiselsville area of Sunderland are served by the Arlington Water Company

Map 9 shows the locations of wells and bedrock formations with potential yields indicated. Most development is in the valleys and these coincide with formations with higher yields than the uplands. Source protection areas were mapped by the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources and are primarily dependent on topography. In 1989 Lincoln Applied Geology provided a report recommending expansion of the area needed to protect the Arlington Water Company well head (Map 11). Identification and protection of the recharge areas for the Town's public water supplies are of paramount importance. These areas supply the water for a substantial portion of the Town's population and businesses, and will be relied upon for new growth that will occur in and around existing villages. Cooperative planning with the Town of Sunderland and the Arlington Water Company will be necessary to ensure the protection of these irreplaceable resources. There are also

# Map 11. Arlington Groundwater Resources



wells serving Mack Molding and Quadra Tek that have source protection areas. The river valleys and lowlands in Arlington have a relatively high potential for supplying groundwater. New development may occur in these areas, and will rely on these groundwater resources. Strict enforcement of local and State health ordinances, protection of wetlands, and prevention of hazardous waste contamination in these areas will be necessary to ensure a continued supply of clean groundwater for the Town well into the future.

## 7.5 Ground Water Policies and Actions

Ground Water Policy: Aquifers and groundwater recharge areas must be protected from activities or development that would adversely affect the quantity or quality of available groundwater.

### Ground Water Actions:

1. Developments or activities that would adversely affect the quality of the Town's groundwater shall be prohibited.
2. Both the Town land use and health regulations and the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources regulations should be strictly enforced to protect water supplies.
3. The Town bylaws and health regulations, and the regulations of the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources must be strictly enforced to protect individual and public water supplies.
4. The Town should identify, map, and describe important groundwater resource areas including documenting the extent that each area contributes to groundwater supplies, water and environmental quality, public health, recreational opportunities, fish/wildlife habitat, and aesthetic values.
5. Identify situations that could result in reduced resource values or access, and initiate appropriate protection measures (i.e. regulatory action, acquisition of land or easements, pollution abatement, and so on)
6. Prepare amendments to the zoning bylaw for protection of water resources. Specific amendments should include: surface and groundwater protection regulations (including setback requirements), well head protection area regulations, and wetland protection regulations.
7. Actively participate in local and state regulatory proceedings that could potentially impact important water resources.

## 7.6 Air Quality

The quality of the air in Arlington is generally excellent, and the Town should endeavor to ensure that it remains clear and clean. According to the US EPA, no parts of Vermont have been designated as failing to achieve air quality standards under the Clean Air Act, though Rensselaer County in New York and Berkshire County in Massachusetts have both failed to achieve ozone standards at certain times (US EPA 2013). The Air Quality and Climate Division of the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources oversees compliance and monitors air quality in Vermont.

Local threats to air quality may come from illegal burning of trash, wood burning stoves and furnaces, commercial and industrial uses, and vehicles. Air pollutants cross boundaries, and particulates, ozone, acidic deposition and others can come from long distances. Since most development is within the valley in Arlington, inversions may trap pollutants.

### 7.7 Air Quality Policies and Actions

Air Quality Policy: Both state and federal air quality standards should be achieved at all times.

#### Air Quality Actions:

1. Developments or activities that would adversely affect the Town air quality shall not be permitted.
2. The Town supports compliance with the state prohibition on the open burning of trash.
3. Encourage compliance with all state and federal regulations regarding wood-burning stoves and furnaces.

### 7.8 Agricultural Lands

Prime farmland soils have the best physical and chemical characteristics for agricultural production (USDA 2006) and are defined using NRCS criteria for soil temperature, moisture and slope. Soils of Statewide importance are designated by the Vermont Department of Agriculture and Markets and have limitations for slope, erosion, moisture, flooding and root depth. Map 12 shows that most agricultural soils are located along the Batten Kill valley in West Arlington and in the southeastern corner of the Town a substantial percentage of the valley lands were farmed at one time, and many of the marginally productive upland areas were used to pasture sheep, cattle, and other livestock.

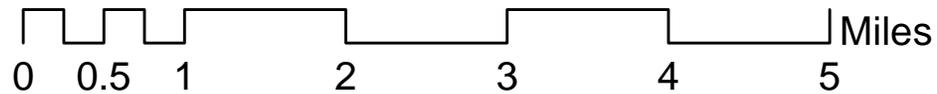
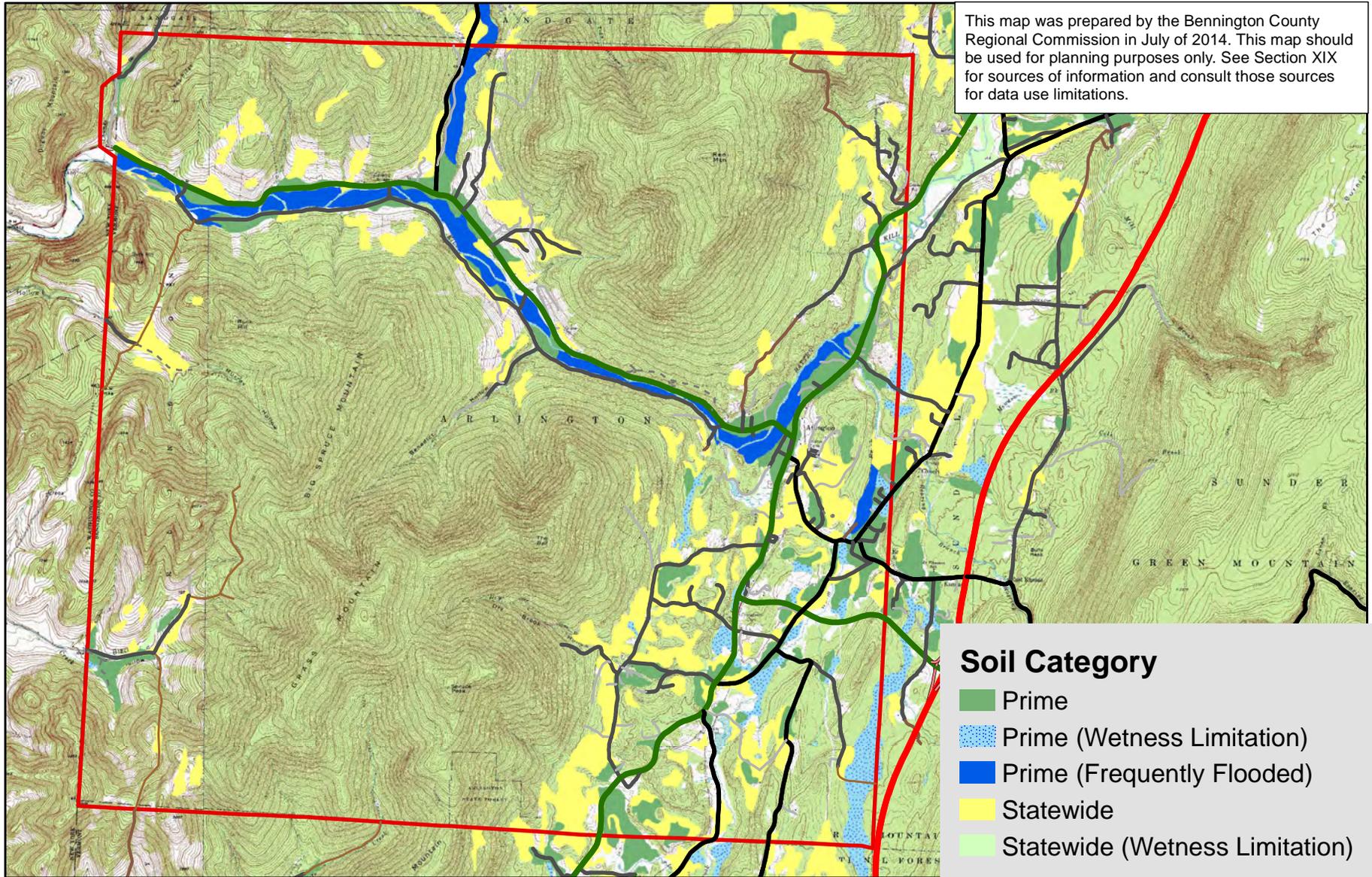
### 7.9 Agricultural Lands Policies and Actions:

Agricultural Land Policy: Agricultural lands and soils should be conserved to allow for continuation of agricultural uses and to protect surface and ground water resources.

#### Agricultural Land Actions:

1. Farms should be identified and a database of their location and products developed.
2. Farmers should be encouraged to use best management practices for managing soils, pesticides, fertilizers and nutrients to protect air and water quality.
3. Small farms that can provide food for residents and local restaurants should be supported.
4. The Town should work with the Vermont Land Trust and other conservation organizations to prioritize and protect lands with agricultural soils,

# Map 12. Arlington Agricultural Soils



- particularly those along the Batten Kill and tributaries and adjacent to wetlands.
5. Landowners should be encouraged to participate in Vermont's Use Value Program which levies taxes based on the property's use for agricultural rather than development purposes.
  6. Landowners should be encouraged to maintain open fields and meadows
  7. The Planning Commission should encourage creative- development techniques such as transferable development rights and cluster subdivision to preserve agricultural land as part of the land development process. Both of these techniques allow developers to build greater densities in appropriate areas provided that important open lands are preserved.
  7. Developments on agricultural lands shall be planned so as to conserve, to the extent possible, the viability, or potential viability, of the site for agricultural use. Development shall be planned so as not to significantly diminish the values afforded by woodlands on or near the site.
  8. The Town should carefully assess public investments in roads and other infrastructure to ensure that they do not promote the deleterious development of important agricultural areas.

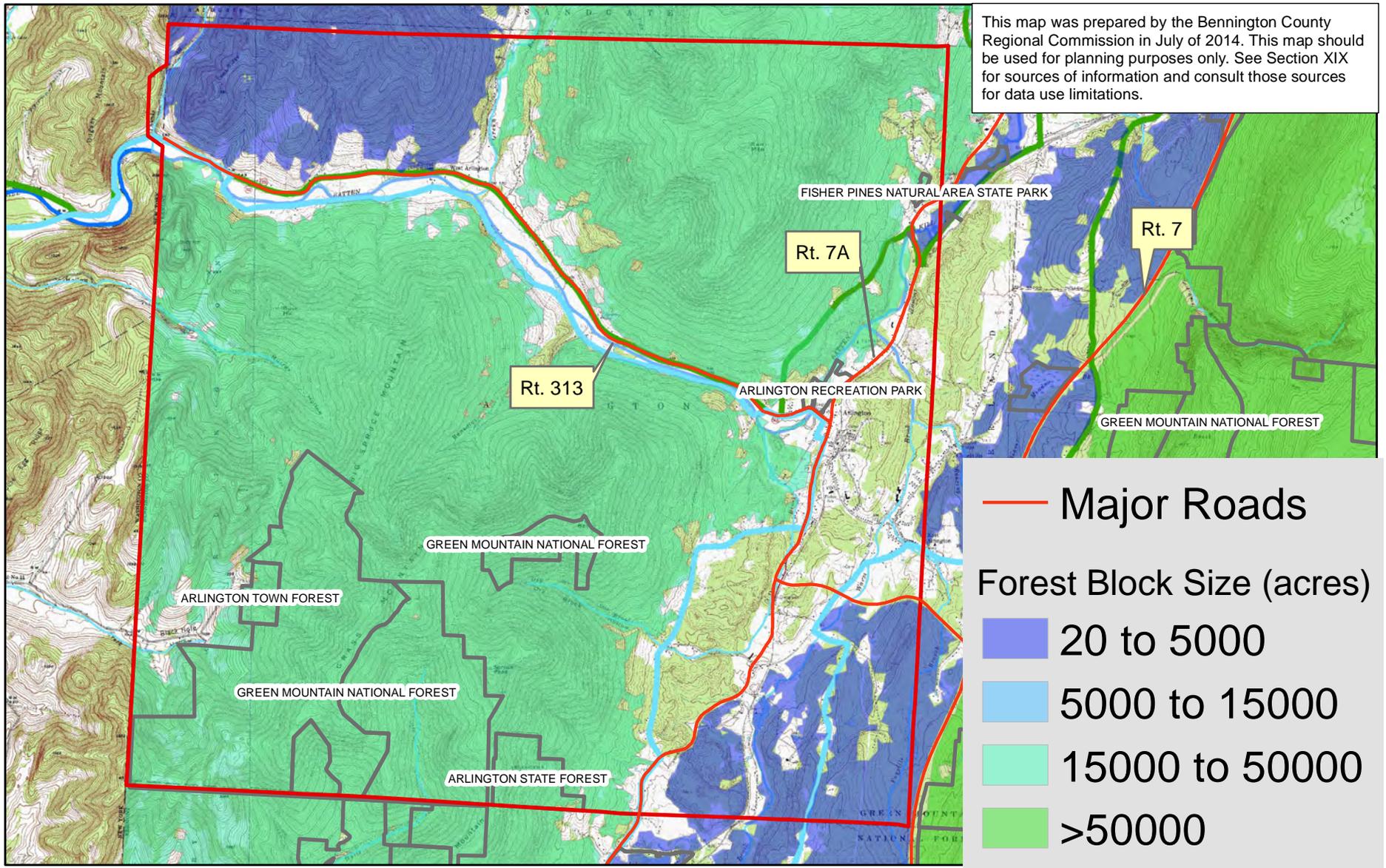
#### 7.10 Forest Lands

Approximately 85% of Arlington is forested (Map 4), particularly in the higher elevations but also throughout the valley. These forests help to prevent soil erosion and flooding, contribute to air and water quality, and provide valuable timber, wildlife, recreational, and aesthetic resources. A number of woodland owners in Town also have active and successful maple sugaring operations. Fortunately, since much of the Town's forest land is located in rugged mountainous areas, relatively little has been lost to development. In fact, with the decline in agricultural land use over the past several decades, the amount of forested land has actually increased. Nonetheless, preservation of this resource, and the public's ability to enjoy its many benefits, is of great importance to the Town. Both the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources (Vermont ANR 2010) and the Bennington County Regional Commission (BCRC 2012) have completed plans for forest conservation. These plans identify the key resources, threats, and strategies to protect forest resources.

The Bennington County Regional Commission worked with Arlington, Glastenbury, Sandgate, Shaftsbury and Sunderland to complete a community wildfire protection plan for those towns. That plan identified actions to help owners protect their properties from wildfire, to work with the Arlington Fire Department and the U.S. Forest Service on fuel reduction projects, and to develop new water sources.

Map 13 shows habitat blocks mapped by the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources and wildlife crossing values. These blocks are primarily forested, but may include wetlands and other natural community types. Many species such as Neotropical migrating warblers, bobcat, and black bear need large, unfragmented habitat. The major barriers to their movement are roads, in particular, Routes 7A, 313 and US 7. In Arlington, Route 313 is the boundary of a forest matrix block identified by

# Map 13. Arlington Forest Resources



the Nature Conservancy as the southern boundary that encompasses Mt. Equinox, a highly diverse forested area due to calcareous bedrock and soils.

### 7.11 Forest Lands Policies and Actions

Forest Policy: Large unfragmented forests should remain intact to protect habitat for species dependent on that habitat, to slow and retain runoff, to protect water and air quality, to provide sustainable forest uses such as timbering and maple sugaring and to provide recreational and scenic resources.

#### Forest Actions:

1. Landowners should be encouraged to participate in Vermont's Use Value Program which levies taxes based on the property's use for agricultural rather than development purposes. .
2. Landowners should be encouraged to develop management plans for their forest lands to allow for forestry operations while minimizing forest fragmentation.
3. The Planning Commission should encourage creative- development techniques such as transferable development rights and cluster subdivision to preserve agricultural land as part of the land development process. Both of these techniques allow developers to build greater densities in appropriate areas provided that important open lands are preserved.
4. Developments on forested lands shall be planned so as to conserve, to the extent possible, the viability, or potential viability, of the site for forest values, including wildlife and rare and unique natural communities.
5. The Town should carefully assess public investments in roads and other infrastructure to ensure that they do not promote the deleterious development of important agricultural areas.
6. Extractive forestry operations shall take all measures necessary to minimize soil erosion, impacts on streams, and changes to the natural appearance of mountain or ridge tops. Operations should be planned and implemented to foster regeneration of native tree, shrub and herbaceous species and to avoid disturbance to the upper organic soil layers.
7. The Planning Commission should periodically review studies on forest resources (Vermont ANR 2010, BCRC 2012) to identify strategies to conserve and appropriately manage forest resources.
8. The Town should work with property owners, the Arlington Fire Department, the U.S. Forest Service and BCRC to implement fuel reduction and water supply enhancements listed in the community wildfire protection plan.

Many of the preservation strategies for agricultural lands are equally applicable to forest lands. Most of the Town's upland forests are presently zoned to permit only forestry, recreation, and other uses that will preserve the resource; this zoning designation is proper and should be maintained. A regional forest land evaluation and site assessment (FLESA) developed by the BCRC provides some useful information that can be used to help planning for Arlington's forest resources.

### 7.12 Earth Resources

The extraction of earth resources is not presently a major economic activity in Arlington. A number of small gravel mining operations exist. The Zoning Bylaw contains special regulations designed to minimize the environmental impacts of earth products removal, and to assure restoration of the site once work is completed.

Earth Resources Policy: The extraction and processing of earth resources and the disposal of wastes must not have an unduly harmful impact upon the environment or surrounding land uses and development. An extremely high level of scrutiny must be exercised over any operation proposing to extract earth resources from a stream bed.

#### Earth Resources Actions:

1. Upon completion of the extracting or processing operation, the site should be restored, as required by the Zoning Bylaw, and left in a condition suited for an approved alternative use or development.
2. Amend the Zoning Bylaw to require the posting of a surety bond by applicants for earth products extraction permits to ensure proper and timely site restoration.

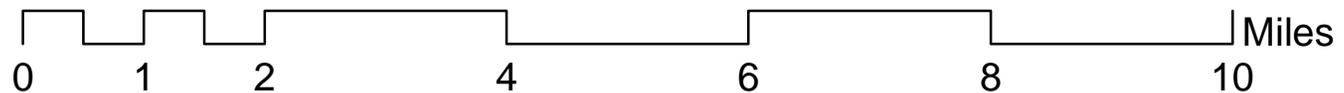
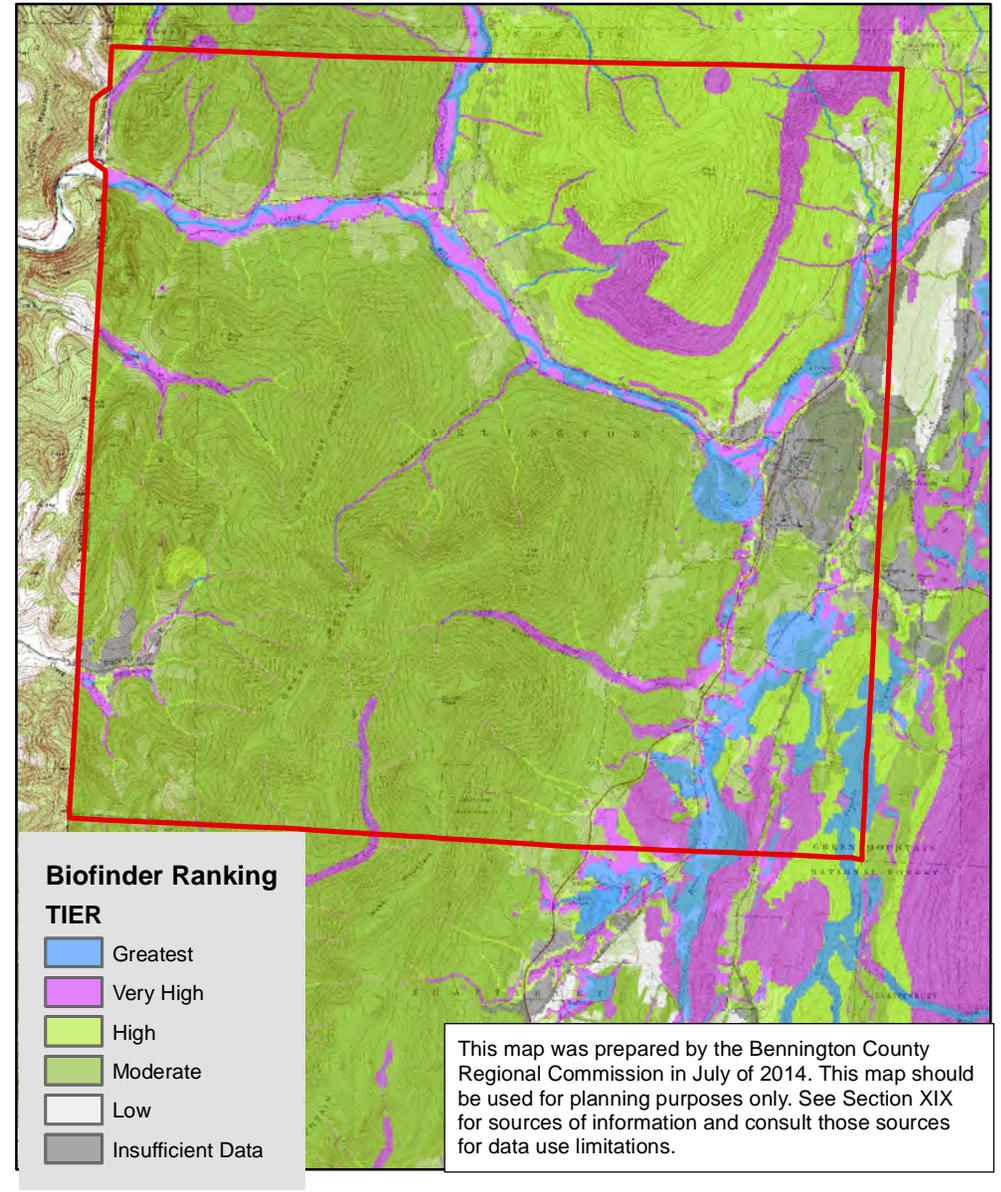
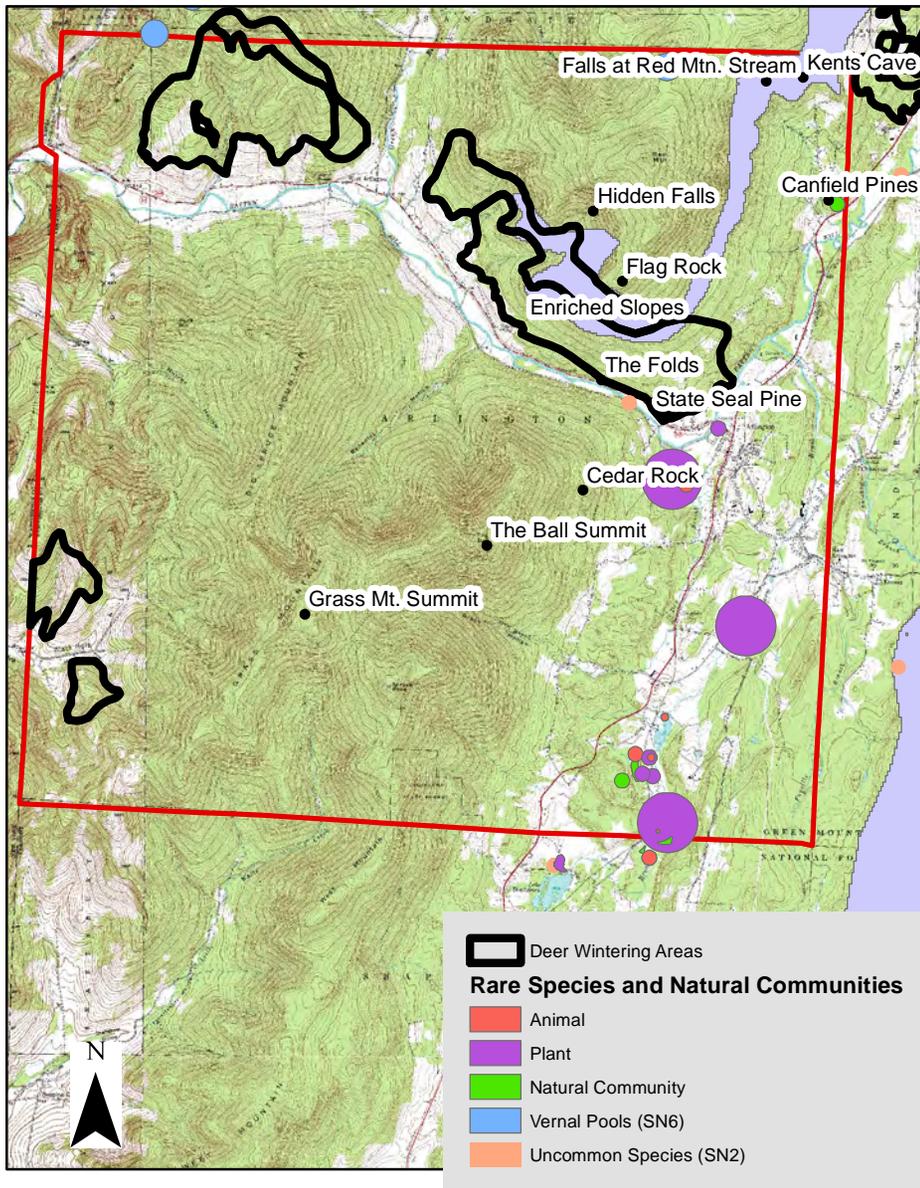
### 7.13 Important Natural Areas

Arlington contains a number of important natural features that warrant special protection. Map 14 shows the various natural features described below. It also shows the “tiers” used by VT ANR to rank areas for biodiversity value. By overlaying natural features with biodiversity value, the more that exist in a given area, the higher the score or tier. In Arlington, the highest tiers occur for streams and wetlands, rare species and natural communities and the enriched slopes north of Route 313.

#### 1. Rare and Uncommon Species and Natural Communities

- a. **Rare Species:** These are plants or animals at the edge of their geographic ranges, that occur in specialized habitats or that have experienced a loss of habitat. There are generally 20 or fewer populations of these species across Vermont.
- b. **Uncommon Species:** Uncommon species are those identified by the Natural Heritage Inventory of the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department as facing moderate risk of extinction or extirpation due to restricted range, relatively few populations or occurrences or having experienced recent declines. There are generally 20 to 80 populations across Vermont.
- c. **Rare Natural Communities:** A natural community is an assemblage of plants and animals, their physical environment and the natural processes that affect and maintain them. Rare natural communities, like rare species, have restricted ranges due to unique habitat requirements (e.g., geological features) or have been reduced due to habitat loss and fragmentation. There are generally less than 20 occurrences in Vermont of these communities.
- d. **Uncommon Natural Communities** generally occur more frequently than rare natural communities and may contain rare species populations.

# Map 14. Arlington Natural Features



- e. **Rare Physical Landscapes:** These are geophysical features that may support rare or unique natural communities and rare species. They may have soil physical or chemical characteristics different from the surrounding area. In Arlington, the “enriched slopes” north of Route 313 are areas underlain by calcareous bedrock.
2. **Natural Areas:** Arlington has several natural areas including:
    - a. **Canfield Pines:** An exceptional stand of old-growth white pine, even-aged with diameters mostly 30-40 inches diameter at breast height, and average heights of 150 feet. The age of the stand has been estimated at 250 years.
    - b. **Kent's Cave:** A solution cave extending westward approximately 230 feet and averaging eight feet in height and width, but varying to larger rooms and narrower passages. Near the western end of the cave a dome chamber extends upward about 65 feet. A stream flows along and beneath the main passage.
    - c. **Falls on Red Mountain Stream:** Several falls ranging to eight feet in height adjacent to rock cliffs located in an interesting mixed oak-hickory stand.
    - d. **Hidden Falls:** A waterfall nearly 40 feet high within a three-sided cliff on an unnamed brook.
    - e. **Folds in rock strata:** Strong, nearly recumbent folds in the Bascom Beldens formation of marble-dolomite-phyllite exposed on the face of a highway cut.
    - f. **Site of the State Seal Pine:** This tree, destroyed in a violent storm on May 9, 1978, was possibly the largest white pine in the county. The tree supposedly inspired the designer of the Vermont State Seal, which shows a large pine tree in the center. A portion of the tree was made into a large table which sits in the Arlington Town Hall as a commemorative.
    - g. **Cedar Rock:** This exposed ledge is a popular destination for day-hikers and offers outstanding views of the Town of Arlington and the Green Mountains to the east.
    - h. **Flag Rock:** A dramatic rock ledge on the south face of Red Mountain.
  3. **Wildlife Habitat:** Deer wintering areas and black bear habitat are two wildlife habitat areas protected under Act 250.
    - a. **Deer Wintering Areas.** These areas are crucial to the survival of deer herds in the region as they provide shelter and browse for deer during winter months.
    - b. **Bear Travel Corridors:** Black Bears are wide ranging animals and use the habitat blocks shown in Maps 13 and 14.

\* The above list represents an inventory of important natural areas in Arlington, but is not necessarily inclusive of all such areas.

7.14 Important Natural Areas Policies and Actions:

Natural Areas Policy: Natural features and areas should be protected so as to maintain the habitat of the rare species and natural communities, including ecological processes, and to maintain the unique areas or physical features of Arlington.

Natural Areas Actions:

1. An activity or development in the vicinity of an important natural area must be carefully planned so that adverse impacts are avoided.
2. Public access to important natural areas should be maintained whenever possible; however, rare plant habitats and other fragile ecological areas need to be protected from human disturbance.

## **VIII. LAND USE**

### **8.1 General Description**

The Vermont Municipal and Regional Planning and Development Act states that a comprehensive plan for a rural town may include “a land use plan consisting of a map and statement of present and prospective land uses indicating those areas proposed for forests, recreation, agricultural, residence, commerce, industry, public and semi-public use, and open spaces reserved for flood plain, wetland protection, or other conservation purposes; setting forth the present and prospective location, amount, intensity, and character of such land uses and the approximate timing or sequence of land development activities in relation to the provision of necessary community facilities and services.’ The Act requires other plans and elements addressing natural resources, facilities, energy and other subjects but the land use plan is of overriding importance. The requirements of the Vermont Municipal and Regional Planning and Development act regarding protection of natural resources, the provision of adequate municipal services, appropriate transportation planning, provision of housing and educational opportunities, economic development and protection of public health, safety and welfare are founded upon land use planning.

The two major factors dictating land use are the characteristics of the land and the necessary infrastructure to serve different land uses. The uses appropriate for a site or are based on the opportunities and constraints presented by features such as slope, depth to bedrock, and other characteristics that may restrict construction of certain buildings, especially residences, requiring on- site wastewater disposal systems. Different types of land use are dependent on transportation systems, utilities such as water and sewer and other infrastructure needed to serve them. Finally, government services such as educational facilities, fire protection and others need to be adequate to serve the amount and type of development. .

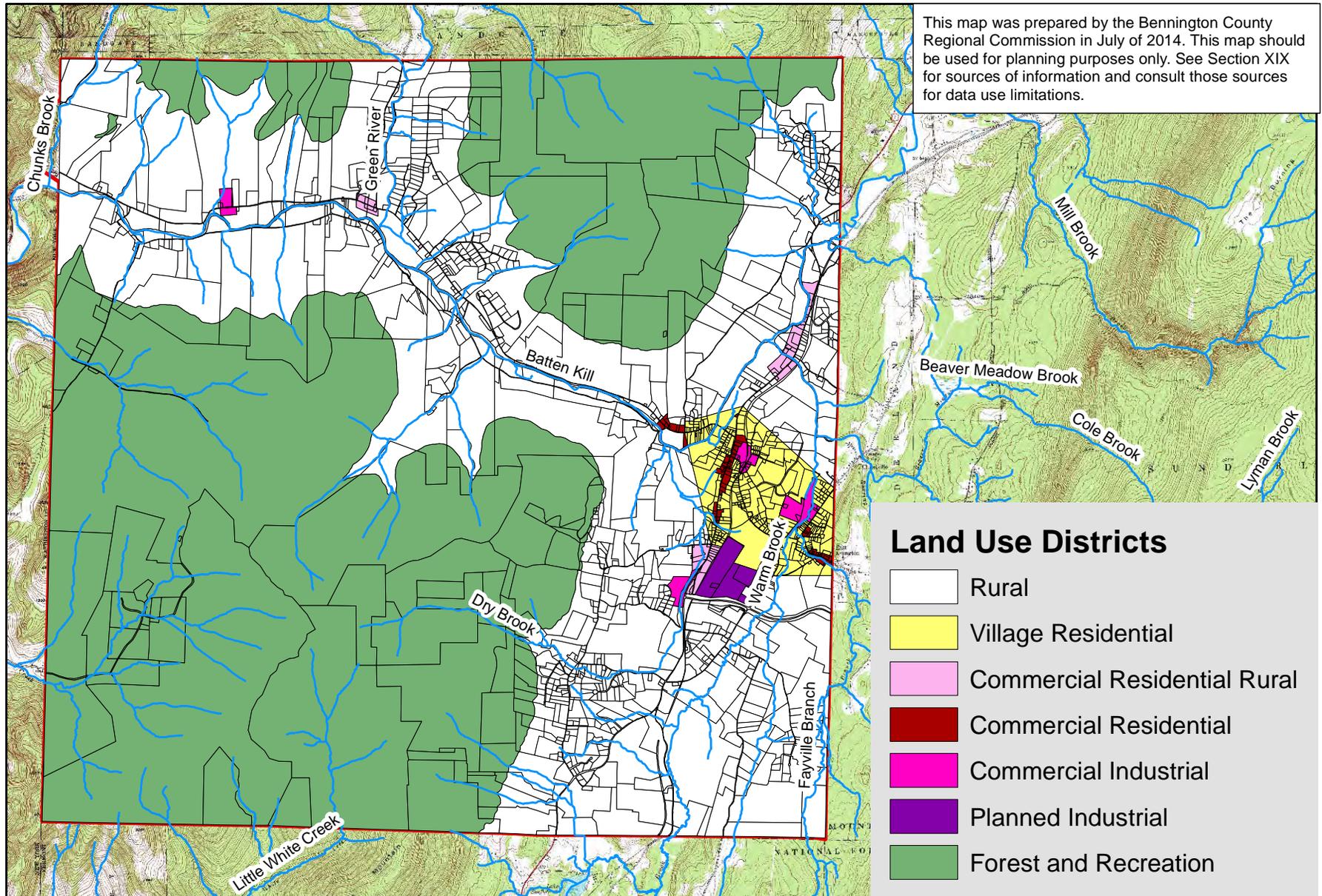
### **8.2 Land Use Regulations**

The intensity of development is influenced by topography and other physical limitations. Arlington’s land use planning has been fairly conventional to date. The Town is currently divided into seven zoning districts (Maps 15 and 16) with the zoning bylaws providing the purpose for and the permitted and conditionally permitted uses in each district. The districts are Village Residential, Commercial Industrial, Commercial-Residential, Commercial-Residential-Rural, Planned Industrial, Rural, and Forest and Recreation.

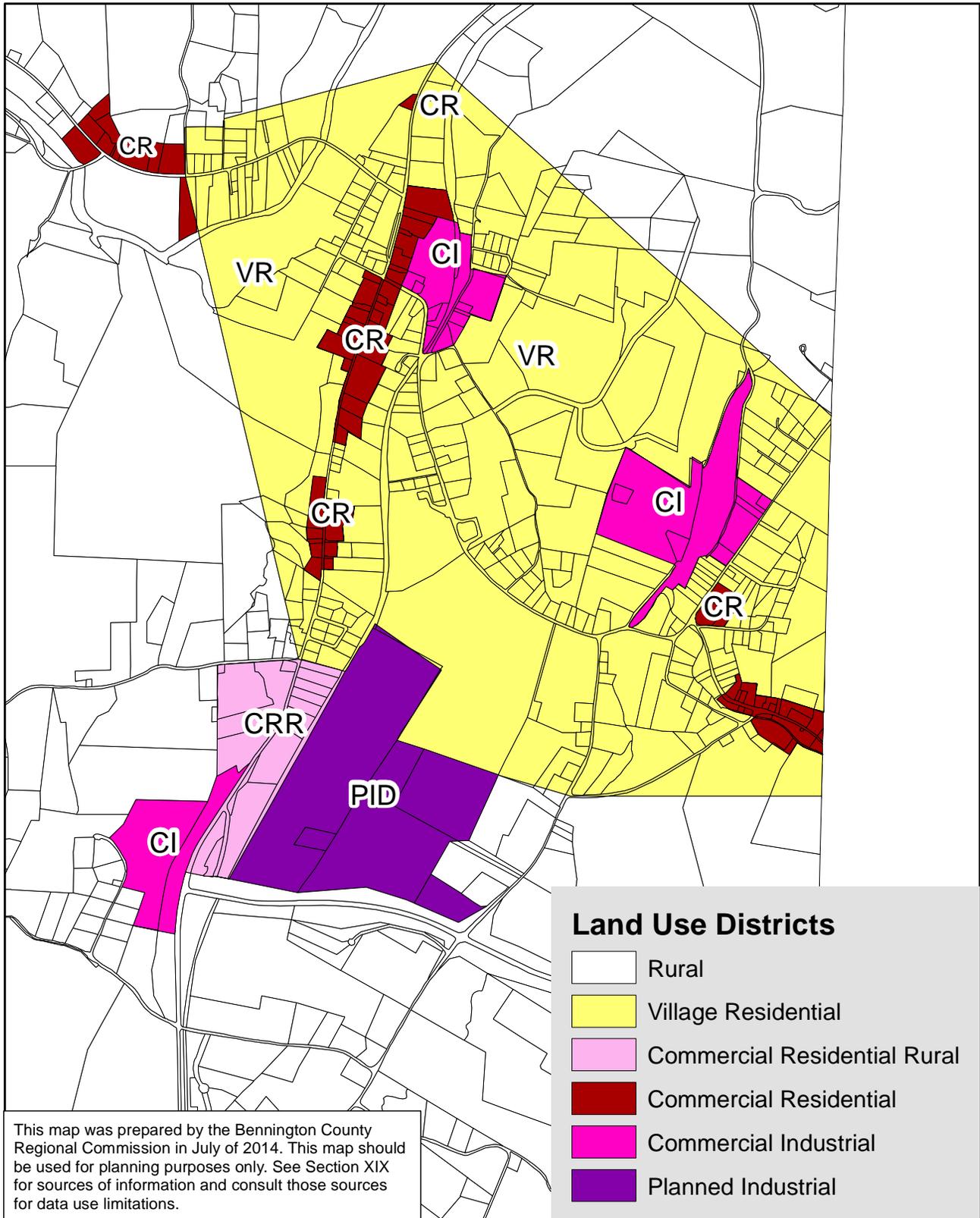
The Village Residential (VR) District occupying most of the Urban Compact on the land use map encompasses what is commonly called Arlington Village and East Arlington Village. The stated purpose is to provide for compact residential development. The permitted and conditional uses in the Village District do promote compact residential development by permitting a two unit per acre density level and allowing an even greater density for multi-family housing.

A number of areas of varying size within the Village District, and just outside the district along Route 7A, are zoned for commercial and industrial, as well as residential, uses (Map 16). These “CI,” “CR,” and “CRR” districts are intended to promote sound economic development and to provide convenient shopping and service areas for residents and visitors. The Commercial-Industrial (CI) Districts include the areas around the original Mack Molding facility and Miles Lumber,

# Map 15. Arlington Land Use Plan



# Map 16. Arlington Land and Zoning Urban Compact and Environs



0 0.125 0.25 0.5 0.75 1 Miles



HBH Prestain, and the site of the former Wilcox Sawmill. The Commercial-Residential (CR) Districts are found in the historical “center of Town” along Route 7A from approximately the Post Office to the Arlington Inn and include a variety of established commercial uses. Many of the buildings in this area are historic structures, making the architectural performance standards which apply to new commercial uses particularly important. Commercial-Residential-Rural Districts allow the same uses as the CR Districts, but require a larger minimum lot size because they are located outside of the Village area. These districts recognize the existing commercial development along Route 7A, and also provide a discrete area for limited commercial uses along Route 313 in West Arlington to serve residents of that area.

The Rural District (R) is extensive, taking in virtually all of the valley floor area outside of the Village District at elevations below 1200'. A broad expanse on either side of Route 7A from the Shaftsbury line to the southwest corner of Manchester is in the district as well as the Batten Kill and Green River Valleys in West Arlington. Its purpose is to ensure the preservation of the natural rural and scenic qualities of areas which are planned to be predominantly residential and agricultural in character. The permitted uses reflect this. This district has experienced substantial growth in the past and will continue to see considerable growth in the future. Regulatory action which serves to improve the planning for this district include clustering incentives for new residential developments in areas where open space protection is deemed important and flood hazard regulations that govern projects in this sensitive area. The Planning Commission now strongly recommends clustered development. The maximum density in conventional subdivisions has been maintained at one acre per lot to avoid legislating sprawl and the consumption of suitable land in large lots. Where suitable, cluster development may allow greater density to slow the conversion of agricultural and woodland to building lots. Subdivision regulations which encourage the use of residential clustering are relied upon to protect significant natural, scenic, and environmentally sensitive areas. A non-regulatory tool that can be used, and should be encouraged, for open land preservation is the acquisition of development rights by land trusts.

The Forest and Recreation District (F) located at elevations in excess of 1200 feet and in the two valley areas of Murray Hollow and Black Hole Hollow, is intended to protect the Town's forest resources and watersheds. The purpose also implies that little or no permanent development should occur because of the difficulty of public access and the provision of facilities and services. The uses are confined entirely to forest industry and recreational endeavors. The district is the largest in area in Arlington, and there are very few year-round residences in the district.

The Planned Industrial District (PI) is located north of Route 313 between the railway and Warm Brook Road. It provides a suitable location for Mack Molding's world headquarters, expanding the local tax and employment bases while maintaining the Town's rural character. Avoidance of air, water, and noise pollution is stressed to reduce impact on the surrounding residential uses.

### 8.3 Future Growth in Arlington

The preponderance of the mountain lands and the fairly extensive flood hazard areas along the Batten Kill and its tributaries compress conventional development into a relatively small area in relation to the Town's overall size. Something less than a fourth of the Town's acreage is available for future growth and herein lies a problem for Arlington's residents. Residents and non-resident property owners

have expressed the opinion that Arlington should strive to retain its present character as a small New England community centered on a village core (the Village District) surrounded by low density housing, farming, and open space. Moreover, the present mix of local business and industry, tourist activity, and recreational pleasures should be maintained. Future development will be market driven. There has been a tendency in recent years to develop at higher elevations where steep slopes limit safe access for municipal services and the construction may affect water quality at lower levels.

If a planning build-out were drawn for the area, that is, if the full extent of development were shown, the pictorial result would hardly be the community its residents are trying to preserve. Conceivably such development could occur under existing land use regulations. It is, therefore, the policy of the Town of Arlington to be guided by the following principles with respect to the land and its use and development upon it within the municipality.

#### 8.4 Land Use Policy

Land Use Policy: The Town should maintain and enforce the Town's land use regulations which are intended to:

- (1) support the concept of a village center with rural surroundings,
- (2) reflect the natural characteristics of the land and its suitability for use and development,
- (3) provide for the availability of goods and services and employment opportunities for residents,
- (4) satisfy housing needs at all levels,
- (5) provide recreational opportunities in parks and playgrounds, and in fields, forests, and streams,
- (6) provide for the safe and economical provision of public services and the maintenance of a transportation system,
- (7) preserve natural areas in sufficient quantity and quality to be self-sustaining ecosystems, and
- (8) support farming and forestry and buffer them against conflicts with residential development.
  - a) New residential development should reflect the objectives of this plan, the purpose of the zoning district in which it is located, and the standards set forth in the municipal subdivision regulations.
  - b) New commercial and industrial development must conform to all relevant conditions and performance standards enumerated in the municipal zoning bylaw.

#### 8.5 Land Use Actions:

1. Employ the latest planning tools and techniques in arriving at land use decisions, including the utilization of State and Regional Commission services as needed and the engagement of private consulting services when expert advice is required.

2. Work with a land trust to preserve important open lands, protect natural resources, and maintain the Town's rural character.
3. Encourage preservation of important open space areas through regulations or other appropriate methods.
4. Designate critical land areas where development should not occur or where special protective measures should be taken. Areas to be reviewed for this designation are flood plains and floodways, wetlands, stream banks and water courses, steep slopes, special geological and potential archeological sites, important agricultural lands, unique or particularly scenic landscapes and natural areas, productive wildlife habitat, and other areas considered necessary for the maintenance of an important ecosystem.
5. Advocate residential and commercial clustering to preserve farm lands and open space, and to reduce construction costs for roads, land preparation, and public utilities.
6. Espouse a development design process that takes into account the entire area in which the development occurs to produce compatibility with neighboring structures, the terrain and its contours, transportation patterns, traditional usage, and cultural and historic values.
7. Mandate construction phasing and building permit quotas when development activity threatens to exceed the Town's ability to provide essential services.
8. Work with BCRC to evaluate the potential type, amount and location of development under the current bylaws and given limitations of the land and the need to protect natural resources.

Land use planning is an on-going process requiring the support of the Board of Selectmen, the Planning Commission, the Zoning Board of Adjustment, the Land Use Administrator, and residents of the Town. The cooperation of those who build on or use the land for gain is also essential. It is only in this fashion that the desired character of Arlington can be achieved and maintained.

### **IX. Public Utilities, Facilities, and Services**

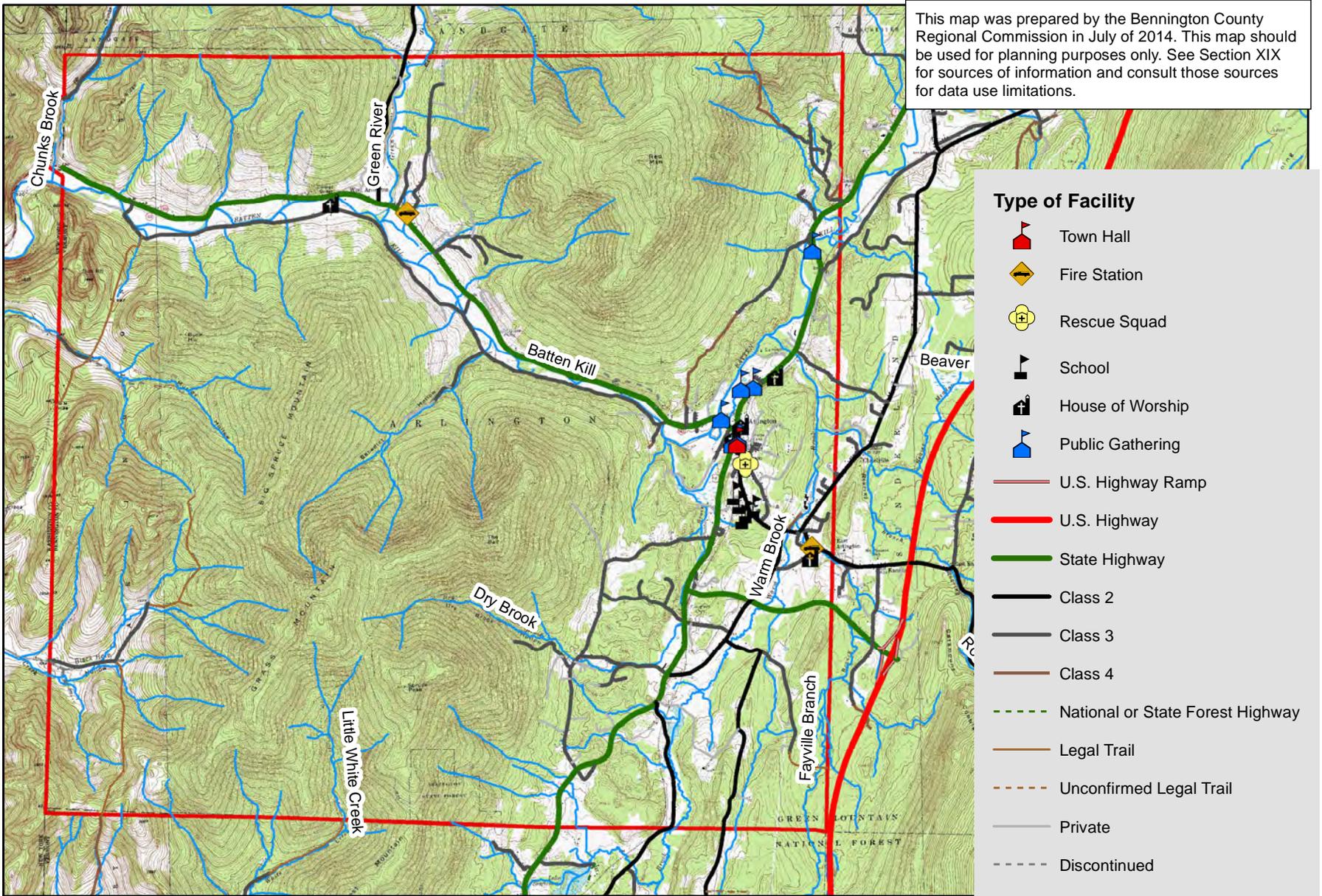
Arlington residents rely on a number of public and quasi-public facilities and services. These community assets must be properly managed and supported so that they will continue to contribute favorably to the quality of life in Arlington. Separate sections in this plan are devoted to the Town's educational and recreational facilities, and to the area's health care services. Topics discussed in this section include: water supply and wastewater disposal; electric, telephone, wireless cell phone towers, and cable television services; solid waste; public buildings and land; fire, emergency, and public safety services; child care; and certain other facilities (e.g., libraries, community center), (Map 17).

#### **9.1 Water Supply and Wastewater Disposal**

The villages of Arlington and East Arlington, and the Chiselsville area of Sunderland, are served by the Arlington Water Company. The Arlington Water Company is a privately owned community water supply regulated by the Vermont

# Map 17. Arlington Public Facilities and Utilities

This map was prepared by the Bennington County Regional Commission in July of 2014. This map should be used for planning purposes only. See Section XIX for sources of information and consult those sources for data use limitations.



**Type of Facility**

- Town Hall
- Fire Station
- Rescue Squad
- School
- House of Worship
- Public Gathering
- U.S. Highway Ramp
- U.S. Highway
- State Highway
- Class 2
- Class 3
- Class 4
- National or State Forest Highway
- Legal Trail
- Unconfirmed Legal Trail
- Private
- Discontinued



Department of Health and the Public Service Board. This system draws most of its supply from a groundwater source located in the “Catamount Cobble” area of Sunderland; the source for the west side of the system is a spring on Red Mountain. The Vermont Department of Health has delineated wellhead protection areas for these sources, (Map 11)

The Arlington Water Company system was constructed in 1894. A new storage reservoir for fire protection has been completed, and various water mains have been replaced and upgraded, in part to meet the needs of the new affordable housing development. Additional water main upgrades have been completed on Russell street and the intersection of Route 7A, East Arlington road and Russell street. An extension of the 10" main from Mack Molding to the 7A intersection is planned for the near future. The estimated capacity of the system is 684,000 gallons per day (GPD), and with a current usage of 204,000 GPD, the system is capable of accommodating new growth if system improvements proceed on schedule. Such new connections should be encouraged in, but restricted to, designated village areas.

Approximately 1,200 people rely on the Arlington Water Company system for their water supply. Consequently, protection of the quality and quantity of the groundwater which feeds this system is critical. Contamination of the water would result in dangers to public health and would necessitate very costly remediation. The Town must strictly enforce its health regulations to ensure that individual wells and springs are not contaminated.

A recent town study (Aldrich and Elliot 2012) recommended that the Town negotiate to acquire the Arlington Water Company in the near future, which will require a town vote. The study also determined that the water supply system was in good condition, but that a series of immediate, short-term and long-term improvements would be needed.

Through enforcement of the Town health regulations, the Health Officer and Board of Selectmen are responsible for seeing that existing polluting systems are corrected and that all new systems are properly designed and installed. These efforts must be continued to ensure that drinking water supplies are not contaminated and that surface and groundwater pollution is minimized. Innovative wastewater disposal technologies may be necessary in Arlington and East Arlington villages — sites of existing and planned high density development - where soil conditions are often only marginally suitable for wastewater disposal. An example of such a system is the wastewater disposal facility recently constructed to serve the elementary and high schools.

## 9.2 Solid Waste

Disposal of solid waste has become a difficult and costly problem throughout the country, and the situation in Arlington reflects this national trend. Arlington has become part of a 9-town Solid Waste Implementation Plan (SWIP), which has been completed and approved by the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources. The SWIP currently guides the Town in the direction of lowering the amount of material that is landfilled by increasing recycling. Arlington is also part of the Integrated Solid Waste Applications Program or ISWAP with Dorset, Manchester, Sandgate and Sunderland. ISWAP contract with Casella establishes costs for recycling a variety of materials at the Sunderland and Northshire Transfer stations.

Unfortunately, diversion of waste from landfills has remained between 30 and 35% over the past ten years. In 2012, the Vermont Legislature passed Act 148, the

Universal Waste Recycling Law with the goal of improving this diversion rate by instituting bans on materials that can be recycled, including over time, bans on leaf and yard and food wastes. The Vermont Agency of Natural Resources is expected to adopt a materials management plan in 2014. Arlington will then have to adopt its own plan, working in concert with the current nine towns of the SWIP and including Bennington, Woodford and Stamford. That plan will have performance requirements requiring outreach and education and other means to foster increased recycling. The Town of Arlington is participating in that process and this plan is in conformance with the Universal Recycling Law.

Individual households can contribute to solid waste solutions, and save a considerable amount of money, through waste reduction, recycling, and composting. Residents should take advantage of the free recycling center at both the Northshire and Sunderland Transfer stations to recycle paper, cardboard, glass, and several types of metal and plastic. Both the Sunderland and Northshire Transfer stations have gone to Zero Waste, increasing the types of materials that can be recycled. Consumers should also be careful to purchase products which are packaged in recyclable materials whenever possible. Household Hazardous Waste collection events, which enable residents to dispose of toxic materials in a safe manner, have been held with the support of Arlington and other area towns. In addition, recent Household Hazardous Waste collection events have included free disposal for residents of Freon items and fluorescent bulbs containing mercury. These bulbs may also be taken to area hardware stores to be disposed through the Vermont Lamp Recycling program. Computers and peripherals as well as televisions can be recycled for free at the transfer stations and at certain stores in Bennington County through the Vermont E-Cycle program. Finally, backyard composting of certain organic wastes can help greatly reduce the volume of waste which must be landfilled or incinerated.

### 9.3 Public Buildings and Land

The Town of Arlington owns a number of properties which are used for various purposes. The most visible and widely used properties are located in or near Arlington Village: the Town Hall, the Town garage, and the recreation park. The recreation park is discussed in some detail in Section XII.

The Post Office has moved to a new specially-built private building, just south of the center of town; a sidewalk to it has been provided.

The Town Hall contains the Town Clerk's office, Selectmen's office, Lister's office, Treasurer's office, a meeting room, and files and work space for other Town officials such as the Land Use Administrator. The Town Hall was recently renovated to move the Lister's, Land Use Administrator, and the Treasurer to the first floor of the building for ease of public access. These renovations were mostly done by volunteers.

Table 7. Values of town-owned properties. Source: Town of Arlington Listers, 2013

<b>Property</b>	<b>Estimated Value</b>
Town Hall	\$312,100
Town Garage	\$108,100
Schools	\$11,997,900
Library	\$662,800
Recreation Park	\$71,200
Fire Company	\$318,200
Fire Company	\$171,200
Rescue Squad	\$113,300
Food Shelf	\$87,800
Evergreen Cemetery	\$46,800
West Arlington Cemetery	\$52,000
State Seal Tree Lot	\$12,000
Remember Lot	\$200
Mountain Land	\$11,100
Black Hole Hollow School Land	\$52,700
Old West Road - .53 acres	\$6,400
Crow Hill Road - .11 acres	\$8,200
Red Mountain Intersection	\$800
Building (0012-1-22-1)	\$5,700
Parking Area (East Arlington)	\$
Yellow Barn	\$112,500
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$14,162,500</b>

#### 9.4 Arlington Fire Department

The Arlington Volunteer Fire Department responds to an average of 130 calls for assistance per year. Arlington had 46%, Sunderland 36%, Sandgate 13%, and mutual aid to our neighbors 5% of the calls. Throughout last year, our active members spent nearly 2,000 hours responding to these calls and 2,000 hours in training.

As the cost of protecting our communities increases every year, we are faced with the tough job of a balanced and justified budget. This becomes a hard job when the price of emergency equipment continues to rise at a faster rate of speed than our budgets. With several items in our budget out of our control, such as fuel oil, fire hydrants, and insurances, we can only hope for a minimal increase. This in turn keeps us from purchasing equipment that would benefit a department with a manpower issue at 50% of its calls. To outfit one firefighter, it costs approximately \$2,500; at 30 members, the total cost is \$75,000. We are actively pursuing grants, when we hear about them, for any qualifying equipment. However, with fiscal cutbacks on every level, there are fewer grants that the department can we qualify for. With much of our equipment at 20 years or older, replacement and maintenance costs continue to rise. Therefore to remain up to date with current fire standards, our budget continues to grow.

Firefighter recruitment and retention continues to be a major concern. As a result, the fire cadet program has been reinstated to acquire and train young individuals to participate in our community. We also continue to search for support personnel to assist with many functions on an emergency scene.

### 9.5 Arlington Rescue Squad

The Arlington Rescue Squad, INC. provides first response and emergency care to the residents of Arlington and surrounding Towns. In 2012 the Squad responded to 438 calls, 235 being in Arlington. Through a matrix of private donations, insurance benefits and municipal funding, the largely volunteer force has provided staff, training and equipment to maintain continual coverage, including paid staff from 6 AM- 6 PM daily.

The Squad headquarters has been in need of replacement for more than 10 years. The Rescue Squad has studied redesigns of the existing building and has had discussions with the Town Planning Commission. There are still many hurdles before modification of the existing building or construction of a new building on a new site. This service is vital to the success of community. Continued support for their mission is important to Arlington's future.

### 9.6 Law Enforcement and Emergencies Plans

The Town has contracted with the Bennington County Sheriff's Department to patrol town roads. An animal control officer responds to complaints and picks up loose dogs. The Town of Arlington maintains a Local Emergency Operations Plan for emergencies, as well as participates in a Regional Emergency Operations Plan. In addition, the Town is represented on the Local Emergency Planning Committee. An elected or appointed Town constable has not been used for some years.

### 9.7 Community House and Libraries

The Arlington Community House, operated by a Board of Trustees as a nonprofit organization, is located on Route 7A in the center of Town, and provides meeting room facilities for a number of groups and organizations. In addition, a new community facility has been developed in the Community House. This is a meeting place for all ages, and operates programs that focus primarily on youth and the elderly.

A new Martha Canfield library building, located adjacent to Fisher Elementary School, opened in May 1996. This attractive facility includes areas for adults, young adults, and children, a meeting room, expanded space for the Russell Vermontiana Collection, and a reading/study area. Private contributions provided the funds for construction and furnishing. The library continues to serve residents with a good selection of books, tapes, and videos, computers and offers a number of informative programs throughout the year. The Town of Arlington should continue to support the library with an annual appropriation.

### 9.8 Electricity, Telephone, Cell Phone, Internet, and Cable Television Service

Arlington receives its electrical service through the Green Mountain Power Company transmission lines; telephone service is provided by Fair Point. Cable television, internet and phone service is available through Comcast in portions of the Town and should be expanded to East and West Arlington. Internet DSL service has been expanded in the town by Fair Point. Electric service seems adequate to meet existing demands and to accommodate reasonable future growth.

A Zoning Bylaw to govern construction of wireless communication facilities was adopted. A cell phone tower is now located on the side of Red Mountain with three different services and one is located off of Butternut Gutter with one service. While Arlington and East Arlington now have service, West Arlington does not. A

telecommunications tower has been installed on a Nolan farm silo in West Arlington for limited Wi-Fi internet service in 2013. Cell phone service may be added to the tower in 2014 with limited coverage.

#### 9.9 Childcare

The need for high quality and affordable childcare has become very apparent to both employers and employees (or prospective employees) as the number of women in the work force has continued to grow. Arlington Area Childcare (Happy Days Playschool) provides a range of childcare and early education programs, along with activities for school age children and educational programs for parents. The organization has moved into a specially-constructed facility on East Arlington Road near the schools; the facility was financed by the Housing and Conservation Board. A number of home-based daycare providers also serve the community. Expanded and enhanced child care services should be supported through both existing organizations and programs offered by area employers.

9.10 Public Utilities, Facilities and Services and Policy: The continued welfare of town residents depends on adequate provision of public services and management of town assets.

#### 9.11 Public Utilities, Facilities and Services Actions:

1. The Town should assess current facilities and services on an annual basis and determine if they are adequate to meet the needs of residents and businesses.
2. The Town should participate with the other Bennington County towns to complete an updated Solid Waste Implementation Plan consistent with the requirements of the Universal Recycling Law (Act 148).
3. The Town should promote recycling through outreach to residents, schools and businesses.
4. The Town should adopt an ordinance requiring solid waste haulers to adopt unit based pricing as required under the Universal Recycling Law (Act 148).
5. The Town should develop a plan for managing town properties to assure they are properly maintained, that public uses are accommodated and energy conserved.
6. The Planning Commission should assess early child care needs periodically to assure that the needs of current and future residents are met.
7. To support both the Rescue Squad and the Fire Department, the Town should encourage residents to change batteries in smoke detectors in the spring and fall and to post their 911 addresses prominently in a location where they can be seen from the road.
8. The Town should evaluate options for maintaining safe and reliable water supplies for the Villages of Arlington and East Arlington.
9. The Town should evaluate options for maintaining safe and reliable waste water disposal in areas where soils and other factors create marginal conditions for on-site septic disposal systems.

## **X. TRANSPORTATION**

### 10.1 Description

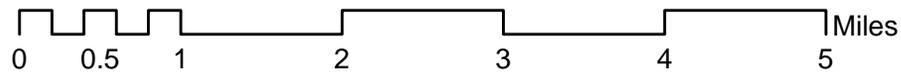
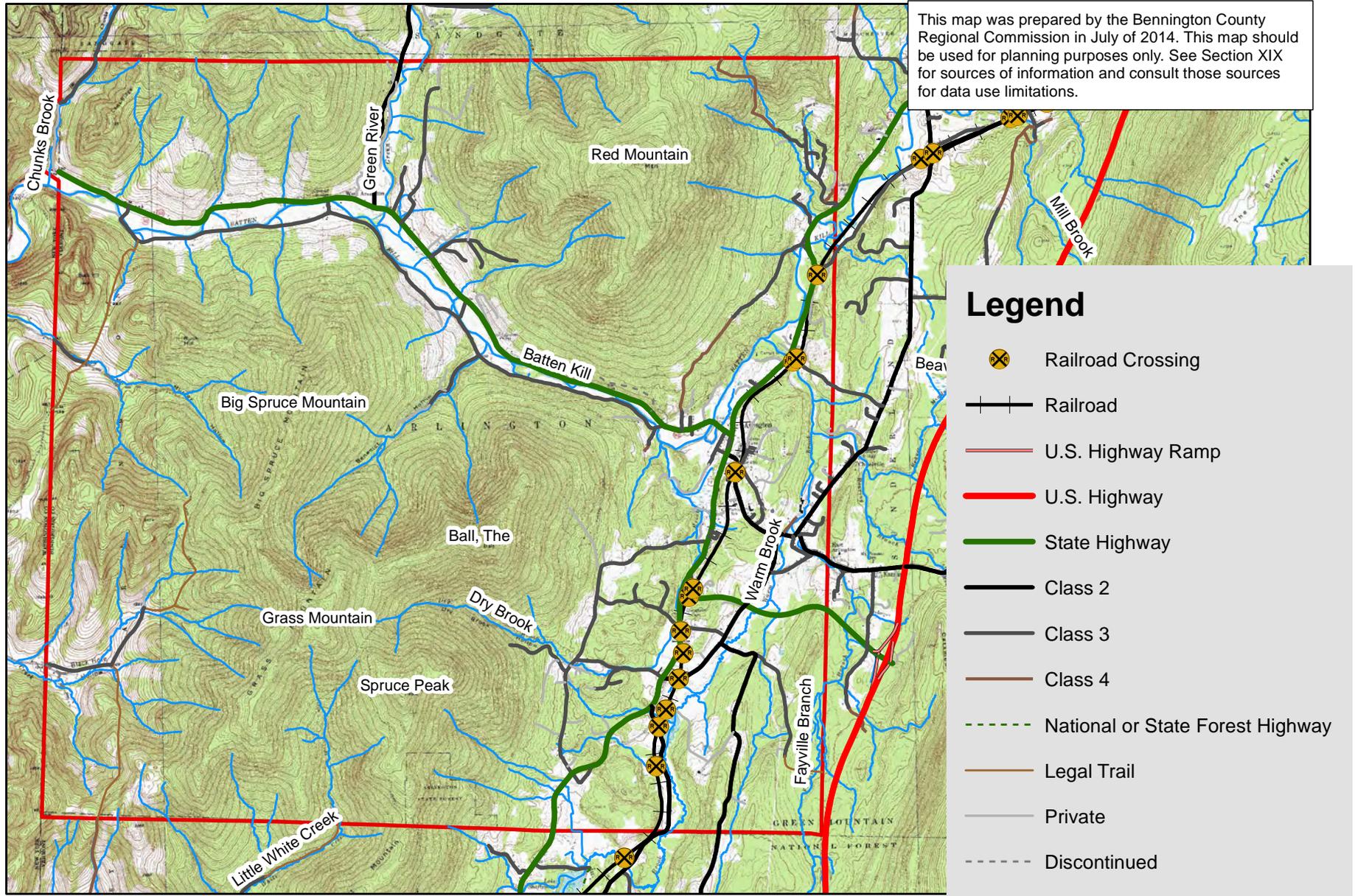
Safe, convenient, and economical transportation is essential to the people and economy of Arlington. A variety of transportation modes exist in the Town. A network of town and state roads and bridges provides access to residential properties and supports the areas various commercial and industrial interests; the Vermont Railway traverses the eastern side of the Town; and sidewalks and pathways allow for pedestrian movement. A public bus service is available to Bennington and Manchester, with connections to Rutland. While each of these elements is important, most of the use (and public expense) is concentrated on the Town's network of roads. Effective and efficient management of these roads and bridges should therefore be a priority for the Town.

The road system in Arlington reflects the Town's topographic conditions. The most level land is found in the southeastern corner of the Town and in the valley of the Batten Kill. The two state highways in Arlington, Route 7A and Route 313, traverse these areas, and a network of town roads reaches out to adjacent lands. With the exception of a few minor roads which snake up into the hollows and stream valleys, no roads are located in Arlington's rugged mountainous regions. The Town is responsible for maintaining the 34 miles of roads in Table 8. The state highway and town highways, private roads, legal trails and railroad are shown in Map 18.

A sidewalk along East Arlington Road has been constructed. The sidewalk connects the Arlington and East Arlington villages, and provides safe pedestrian access to the schools and the new library. A sidewalk also runs to the new Post Office. Re-construction of the sidewalk along Church Street and extension along Route 7A was completed in 2012, to substantially improve pedestrian safety in the village center.

The Town's highway department is presently staffed by three full-time employees, a level that is adequate at the present time, although an additional employee (and equipment) may be needed in the future if new road mileage is added and if residents demand more extensive and prompter service during the winter months. The department owns and maintains a considerable inventory of vehicles and equipment including a grader, backhoe-loader, tractor, a small dump truck, and two full size dump trucks that can be outfitted to perform a variety of roadway maintenance functions. These vehicles and equipment are replaced periodically by annually appropriating tax revenues into designated "sinking funds."

# Map 18. Arlington Transportation



The Town highway garage and sand/salt storage area, located on Chittenden Avenue, is already crowded and in need of expansion. Because of the small lot size and other limitations at the existing site, however, the Town may need to consider acquisition of a new parcel. A new garage of adequate size to store all equipment plus the probable need to store sand and salt in a building in the future suggests that a lot of three to five acres will be required. This garage relocation and construction project is expected to be the most substantial municipal capital expenditure over the next several years.

Table 8. Summary of road mileage in Arlington  
by Town/State highway and class  
(Source: Vermont Agency of Transportation 2013)

Class 2 town highways <sup>1</sup>	7.910 miles
Class 3 town highways <sup>2</sup>	26.800 miles
Legal Trails	4.560 miles
State highways	14.047 miles
Total Traveled highways	53.317 miles

\* The Town also contains 2.710 miles of Class 4 town roads.<sup>3</sup>

- 1 “Class 2 town highways are those town highways selected as the most important highways in each town. As far as practicable they shall be selected with the purposes of securing trunk lines of improved highways from town to town and to places which by their nature have more than normal amount of traffic. The selectmen, with the approval of the board, shall determine which highways are to be class 2 highways.” (19 VSA section 302(2))
- 2 “Class 3 town highways:
  - (A) Class 3 town highways are all traveled town highways other than class 1 or 2 highways. The selectmen, after conference with a representative of the agency shall determine which highways are Class 3 town highways.
  - (B) The minimum standards for class 3 highways are a highway negotiable under normal conditions all seasons of the year by a standard manufactured pleasure car. This would include but not be limited to sufficient surface and base, adequate drainage, and sufficient width capable to provide winter maintenance.
  - (C) A highway not meeting these standards may be reclassified as a provisional class 3 highway if within five years of the determination; it will meet all class 3 highway standards.” (19 VSA section 302(3))
- 3 “Class 4 town highways are all other town highways. The selectmen shall determine which highways are Class 4 town highways.” (19 VSA section 302(4))

## 10.2 Capital Project Planning

The highway department and Board of Selectmen, in concert with the Town's effort to prepare a capital budget and plan, identified a priority list of transportation infrastructure improvement projects and an equipment replacement schedule. Funding sources and annual costs were also identified for each item. Section 10.3 is a summary of the highway department's proposed capital projects.

## 10.3 Transportation Infrastructure

1. The Town's largest capital project over the next several years is expected to be the acquisition of a new lot for the town garage, and construction of the necessary structures on that parcel. The Town should begin looking for a suitable location but it is still premature to determine estimated costs or timetables.
2. Paved roads are resurfaced and upgraded as needed and as funds permit. Major projects are funded with State and Federal monies paying 80% to 90% of the total costs. Smaller projects are funded with local tax revenue.
3. The four town bridges crossing the Batten Kill have all been replaced or extensively repaired in recent years. The two steel bridges at either end of River Road are built to the same specifications as state bridges on major highways and should have a life expectancy of 50 to 75 years with routine maintenance. The two wooden bridges (Benedict Crossing and the Covered Bridge) have been rehabilitated, but will require ongoing work to remain serviceable. At this time, there are no plans to replace these two wooden structures because of their historic value. Both wooden bridges were repaired after Hurricane Irene.
4. Gravel roads are maintained regularly each year by adding material as needed and grading. A program with the State will assist in improving signage on gravel roads to make safer highways.
5. The focus of the Town is to maintain and improve the existing Town highways. Future growth in Town should move in such direction that existing roads are utilized and the Town is not put into a position where it has to expand its highway system.
6. Investments that would encourage the inappropriate development of important agricultural, forest, or natural areas should be avoided. The Town should ensure that plans for State-owned roads are not contrary to this or other municipal goals, and that plans of adjacent municipalities are consistent with the objectives outlined in this plan.

#### 10.4 Special Issues

##### 1. Road Reclassification/Downgrading

In the past, the Town has reclassified or abandoned road segments which had been either Class 4 town roads or road segments with an unclear ownership status. These road segments either were downgraded to trail status, or were discontinued in the event that they did not provide access for any property owner. Such action was necessary to avoid potential municipal liability for maintenance and upkeep of these “roadways.” In the future, where access should be maintained, reclassification of such roads to trails, rather than abandonment, should be the preferred option so that public access can be retained.

The Town is working to identify and locate old Town roads. The “Ancient Road” program throughout the State requires that all roads be identified and mapped prior to the year 2015 or they will be lost as public rights-of-way.

##### 2. Road Permits

Because the location and design of new driveways, culverts, ditches, and tree removal can affect the physical condition of public roads and traffic safety, a road permit must be obtained from the road foreman prior to construction of such improvements within the Town highway right-of-way. This includes all Class 2, 3, 4 roads and Legal Trails. Almost all highway rights-of-way are 3 rods or 50 feet wide.

##### 3. Sidewalks and Pathways

Facilities for pedestrians and young children on bicycles are very limited in Arlington. A sidewalk along East Arlington Road, connecting Arlington and East Arlington villages and providing safe pedestrian access to the schools and the new library is complete. The sidewalk from the Post Office along Route 7A is complete. Sidewalk connections to the recreation park along Route 313 would be very beneficial for both improved access and safety. The Church Street sidewalk was renovated and extended along Route 7A. The Town should continue to seek state/federal transportation funds for these high priority projects. Other efforts to encourage pedestrian travel should be continued, particularly in village areas. When undertaking new construction or major reconstruction of roads, the Town and State should consider the adequacy of those roads for safe pedestrian and bicycle travel, and include special provisions (e.g., shoulders of sufficient width on paved roads) for bicycle use.

##### 4. Scenic Roads

The Town of Arlington contains a number of particularly scenic roads which provide pleasant travel routes for both residents and tourists. Although consideration has been given to official “scenic road” designation, the Town has been reluctant to pursue such designation because of a concern over the possibility that official recognition will lead to a dramatic increase in vehicular traffic on these roads. Future

road improvements should be planned so as not to degrade their scenic attributes.

5. Parking

There are some localized parking problems in Town, particularly on busy weekends in East Arlington where there is a concentration of retail stores with limited parking. Overall, however, the sufficiency of parking areas has not proven to be a significant problem. Strict adherence to site plan requirements for on-site parking has been helpful; the planning commission must continue to require adequate on-site parking for new commercial and industrial uses.

6. Routes 7A & 313

In 1996, the BCRC conducted a study of Route 7A, an important regional highway that is currently plagued by a number of deficiencies. Needed improvements were identified, as well as recommended short term, long term, and zoning actions. In 2011, the state repaved Routes 7A and 313 in the Town of Arlington

Particular attention should be given to the nature of the roadway in the center of Town, where it should reinforce the village character and ensure that vehicle speeds and access/parking are consistent with safety concerns.

7. Railways

While railroads are not presently used as a major means of transport for either people or materials in the region, the potential for expanded future use of trains should not be diminished. A rail line runs through Arlington in close proximity to commercial and industrial areas. Manufacturers should be encouraged to utilize rail service when feasible. Vermont has recently acquired and opened in 2008 a section of deficient track between Hoosick, N.Y. and North Bennington; improvements to this section and upgrades throughout the region could lead to significantly more rail freight use and may bring about restoration of passenger rail service at some future time. The Town should cooperate in these efforts to improve rail service in the region.

8. Public Transit

The need for public transportation in Arlington is felt principally by elderly and low income persons. Access to transportation for health care purposes, for shopping and personal business, and for social or recreational purposes is particularly important to elderly residents. There is an apparent need for transportation to health care providers and work and job training sites for some low income residents. These needs are met, to some extent, by several health and human service organizations in the area. The Green Mountain Community Network, operating the Green Mountain Express, provides demand-response service to meet medical and other needs, as well as a fixed-route service used primarily for job access, shopping, and other needs. Arlington has a designated bus stop along the fixed-route service

line from Bennington to Manchester. Transportation for those in need should be available through several means, as identified in the Transportation Plan for the Bennington Region (BCRC, 2002)

- a) A region-wide volunteer transportation program to serve primarily health related trips (currently operated by the Green Mountain Community Network and human service organizations);
- b) Handicap-accessible van services for seniors and disabled persons region-wide on a contractual basis with nursing homes, human service agencies, and towns (through the Green Mountain Community Network);
- c) A ride referral/ride match program to serve mostly regularly scheduled trip needs from outlying areas (State of Vermont Agency of Transportation RideShare Program)

#### 10.5 Transportation Policies

1. New roads, driveways, and drainage systems should be designed, constructed, and maintained in accordance with the municipal subdivision regulations, street standards, and any recommendations of the Town's road foreman. When possible, residential development should be designed to avoid direct access to major roads from individual lots. Subdivision roads and driveways should be designed to allow safe access by fire and emergency services.
2. Additions and improvements to the transportation system should be designed to minimize impacts on residential areas and avoid the loss of parks and recreation areas, agricultural land, natural resources, and wildlife habitat.
3. All Town transportation projects should incorporate "complete streets" principles (Vermont Department of Health 2012) to accommodate all transportation users regardless of age, ability or transportation preferences. These principles encourage bicycle and pedestrian uses along roads and need to be incorporated in the planning, design and construction phases.
4. Major transportation improvements and investments should be encouraged to enhance villages and important existing highways, with minimal or no investment for new roads serving remote and mountainous areas.
5. Proposed transportation facilities should, to the degree possible, utilize existing highway alignments.
6. Commercial and industrial developments should provide adequate on-site parking, and include provisions for safe and efficient vehicular ingress and egress. To the extent possible, adjacent commercial or industrial uses should make use of common parking and access drives. Parking in the rear area with buildings closer to the Street should be encouraged to reduce multiple access onto local and state highways.
7. Scenic roads should be maintained for their scenic value while providing safe access for residents. Road construction and

maintenance should be consistent with scenic values (width, alignment, roadside vegetation, etc.)

#### 10.6 Transportation Actions

1. The Planning Commission should assure that developers coordinate with the Arlington Fire Department to confirm that water supplies for structure protection are adequate and located within 20 minutes travel time to the nearest structure.
2. The Planning Commission should enforce the road standards in subdivision regulations.
3. The Town should host bus shelters to provide for riders of the bus line.
4. The town should encourage energy conservation by promoting pedestrian use by building and maintaining sidewalks and trails, assuring road construction and maintenance projects that accommodate bicycles, and supporting public transportation (including school buses) and carpooling.
5. The Town should conduct a scoping study of the area in East Arlington at the intersection of Ice Pond and Old Mill Roads to redesign the intersection and provide an improved area for public parking.
6. Sidewalks and paths should be improved and developed to provide safe pedestrian access along 7A.
7. The intersection of Routes 313 and 7A should be redesigned to provide a crosswalk and to improve the geometry so as to reduce vehicular turning speeds thereby improving safety.

## **XI. EDUCATION**

### 11.1 Enrollment and Schools

The Arlington School District is part of the Batten Kill Valley Supervisory Union (BVSU), which also includes the Sandgate School District. The BVSU is comprised of over 400 students who attend Arlington Memorial High School & Middle School, Arlington Accelerated Academy and Fisher Elementary School. Fisher Elementary offers a Pre-Kindergarten-Grade 5 education to 200 students. The Pre-K program is publicly funded. Arlington Middle School serves students in grades 6-8 including students who choose to attend the Accelerated Academy, a program for students who want a rigorous and advanced course load offering high school credits. Arlington Memorial High is a 9-12 school that offers Advanced Placement (AP), Honors, College Prep and General core academics as well as Room 129 Productions, a technical education program that provides instruction in woodworking, small engine repair, painting, and landscaping. Room 129 Production students also participate in various service projects within the community as requested. Through Vermont's School Choice option, students attend Arlington Memorial from many towns including Arlington, Sandgate,

Sunderland, Shaftsbury, Bennington, North Bennington and Manchester. Over 200 students attend classes in the grades 6-12 building.

### 11.2 Facilities

A major renovation and addition was completed at Fisher in 1993. In more recent years and due to the addition of the public Pre-K program, playground equipment was purchased and accommodations were made within the building specific to that age population per state criteria. At Arlington Memorial, a significant renovation and addition project was completed to support various academic goals, educational programs and support services in 2001. In 2007, the Mack Performing Arts Center & Wes Carlson Studio for Dance and Theatre was completed. This project was funded entirely with private donations totaling \$620,000 and serves as a resource for community activities as well as educational performances and events.

### 11.3 Raising the Bar

From 2004-2009, Arlington Memorial initiated a “Raising the Bar” educational campaign to increase academic expectations and student performance in a sound and fiscally responsible manner. During that time the average educational budget increase was 3.2 percent. “Raising the Bar” initiatives included: increasing graduation requirements from 23 to 26 credits, incorporating a community service requirement of 32 hours, requiring a demonstration of nine computer technology competencies, establishing a Principal’s Assistance program before/after school for students who chose not to complete a homework assignment and increasing the number of school days to 180—five days above the state average. These initiatives have had a positive effect on our students and school system. The high school continues to receive state and national recognition for its high graduation rate, standardized test scores and academic achievements of all students, not just those at the top of their classes. Just this year (2013), US News & World Report voted Arlington Memorial a “Best High School in America” and ranked the school fourth in Vermont for quality public education.

### 11.4 Athletics

The Arlington Eagles have a rich history of success with 50 state championships in the past 30 years. Arlington offers athletic programs in soccer, cross country running, basketball, indoor track, snowboarding, dance, golf, baseball, softball and track & field. Trophy cases and numerous banners are displayed in the athletic wing of the high school honoring the many student-athletes who participated and excelled in Arlington athletics over the past many decades.

### 11.5 NEASC and Rankings

Over the last several years, Arlington Memorial has received significant recognition for its success, direction and achievement. The Vermont Department of Education visited the high school and was complimentary of the success that has been achieved in terms of academic rigor, relevance, curriculum and communications. The system was also cited for the positive culture, climate, and sense of cooperation that exists. After the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) completed its last accreditation review of Arlington Memorial, they stated, “Arlington Memorial High School has an excellent reputation for success in

promoting learning for all students and being a strong college preparatory school. It has also had a long standing reputation for providing a safe and secure learning environment and for offering a diverse curriculum.”

In 2008, US News & World Report released a rating of America’s best high schools for the first time. US News collaborated with School Evaluation Services, a K-12 data research and analysis organization operated by Standard and Poor's. The research team evaluated and analyzed 22,000 high schools across America. Six Vermont schools received recognition in this initial assessment including Arlington Memorial which was awarded a silver medal—only 7 percent of these schools received silver medal distinction. Over the next few years, Arlington added another silver medal and a bronze medal to its list of achievements.

### 11.6 Banners & Displays

Banners recognizing the academic success of Arlington students are proudly displayed in the main entrance of the school. A banner honoring Johns Hopkins Scholars is located in the Middle School wing of the building. This banner showcases the more than 100 students who earned Johns Hopkins Scholar distinction over the past 15 years. In addition to these academic honors, several additional displays can be found throughout the building. With funding and assistance from the Arlington Arts & Enrichment Program and Room 129 Productions, an Art Wall was created to honor the rich history of Arlington area artists. Many of the art pieces had been donated to the school over the years, and now they are organized in one area, so that students and community members can appreciate the work. A special display of pieces from local artist Norman Rockwell is one of the highlights of the Art Wall project. A tribute to Arlington Memorial musicians and visiting poets can also be seen along the Art Wall.

### 11.7 Technology

After developing a comprehensive technology plan utilizing existing funds and two years of sinking funds, the supervisory union, in 2005, undertook a significant upgrade for all of its schools including an upgrade in computers, printers and peripherals: software and software licenses were upgraded as well. Internet security was put into place as new servers were purchased, and the schools and supervisory union office were connected via fiber network.

### 11.8 Going Forward

State and federal requirements and initiatives continue to place burdens on local school districts, and many of the requirements are unfunded mandates. While we recognize that special education programs continue to increase in terms of cost and complexity; we support an educationally strong program for all of our students regardless of need. Both Fisher Elementary and Arlington Memorial continue to regularly meet the academic standards and progress necessary under state and federal guidelines.

The district works hard to challenge and stretch students at all levels—the Accelerated Academy and Room 129 Productions are two examples of programs designed to reach students who need different learning settings. The Career Development Center in Bennington continues to be an option for our students who

are interested in exploring various vocational programs like forestry and artificial intelligence. Professional development of employees will continue to be a priority, especially in the areas of technology and curriculum coordination across the Pre-K-12 spectrum.

The Arlington community is proud of its schools, its students and the commitment to quality education from its families and employees. Working together, much has been achieved, much success has been had, and much will be achieved in the future. The quality of education in Arlington continues to grow because of these dedicated groups of individuals who put forth the effort to enhance the system and allow new educational opportunities to cultivate.

11.9 Education Policy: Arlington should maintain a high quality school system to continue to maximize opportunities for school children. The schools also represent community centers for events and activities and may also provide space for adult education.

11.10 Education Actions;

1. The Planning Commission should carefully consider the potential impact to educational institutions when reviewing development applications.
2. The Town should encourage training programs for adults to develop skills and strategies to maximize their employment potential. Working with the Bennington County Regional Commission, the Bennington County Industrial Corporation, area education providers and local businesses can help target critical skills and training necessary to increase employment opportunities.

## **XII. RECREATION**

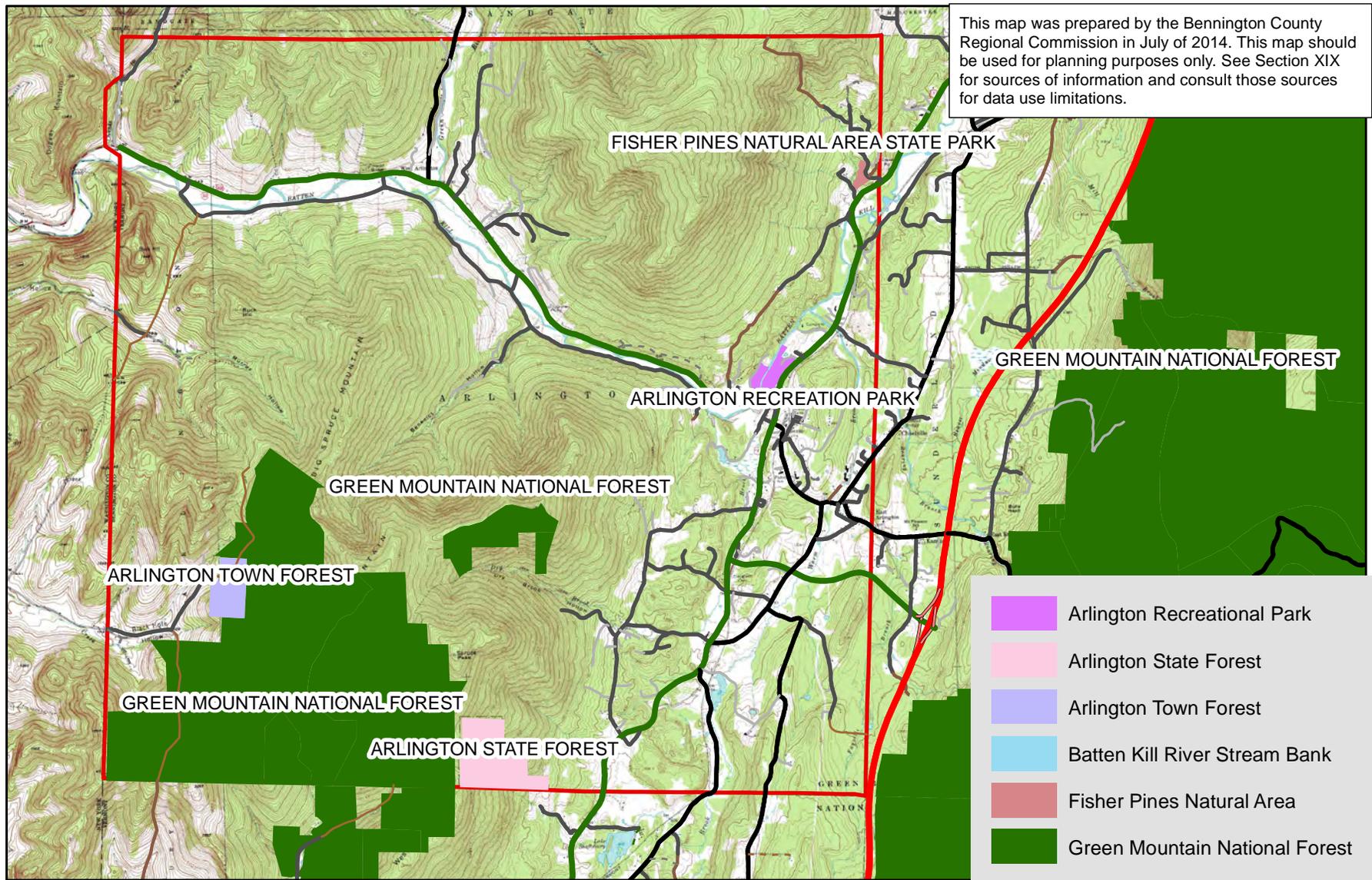
Residents of Arlington are fortunate to have ready access to a wealth of recreational opportunities. The Town has an outstanding recreation park, a river renowned for fishing and canoeing, and miles of trails traversing thousands of acres of unbroken forests. Maintenance of the quality of these recreational opportunities for both residents and the visitors who are drawn to the Town by these resources is an important goal of this Town Plan (see Map 19).

12.1 Recreation Park

Arlington's recreation park is situated in the center of Town on approximately 27 acres of land along the Batten Kill. The park contains facilities for a wide variety of sports and activities, including: softball and baseball fields, tennis courts, a basketball court, a one- mile walking path with exercise stations, a swimming pond, a soccer field, volleyball courts, a 9-hole golf course, an ice skating rink, and picnic facilities including a pavilion. In addition, the Lions Club owns and maintains a swimming pond at the park. These facilities are heavily used from early spring through late fall.

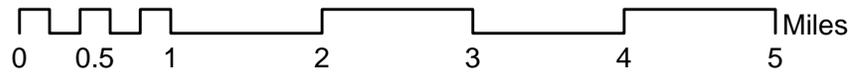
The operation and management of the Park became part of the Town of Arlington operations structure for 2013. The change that has taken place is that the day to

# Map 19. Arlington Open Space Lands



This map was prepared by the Bennington County Regional Commission in July of 2014. This map should be used for planning purposes only. See Section XIX for sources of information and consult those sources for data use limitations.

- Arlington Recreational Park
- Arlington State Forest
- Batten Kill River Stream Bank
- Fisher Pines Natural Area
- Green Mountain National Forest



day operation of the Park and all income and expenses are managed by the Town. With this change, all of the operations are shown in the Town Report and are voted on as part of the Town budget at our annual meeting. The Town will request and accept donations and contributions from the neighboring towns and individuals to allow the maintenance and improvements at the Park with the minimal amount of tax funds from Arlington.

The Park Corporation manages and controls the endowment fund for the Park.

In the past, only limited Town funding was required for the park. The endowment fund, donations, and modest user fees (for certain organized leagues, large gatherings, and scholastic sports) supported the park. Funding for the operation and maintenance of the swimming pool is provided by the Lions Club. The Masons maintain the ice skating rink on Route 313W during the winter. Arlington is extremely fortunate to have this fine park available to the public.

In 2008, the Town of Arlington purchased a 12-acre property known as Yellow Barn Farm with about 1400 feet of Batten Kill frontage on Route 313W. This property will be used for additional public access for angling. This will take some of the pressure off the Recreation Park access across the river, but it would also be useful to have additional public access further downstream. The Town has worked with the Batten Kill Watershed Alliance in order to improve the trout habitat in that reach of the river.

The new Yellow Barn Farm property across the river from the Recreation Park will serve to complement the existing facilities. There will be additional trails for hiking and cross country skiing. Public access to the river for angling will be provided. There may be a community garden, and the Town may grow Christmas trees. The barn will be preserved and used for public activities as determined in the future. This property was purchased with funds from the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board with assistance from the Vermont Land Trust.

Special mention should be made of the fact that the recreation park is particularly valuable to the local schools because outdoor recreational facilities on the school properties are rather meager. As noted above, the school pays a small fee to cover maintenance costs for the facilities used by its teams. Many children walk from the schools or from their homes to the park. The new sidewalk along East Arlington Road and existing paths cover most of the route to the Recreation Park from the schools, but there remains a section along Route 7A that should be completed.

It should be noted that the programs at the Community House serve to provide recreational facilities for both youth and elderly. In addition, there is now a Seniors Luncheon twice a week at Bailey Hall in East Arlington. There are senior exercise classes at Bailey Hall and the American Legion.

## 12.2 Natural and Recreational Resources

Arlington's location among the mountains, forests, and streams of southwestern Vermont provides a variety of easily accessible outdoor recreational opportunities. The natural resource that receives the most intensive recreational use, while supporting a wide variety of uses, is the Batten Kill and are important for water quality and flood resiliency. As described in Section VII, the Batten Kill is a state and nationally significant resource, and both the main stem and tributaries provide for recreational opportunities. Maintenance of the recreational opportunities afforded by Arlington's waterways must consider the need for public

access to these resources, protection of environmental quality, and the needs and differences of the various user groups.

The forested uplands in Arlington and the surrounding area support a similarly impressive array of recreational uses: hunting, camping, hiking, cross country skiing, snowmobiling, and mountain biking, to name a few of the more popular activities. To maintain the quality of these recreational experiences it will be necessary to ensure the continued existence of the forest resource. Physical conditions and regulatory restrictions are likely to prevent fragmentation and degradation of the resource; however, because most of the forest land in Arlington is in private ownership, continued access to these areas, and the extensive trail systems that traverse them, is a concern. Various options to maintain access are available, and should be pursued (e.g., acquisition of easements, and public land acquisition)

Arlington's serene rural setting has also attracted a growing number of bicyclists. Both road and off-road bicycle touring have become popular among vacationers in organized tour groups and residents of the area. Planning should include consideration of this activity whenever appropriate (e.g., road construction and improvements, trail use designations) to ensure the safety of bicyclists and the environment.

Many of the recreational resources in Arlington are really just a portion of a larger regional resource. Forests, trails, rivers, and watersheds rarely respect municipal (or state) boundaries. Moreover residents of Arlington are just as likely to hunt in Sandgate as residents of Manchester are to canoe in Arlington, and so on. Clearly then, regional cooperation in recreation planning is very important.

Initiatives to address the problems of degradation and overuse of the Batten Kill have been undertaken by various agencies and organizations over the past few years. At times, a river group has provided a River Steward for the summer months to engage in education and outreach to river users, conduct research, and work with landowners. The town has supported these efforts.

### 12.3 Recreation Policies

1. Developments which include, or potentially affect access to, an important recreational resource shall include provisions to ensure preservation of that resource and continued public access.
2. While public access to streams and other water bodies is encouraged, recognition must be given to the need to protect fragile environmental areas; intensive recreational uses in such areas shall be restricted accordingly.
3. Capital investments that would adversely affect an important recreational resource, or public access to that resource, shall not be pursued.
4. Permanent development shall be severely limited in the forest and recreation areas of Arlington.
5. Stream channels, and lands adjacent to them, shall be preserved in their natural state; in areas of existing or planned development, improvements near such waterways should be limited to those that will improve public recreational access without damaging the natural environment.

6. Highway improvements or new construction should provide adequate space for the construction of bicycle paths, or include shoulders of sufficient width to safely accommodate bicycle use.

#### 12.4 Recreation Actions

1. The Town of Arlington should continue its capable management of the recreation center, and should solicit ideas from users of the park to determine the type of improvements that are most appropriate.
2. Arlington should continue to work with agencies and organizations to facilitate river studies and planning, including planning for management of recreational use. The river group, the Batten Kill Watershed Alliance, should be supported in promoting improved river user behavior and cooperation through increased public education, awareness, and involvement.
3. The Town and/or Batten Kill organizations should work to secure and develop environmentally sound public access areas and trails along the Batten Kill and other major streams, and to inform the public of those access areas. Continued and expanded public access will assure high quality recreational opportunities and reduce environmental damage and user conflicts by dispersing users over a wider area.
4. The Town should consider public acquisition of forest land where such acquisition would preserve access to important resources without posing undue cost to the Town.
5. A continued effort should be made to develop recreation for youth and elderly.
6. The Town should continue to monitor and support trout habitat restoration projects on the Batten Kill and tributaries.

### **XIII. AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

#### 13.1 Introduction

Vermont's Planning and Development Act urges towns to ensure the availability of safe and affordable housing, particularly for those citizens of low and moderate incomes (24 VSA §43 02 (11)). The Act recommends that housing be convenient to growth centers and public utilities, and that sites for multi-family and manufactured housing be available in locations similar to those generally used for conventional single-family dwellings.

Housing is considered affordable when households with incomes at or below the county median income pay no more than 30% of their gross income on housing costs (from "Planning for Affordable Housing," Vermont Department of Housing and Community Affairs - February, 1990). For rentals, this consists of rent and utilities. For home owners, this consists of the principal and interest on the mortgage, property taxes, and insurance on the house.

### 13.2 Housing Policy

An adequate supply of safe and sanitary housing should be available to meet the needs of all Arlington's residents. Such housing should be convenient to village centers, public utilities, facilities, and services, and should be developed in accordance with the other policies of this Town Plan.

### 13.3 Housing Actions

1. The Town should continue to work with the BCRC, Shires Housing, other public and nonprofit housing organizations and private housing developers to identify housing needs in the community and develop appropriate strategies and projects to meet those needs.
2. In addition to the above, the Town should support the provision of affordable housing for the elderly, disabled and those with special needs or very low income. This type of housing should be located in village centers.
3. The Town should carefully plan future capital projects to minimize tax burdens and direct growth to areas where housing development is most appropriate.
4. The Town should seek state or federal funding sources, including the Vermont Housing and Conservation Trust Fund, for the purchase of land or buildings to be used for affordable housing development, or to reduce development of housing payment costs. Town-owned property, should it become available for alternative use, should be considered as a location for affordable housing development.
5. Where feasible, density could be increased by reducing minimum lot sizes and/or using vacant and infill lots to serve the dual purposes of providing affordable housing and promoting a village center/open space development pattern.
6. The Planning Commission should explore the use of inclusionary zoning requiring a proportion of affordable units within a development.

## **XIV. ENERGY**

### 14.1 General Information

Homes and businesses in Arlington utilize a variety of energy sources for heating - wood, fuel oil, propane, electricity, and coal. Alternative energy sources such as solar and geothermal are being used. Wind power generation may have potential as well. With a heating season that generally lasts for at least seven months, it is evident that home and business energy consumption is a significant issue for everyone residing in this area. The cost of fuel, combined with the local, regional, and global environmental problems caused by fuel extraction, processing, and combustion, suggest strongly that energy conservation measures should be emphasized now more than ever. Subdivisions and buildings should be designed with energy conservation in mind (orientation for solar access, locating buildings in protected rather than exposed locations, etc.), and thermal integrity standards for buildings, such as those specified in the Bennington Regional Energy Plan, should

be adhered to. Owners of existing buildings should be urged to retrofit, where necessary, to meet the standards of the Regional Energy Plan; financial assistance may be available to some home owners through State programs and organizations such as the Bennington Rutland Opportunity Council (BROC). In addition, the development and utilization of alternative energy sources should be explored and supported.

It is well established that effective land use planning can promote energy conservation. Development should be concentrated in growth centers, with new residential development convenient to commercial service and employment centers. The land use element of this Plan reflects these principals by prohibiting permanent development in Arlington's remote forest areas, by discouraging scattered development in rural areas, and by providing for more intensive residential and commercial growth in designated village areas. The Plan also discourages capital expenditures on roads or other infrastructure that would tend to lead to scattered development. Compact development patterns will encourage non-motorized modes of transportation, while reducing the number and length of automobile trips, truck deliveries, and the like.

Future public and private investments should be mindful of energy conservation. Facilities that encourage pedestrian and bicycle transportation (e.g., centrally located parking facilities and sidewalks in village areas, and bicycle paths and lanes) should be pursued. Efforts to develop alternative/renewable energy sources, such as solar and wind power should be supported.

14.2 Energy Policy: The development of new forms of energy has created more diversity in sources of energy for residents and businesses. Encouraging both energy sources that minimize environmental impacts and reduce costs as well as energy conservation measures can benefit residents, promote economic development and protect natural resources.

14.3 Energy Actions:

1. The Planning Commission should encourage siting of buildings to maximize solar access for heating and lighting and to incorporate landscaping and other measures to moderate temperature.
2. The Town should require and verify that new residential buildings meet state mandated residential energy standards, and that commercial and industrial buildings meet commercial building energy standards.
3. The Town should support and publicize programs sponsored by Efficiency Vermont, BCRC and other organizations that focus on energy savings and weatherization. This is particularly important for those with low or fixed incomes.
4. The Town should encourage commercial enterprises to conserve energy to reduce both use and costs.
5. Where feasible and where such uses would not impair natural resources, including migratory species, wind turbines can be developed to meet a portion of the town and regional demand.

6. Where feasible and where such uses would not result in forest degradation or fragmentation, wood resources can be harvested to provide a local source of energy.
7. The Town should support the installation of solar energy systems by residential, commercial and industrial users to increase diversity in electrical generation.

## **XV. HEALTH CARE**

### 15.1 General Information

Availability of adequate health care in a rural community like Arlington can often be a problem. There may not be a large enough population to support a local physician or a dentist. There may not be emergency services close enough to assist in case of accidents or life threatening health problems. Hospitals and clinics may be many miles away and getting to them by private or public transportation may pose problems, especially when repeated care is required. Fortunately, such problems do not exist in Arlington.

Residents of Arlington are fortunate in having many in-town health care services and, within neighboring towns only a few miles distant, additional services to meet virtually any medical or dental need. A family medical practice is established in Arlington at a central location on Route 7A across from the Town Hall, and the examining rooms and equipment reflect a state of the art approach to the practice of medicine. The same is true of the dentist's office, located next door to the medical building. This general practice provides a wide range of dental services, and advice and counsel on care that may require the attention of specialists. In 2013, a pharmacy was opened to provide more convenient pharmacy services in Arlington.

In 2013, a federal grant was approved to create a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) in Arlington. Federally Qualified Health Centers are community organizations that provide comprehensive primary care and preventive care, including health, oral and mental health/substance abuse services to persons of all ages regardless of their ability to pay or health insurance status. The plan is to convert the existing family medical practice into a FQHC which will be the Battenkill Valley Health Center.

The Arlington Nursing Service is another health care benefit enjoyed by the Town's citizenry and by residents of Sandgate and Sunderland. Services include nursing care at local schools, an arrangement with the Manchester Health Services for home health care, a free well-child clinic, dental care for elementary school children, and health screening and flu clinics. These essential benefits are provided regardless of one's ability to pay. Should one not have health insurance or the resources to pay for the services rendered, the Arlington Nursing Service covers the cost.

The Arlington Rescue Squad, serving Arlington, Sandgate, Sunderland, and North Shaftsbury, is staffed by paid staff and volunteers from the community and is funded primarily by donations. The Squad's purpose is to provide the best professional emergency care possible. Squad members are trained and certified as Emergency Medical Technicians, and Emergency Care Attendants. In addition to responding to emergency situations, the members have as an additional goal to

train the general public in immediate first aid treatment and CPR. Emergency calls are answered twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week.

There are other services in Arlington or close-by that are beneficial to the Town's residents in the health care area. The Project Against Violent Encounters, Inc. (PAVE) is a nonprofit corporation working to prevent domestic violence and sexual assault, and to assist victims of such crimes. For Arlington and neighboring communities there is a twenty-four hour hotline for crisis calls, private safe homes, and volunteers who will accompany victims to the police, a hospital, or court. This vital need is provided at minimal cost to Arlington residents.

The Southwestern Vermont Council on Aging, partly funded by Arlington taxes, provides many services to elders in the community. Senior meals, senior advocate assistance, Medicaid and food stamp assistance, essential transportation to meet medical/hospital appointments, and food shopping are just a few of the needs filled by this agency.

Arlington residents participating in the Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) also fill many other needs in the health care category. RSVP volunteers serve at the Southwestern Vermont Medical Center, United Counseling Service, Social Rehabilitation Service, American Red Cross, Special Olympics, Well-Child Clinics, and on and on.

The Vermont Center for Independent Living, while a State organization, has the grassroots goal of assisting any Vermonter with disabilities, to develop the resources necessary to achieve self-determination and an independent lifestyle.

Beyond Arlington's town limits, but only minutes away, is an array of medical, dental, hospital, and counseling services available to those living in Arlington. In Bennington there is the Southwestern Vermont Medical Center, a 99 bed acute care hospital providing a full range of inpatient and outpatient services to Bennington County residents and those living in neighboring counties and states. Associated with the Medical Center, or sharing space on "hospital hill, are the Wellness Connection, Hospice of the Bennington Area, Bennington Home Health Agency, Planned Parenthood of Vermont, and United Counseling Service. Southwestern Vermont Medical Center and Dartmouth Hitchcock are now working together to bring Arlington the region's finest physicians and health care.

The Northshire Medical Building in Manchester hosts medical associates in primary health care and specialists in many fields of medicine such as neurology, obstetrics, pediatrics, psychiatry and psychology, and nutrition counseling. The Northshire Campus is also affiliated with the Southwestern Vermont Medical Center

Additionally, the Bennington County Physician's Care Program, coordinated in part by the Putnam Memorial Health Corporation, provides an initial visit to a physician and referral services at no cost to those in the area who cannot afford it; subsequent visits are charged for, however.

While the local dentists provide a wide range of dental care including oral surgery, root canal treatment, gum care and treatment, and the fitting of dentures, there will be occasions when they recommend treatment by a specialist. Bennington provides special dental care in the fields of oral surgery and treatment of gum diseases; Manchester in the fields of orthodontia and root canal procedures; and Rutland for special problems relating to dental work with children.

To provide training for future nurses, Associate and Baccalaureate Degrees in Nursing are offered at Southern Vermont College in Bennington. Also, the Putnam Memorial School of Practical Nursing, funded in part by the State, provides training for those interested in this level of nursing education.

While those living in Arlington are fortunate in having access to very adequate health care services, there are some concerns, both on a local level as well as nationwide. First, the cost of health care has risen substantially over the past decade, outstripping the cost of most other goods and services. Those without health insurance are suffering the most, but the providers of such insurance coverage are suffering also, as are those paying the premiums. The magnitude of this problem is beyond local solutions, and encouraging State and Federal representatives and officials to come to grips with the problem is essential.

It is essential that the Town make every effort to maintain and extend medical, dental, and auxiliary services. Private donations, commercial and industrial support, and line item expenditures in the Town Budget are to be encouraged when appropriate. Individuals and organizations that serve the community so well must not be allowed to struggle along, or even wither away, because of lack of local support. Arlington is blessed in many respects, but the blessing of health care services cannot be taken for granted, lest it is lost.

15.2 Health Care Policy: The Town should make every effort to maintain and extend access to medical, dental, and auxiliary services.

### 15.3 Health Care Actions

1. The Town should identify vulnerable populations including the disabled, elderly and others who may need assistance, particularly in an emergency.

## **XVI. MUNICIPAL ADMINISTRATION**

### 16.1 Town Government - Structure and Staffing

A five member Board of Selectmen elected by the registered voters of the Town governs the Town of Arlington. Also elected are the Town Clerk, the Town Treasurer, three Listers, three Auditors, three Grand Jurors, seven Justices of the Peace, and several other Town officials. The Board of Selectmen appoints a Health Officer and one Deputy, a seven member Planning Commission, a seven member Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA), and approximately twenty other residents to perform Town functions. Also, the Selectmen hire a Road Foreman and road crew, Secretary to the Board, and a Town Attorney. The town contracts with the Bennington County Sheriff's Department for their services. The Planning Commission appoints a Land Use Administrator with the consent of the Selectmen.

In total, some eighty Town residents serve the Town government in one capacity or another. The principal Town officers are paid annual salaries or an hourly wage. Most of the appointed officers serve without pay.

The Select Board is currently evaluating whether or not the existing governing structure is sufficient to meet the complex and growing demands of managing the

Town. At some point over the coming years, the townspeople may decide that it is necessary to move to a structure of government that includes a salaried Town Manager or Supervisor, along with the Board.

## 16.2 Town Services and Related Costs

The services rendered by the Town government and the related costs are generally broken down into six categories — administration, appropriations, fire protection, highway, Town Hall, and Town patrol. Traditionally, the administrative and highway costs are the most substantial, making up about 70% of the Town budget. Appropriations and fire protection follow in that order, with Town Hall and patrol costs.

Administration covers a wide range of services and costs. As such, they represent the “nuts-and-bolts” of running the Town activities from animal control to ZBA reviews. Audits, clerical and listing services, scheduling and conducting elections, issuing licenses and permits, and providing Xerox copy service are a few of the Town’s administrative functions. The most substantial costs are in the clerical, insurance, street lights, County tax, solid waste, and listing areas.

Appropriations covers funds set aside to support agencies serving the Town or the area in one way or another, such as nursing services for the elderly, childcare, community nursing, libraries, cemeteries, and the Rescue Squad.

Funds for Fire Protection represent a modest allocation in the Town budget. The service rendered is, of course, the protection of the Town and its residents from the destruction of property and loss of life by fire. The major costs are maintenance of equipment, the purchase of new equipment not provided for through Capital funds, hydrant installation and maintenance, and Personal Protective Equipment for the firemen. The Fire Company owns the firehouses in East Arlington and West Arlington. The Fire Department and the Fire Company are staffed by volunteers from the areas served, which include the neighboring Towns of Sunderland and Sandgate.

The Town Highway Department stands as an equal with administration in terms of costs to taxpayers. The department is responsible for the use and maintenance of the Town garage, construction and care of town roads, bridges and culverts, roadside maintenance within the right-of-way, winter plowing and salting, sanding of all town roads and the use and maintenance of Town trucks, plows, graders, loaders, and other capital equipment related to the highway function. Highway maintenance is the largest expenditure in the category, followed by labor costs and employee benefits, including health, pension, and workers compensation.

The Town Hall serves as a place for public meetings, Town offices, and a “center” for Town Government. The costs involved are largely for the upkeep of the building, such as repairs and services, fuel, electricity, and janitorial service. The space that was the Post Office has been renovated and now the town official’s offices are on the first floor.

The constable is now an appointed position and has not been filled for several years. Town patrols are maintained under a contract with the Bennington County Sheriff’s Department.

The Town has developed a website that will provide information to the public about town meetings, regulations, and so forth. This is an important step toward giving the Town a presence in the communication media of the Internet that has become central to daily life for many.

### 16.3 Town and School Expenditure Budgets

Most of the growth in local public expenditures over the past five years is attributable to increases in the school budget, which accounts for over 80% of the total budget annually. Table 9 shows the changes in the Town Budget, the School Budget, and the combined total for the years 2008 to 2012. These dollar amounts have not been adjusted for inflation. The total budget has been growing at about -3.2% to 3.5% over these years. is a relatively low rate of growth since the amounts have not been adjusted for the rate of inflation over that period of time. Some of the small changes in expenditures reflect an attempt to restrain budgets with the 2008 recession.

Table 9

Expenditure Budgets for the Town of Arlington and the School District from 2008 - 2012. Source: Arlington Town and School Treasurers

Year	Town	School	Total	% Change
2008	\$1,141,419	\$5,630,655	\$6,772,074	+3.3
2009	\$1,136,316	\$5,680,655	\$6,816,971	+0.7
2010	\$1,133,164	\$5,463,998	\$6,597,162	-3.2
2011	\$1,150,977	\$5,505,394	\$6,656,371	+0.9
2012	\$1,206,929	\$5,683,738	\$6,890,667	+3.5

### 16.4 Sources of Funds to Meet Town and School Expenses

There are various sources of funds to meet Town and School expenses, but the primary source is the property tax. There are two separately set tax rates, one for Town expenses and one for the School. These are combined to determine the total property taxes levied on the appraised fair market value of real estate.

The funds required to meet Town expenses are derived from several sources. Aside from the property tax other major sources are State funds for highway and bridge construction, maintenance, and repair, and fire department services to Sandgate and Sunderland. Grants from many sources are combined with local tax funds to pay for the larger projects throughout the Town. Smaller amounts of income are derived from land use permits, delinquent tax collection interest, and revenue from fines that are issued by the Sheriff's Department, and other minor fees. In a typical year, approximately 70% of the Town budget is raised through the property tax, with the balance coming from the secondary sources mentioned above. Prudent management of funds or unexpected revenue can result in a surplus at year's end which is used in the following year to lower the amount to be raised by taxes.

The funds to meet School expenses are also primarily derived from the education property taxes. Other sources include special education grants and fees, state transportation aid, and tuition from students attending from other towns.

The amount of revenue to be raised by taxes for the town, the school, and the combined budgets is shown in Table 10. Since there are variations in the other sources of funds, these amounts do not necessarily track the changes in the budgets in Table 9. The dollar amounts are not adjusted for inflation. The total has been growing at a rate between -9% and +6%.

Table 10.

Amount of Revenue to be Raised by Taxes 2008-2012 for the Town of Arlington and the School District Source: Arlington Town and School Treasurers.

Year	Town	School	Total	% Change
2008	\$795,670	\$4,236,751	\$5,032,421	+6.2
2009	\$883,267	\$3,716,641	\$4,599,908	-8.6
2010	\$864,186	\$3,779,570	\$4,643,756	+1.0
2011	\$859,751	\$3,800,588	\$4,660,339	+0.4
2012	\$869,734	\$3,825,537	\$4,695,271	+0.7

### 16.5 The Budgeting Process and Determination of the Tax Rate

Preparation of the Town budget is as much based on past events as it is on future forecasts. Over time, a community develops a pattern of needs and expenditures that are satisfied, in part, by the Town government. The Town budgeting process takes into account this pattern in determining the funds necessary to meet administrative, highway, and other costs. Additional funds may be required to meet needs or expenditures that are unanticipated, emergency, or unforeseeable. Expenditures of funds require careful judgment by Selectmen and other Town officials in managing current budgets, preparing budgets for the next fiscal year, and for short and long term budget planning.

All Town officials involved in the expenditure of Town funds play a part in the budgeting process by projecting the needs and expenditures for their areas of responsibility, both within the normal pattern and outside of it, when necessary. The final budget, based on these projections, is then compiled by the Selectmen and presented for approval to the registered voters of the Town. The voters may approve, modify, or disapprove the budget. In the latter case, a budget reflecting the wishes of the voters is usually resubmitted for approval.

There are several sources of monies to meet Town obligations — local taxes, state and federal funds, license fees, monies received from neighboring towns, etc. Except for taxes, these monies are considered as income to the Town, and are subtracted from the Town budget as approved by the voters. The remaining balance represents the amount to be raised by taxes. The tax, referred to as a property tax, is levied on the appraised fair market value of the real estate in the Town. The responsibility for determining fair market values rests with the Town Listers who are elected by the voters. With some modification, their final product represents the value of the Grand List for tax purposes. This then becomes the basis for determining the tax rate.

The dollar amount to be raised by taxes is divided by the dollar amount of the Town's fair market value, with the result of that calculation the tax rate. The rate is then applied to each one hundred dollars of one's real and personal estate. For example, if the fair market value is \$100,000,000 (one hundred million) and the amount to be raised by taxes is \$400,000 (four hundred thousand), the resultant rate would be \$.40 per \$100 of assessed value:

$$(\$400,000 / \$100,000,000) \times \$100 = \$.40$$

If one's property is valued at \$150,000 (one hundred fifty thousand), the Town property tax would be \$600:

$$(\$150,000 / \$100) \times \$0.40 = \$600$$

The School Budget for the Arlington School District is prepared by the Arlington School Board. But the passing of Act 60 and Act 68 by the State of Vermont has changed the way school taxes and the tax rate are handled. All calculations are now done by the tax department in Montpelier and the town uses their numbers when setting the rate.

The education property tax rates set by the state are influenced by a variety of factors, including the number of students, the school budget, and whether the assessment of Town properties reflects fair market value.

There is a separate tax rate for residential property and nonresidential property. Residential property is the primary home of a Vermont resident. Nonresidential property would include commercial and industrial property, property owned by nonresidents, and property owned by Vermonters beyond their residence. For Vermont residents below a certain income level the "income sensitivity" adjustment puts a cap on the total property tax payment as a set percent of their income. This is currently around 2%. This provision only applies to the house and up to 2 acres. In this case the state pays part of the property tax that is due to the Town.

Over the past few years the combined Town and School tax rate has varied from 1.63 to 1.7746. The dollar amounts are not adjusted for inflation. The total property tax rates and taxes for sample Residential property values for 2008 to 2012 are shown in Table 11.

Table 11

Property Taxes Levies on Sample Residential Properties from 2008-2012 using the total combined tax rate for the Town of Arlington and the School, Source: Arlington Town and School Treasurers

Year	Tax Rate (Combined Town & School)	Home Assessed at \$100,000	Home Assessed at \$200,000
2008	1.6305	\$1,630.50	\$3,261.00
2009	1.7315	\$1,731.50	\$3,463.00
2010	1.7672	\$1,767.20	\$3,534.40
2011	1.7746	\$1,774.60	\$3,549.20
2012	1.7699	\$1,769.90	\$3,539.80

## 16.6 Capital Programming

Capital programming provides a method for selecting, scheduling, and financing capital projects. Vermont statute 24 V.S.A. Section 4426 defines capital projects as:

- a) any physical betterment or improvement including furnishings, machinery, apparatus, or equipment for such physical betterment or improvement when first constructed or acquired; or
- b) any preliminary studies and surveys relating to any physical betterment or improvement; or
- c) land or rights in land; or
- d) any combination of paragraphs (a), (b), and (c) above.

Capital projects are particularly important to a community. Some of the important impacts of capital projects are enumerated here: (Evans 1974)

- (1) As major costs, they place a visible burden on the tax rate and possibly the debt structure of the municipality.
- (2) The operating budget is significantly affected over the long-term by new structures and equipment.
- (3) Capital expenditures typically represent permanent, inflexible investments having an effect over long periods of time.
- (4) Capital facilities can dramatically affect the governmental service patterns of the municipality.
- (5) Through their effect on service patterns, capital expenditures can affect the rate and location of growth.
- (6) Capital projects often exert a direct and immediate impact on the physical environment.

Capital programming requires that a town address such questions as: "Which projects should be undertaken?" "When should they be implemented?" and "How should they be paid for?" By answering these questions a municipality will significantly improve its ability to assure good land development practices, smooth out a fluctuating tax rate, anticipate service problems before crisis conditions develop, coordinate related projects and activities, and assess alternative solutions to service problems.

The Town is updating a Capital budget and Capital plan working with representatives from Town departments, the School District and the Fire Department. This plan will be updated each year as part of the budget process. If needed, the amount of funds set aside to meet the Capital Plan can be adjusted. These funds will be under "Reserve Funding" and will now become a part of each department's budget.

## **XVII. IMPLEMENTATION SUMMARY**

### 17.1 Direction

This Town Plan will only be effective if it is successfully implemented. A number of specific actions - to be taken by the Planning Commission, Board of Selectmen, and other local officials - are enumerated in the Plan. These actions should be taken, and specific policies followed, or the value of the time and thought that has gone into the preparation of the Plan will have been diminished.

The Planning Commission and Board of Selectmen should report each year on actions taken that are intended to implement the goals of this plan. This report could take the form of a summary of projects reviewed, permits issued, and actions taken under each of the sections of this plan.

At some places in the Plan further planning studies are called for before final action can be taken. The Planning Commission may undertake such studies on its own, with other local officials, or may work with the BCRC or other towns or groups. Final plans or implementation strategies will need to be presented to the public and approved by the Board of Selectmen.

Very often the most efficient and effective way to implement certain goals of a town plan is through the use of regulations, particularly the municipal zoning and subdivision bylaws. Additional changes may be proposed for discussion following adoption of this Plan. The discussion of land use (Section VIII) contains several recommendations for guiding future development by utilizing innovative regulations such as cluster subdivision, open space conservation, and phased growth controls. The Planning Commission should work on implementing these ideas at their monthly long-range planning meetings.

Because the expenditure of public funds affects both how a town grows and the quality of life within the community, fiscal issues must be considered in a town plan. Arlington may want to renew its efforts to maintain an ongoing capital budgeting process. Of course, the Arlington School District must be fully involved in this process because a large share of the public's tax burden is used to support the local schools. The Plan also notes the importance of public properties and services and states that funds should be appropriated to support and maintain them, and even to acquire property that is determined to be of particular value to the townspeople.

A final and direct way to see that the Plan is implemented is for the Town and School District to participate in all Act 250 hearings at which the Town is a party and insist that major new developments conform to the policies of the Plan. The Town should also attend hearings on State agency plans and identify any issues that might affect Arlington or be contrary to the Town Plan. The Town should then work with any such agency to develop alternatives that will be acceptable to both parties.

## **XVIII. RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PLANS**

Arlington is a diverse town lying near the center of the Bennington Region. Arlington's village areas coincide with the Regional Plan's Village Districts in

location and current and planned use. Relatively low density rural/residential land occupies most of the rest of the valley areas in both the local and regional plans. A majority of the land in Arlington is in the Regional Plan's Upland Forest District, consistent with the Town's Forest and Recreation District; both areas emphasize natural resource protection and uses related to those resources, with little or no permanent development. The type, location, and rate of new development planned by the Town are consistent with the Regional Plan. Both plans also are in agreement on the nature of critical resources and strategies to conserve them.

Similarly, there do not appear to be any significant conflicts with the municipal plans of the surrounding towns of Sandgate, Sunderland, or Shaftsbury. The land use districts in those towns match up well with those in Arlington: forest districts adjacent to forest districts and rural/residential areas next to similarly zoned land. Sunderland does have a commercial zone along Route 7A, a designation similar to Arlington's CRR zoned areas to the south.

A number of specific issues requiring regional or inter-municipal cooperation are identified in the Arlington Town Plan. A principal concern is the use and protection of the Batten Kill. Cooperation with towns from Dorset to Greenwich, New York is called for. Ground water protection and the area's principal public water supply is an issue of concern that must be addressed jointly with Sunderland, as the supply's protection zone is located in that town. Arlington's schools accept students from Sandgate and Sunderland. Solid waste, emergency services, health care, air quality, and recreational resources are among the other issues specifically identified in the Arlington Town Plan as requiring cooperation with people beyond the municipal borders.

In summary, the Town's plan for growth and development is consistent with the Regional Plan and with the plans of neighboring towns. Moreover, the Town has identified a range of issues where cooperation is called for, and has enumerated appropriate actions to address those issues.

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#### Personal Communication

Bill Budde, Russell Vermontiana Collection Curator, Martha Canfield Library, Arlington, VT [russell\\_vermontiana\\_collection@hotmail.com](mailto:russell_vermontiana_collection@hotmail.com) 802-375-6153

Shannon Pytik, River Scientist, Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, River Management Program, [Shannon.pytlik@state.vt.us](mailto:Shannon.pytlik@state.vt.us); 802-490-6158. Shannon Pytik developed the river corridor boundaries (FEH) based on the Phase 2 studies (Field 2005, South Mountain Research and Consulting 2009).

Steve Revell, CPG, Lincoln Applied Geology, Inc., 163 Revell Dr., Lincoln, VT 05443, 802-453-4384, [srevell@lagvt.com](mailto:srevell@lagvt.com).

### Sources for Maps

The maps in this plan are for planning purposes only. The data sources are listed below and should be consulted for data use limitations.

Maps	Information Sources
Map 1. Town of Arlington	Vermont Center for Geographic Information, vcgi.vermont.gov USDA Geospatial Gateway: <a href="http://datagateway.nrcs.usda.gov/">http://datagateway.nrcs.usda.gov/</a>
Map 2. Arlington Bedrock Geology	Vermont Geological Survey <a href="http://www.anr.state.vt.us/dec/geo/catalog.htm">http://www.anr.state.vt.us/dec/geo/catalog.htm</a> USDA Geospatial Gateway: <a href="http://datagateway.nrcs.usda.gov/">http://datagateway.nrcs.usda.gov/</a>
Map 3. Arlington Surficial Geology	Vermont Center for Geographic Information, vcgi.vermont.gov USDA Geospatial Gateway: <a href="http://datagateway.nrcs.usda.gov/">http://datagateway.nrcs.usda.gov/</a>
Map 4. Arlington Land Cover	NOAA Coastal Services Center <a href="http://www.csc.noaa.gov/digitalcoast/">http://www.csc.noaa.gov/digitalcoast/</a> 2010 land cover data used USDA Geospatial Gateway: <a href="http://datagateway.nrcs.usda.gov/">http://datagateway.nrcs.usda.gov/</a>
Map 5. Arlington Historic District	Vermont Center for Geographic Information, vcgi.vermont.gov USDA Geospatial Gateway: <a href="http://datagateway.nrcs.usda.gov/">http://datagateway.nrcs.usda.gov/</a> Historic district boundaries digitized from U.S. Department of the Interior 1989 provided by Bill Budde curator of the Russell Collection
Map 6 East Arlington Historic District	Vermont Center for Geographic Information, vcgi.vermont.gov USDA Geospatial Gateway: <a href="http://datagateway.nrcs.usda.gov/">http://datagateway.nrcs.usda.gov/</a> USDA Vermont Center for Geographic Information, vcgi.vermont.gov Geospatial Gateway: <a href="http://datagateway.nrcs.usda.gov/">http://datagateway.nrcs.usda.gov/</a> Historic district boundaries digitized from U.S. Department of the Interior 1996 provided by Bill Budde curator of the Russell Collection
Map 7 Arlington Green Covered Bridge	Vermont Center for Geographic Information, vcgi.vermont.gov Geospatial Gateway: <a href="http://datagateway.nrcs.usda.gov/">http://datagateway.nrcs.usda.gov/</a> Information from Bill Budde curator of the Russell Collection
Map 8. Arlington Development Patterns	Vermont Center for Geographic Information, vcgi.vermont.gov Geospatial Gateway:

Maps	Information Sources
	<a href="http://datagateway.nrcs.usda.gov/">http://datagateway.nrcs.usda.gov/</a>
Map 9. Arlington Surface Water Resources	Vermont Center for Geographic Information, <a href="http://vcgi.vermont.gov">vcgi.vermont.gov</a> Vermont Natural Resources Atlas and BioFinder <a href="http://www.anr.state.vt.us/site/html/maps.htm">http://www.anr.state.vt.us/site/html/maps.htm</a> Geospatial Gateway: <a href="http://datagateway.nrcs.usda.gov/">http://datagateway.nrcs.usda.gov/</a>
Map 10. Arlington Flood Hazard Zones	Vermont Center for Geographic Information, <a href="http://vcgi.vermont.gov">vcgi.vermont.gov</a> Vermont Natural Resources Atlas and BioFinder <a href="http://www.anr.state.vt.us/site/html/maps.htm">http://www.anr.state.vt.us/site/html/maps.htm</a> Shannon Pytlik, VT ANR (FEH zones) Geospatial Gateway: <a href="http://datagateway.nrcs.usda.gov/">http://datagateway.nrcs.usda.gov/</a>
Map 11. Arlington Groundwater Resources	Vermont Center for Geographic Information, <a href="http://vcgi.vermont.gov">vcgi.vermont.gov</a> Vermont Geological Survey, <a href="http://www.anr.state.vt.us/dec/geo/grndwaterinx.htm">http://www.anr.state.vt.us/dec/geo/grndwaterinx.htm</a> Vermont Natural Resources Atlas and BioFinder <a href="http://www.anr.state.vt.us/site/html/maps.htm">http://www.anr.state.vt.us/site/html/maps.htm</a> Geospatial Gateway: <a href="http://datagateway.nrcs.usda.gov/">http://datagateway.nrcs.usda.gov/</a> Steven Revell, Lincoln Applied Geology
Map 12. Arlington Agricultural Soils	Vermont Center for Geographic Information, <a href="http://vcgi.vermont.gov">vcgi.vermont.gov</a> Geospatial Gateway: <a href="http://datagateway.nrcs.usda.gov/">http://datagateway.nrcs.usda.gov/</a>
Map 13. Arlington Forest Resources	Vermont Center for Geographic Information, <a href="http://vcgi.vermont.gov">vcgi.vermont.gov</a> Vermont Natural Resources Atlas and BioFinder <a href="http://www.anr.state.vt.us/site/html/maps.htm">http://www.anr.state.vt.us/site/html/maps.htm</a> Geospatial Gateway: <a href="http://datagateway.nrcs.usda.gov/">http://datagateway.nrcs.usda.gov/</a>
Map 14. Arlington Natural Features	Vermont Center for Geographic Information, <a href="http://vcgi.vermont.gov">vcgi.vermont.gov</a> Vermont Natural Resources Atlas and BioFinder <a href="http://www.anr.state.vt.us/site/html/maps.htm">http://www.anr.state.vt.us/site/html/maps.htm</a> Geospatial Gateway: <a href="http://datagateway.nrcs.usda.gov/">http://datagateway.nrcs.usda.gov/</a>
Map 15. Arlington Land Use	Information maintained by BCRC Geospatial Gateway: <a href="http://datagateway.nrcs.usda.gov/">http://datagateway.nrcs.usda.gov/</a>
Map 16. Arlington Land Use Urban Compact and Environs	Information maintained by BCRC Geospatial Gateway: <a href="http://datagateway.nrcs.usda.gov/">http://datagateway.nrcs.usda.gov/</a>
Map 17. Arlington Public Facilities and Utilities	Vermont Center for Geographic Information, <a href="http://vcgi.vermont.gov">vcgi.vermont.gov</a> Geospatial Gateway: <a href="http://datagateway.nrcs.usda.gov/">http://datagateway.nrcs.usda.gov/</a>

Maps	Information Sources
Map 18. Arlington Transportation	Vermont Center for Geographic Information, <a href="http://vcgi.vermont.gov">vcgi.vermont.gov</a> Geospatial Gateway: <a href="http://datagateway.nrcs.usda.gov/">http://datagateway.nrcs.usda.gov/</a>
Map 19 Arlington Open Space Lands	Vermont Center for Geographic Information, <a href="http://vcgi.vermont.gov">vcgi.vermont.gov</a> Geospatial Gateway: <a href="http://datagateway.nrcs.usda.gov/">http://datagateway.nrcs.usda.gov/</a>

## Appendix I. Review of Statutory Requirements

The Vermont Municipal and Regional Planning and Development Act encourages towns to develop plans that are compatible with the plans of other municipalities and with the regional plan, and which are consistent with the goals that are contained in 24 V.S.A. Section 4302. The following section reviews this Plan’s consistency with those goals and discusses Arlington Town Plan in the context of the Bennington County Region and nearby municipalities. The statute also requires that the plan include a recommended program for implementing the objectives of the Plan. That requirement is met through the specific policies and recommendations that accompany each individual element of the Plan.

### Consistency with State Goals

The Planning and Development Act contains one set of goals that deals with the planning process—24 V.S.A. Section 4302(b):

- To establish a coordinated, comprehensive planning process and policy framework;
- To encourage citizen participation;
- To consider the use of resources and the consequences of growth and development;
- To work with other municipalities to develop and implement plans.

The Planning Commission began revisions to the 2008 Town Plan in June 2013 and a draft copy was presented at the July 2013 meeting. As required by Title 24 VSA Chapter 117, Section 4384, the Planning Commission held a public hearing to readopt the 2008 Town Plan in October 2013 to provide them with additional time to prepare this 2014 version. The Planning Commission then referred the plan to the Arlington Select Board at their meeting of November 4, 2013 stating there had been no changes to the plan. The Select Board held a public hearing on November 18, 2013 and voted to readopt the existing plan.

In the July 2013 meeting, the Planning Commission asked BCRC to apply for a grant to update the Figures, Maps and other sections of the plan to be consistent with new census data, state statues and other information. After receiving a grant, staff from the Bennington County Regional Commission proceeded to present revised drafts at several meetings with a final draft for consideration at the July 24, 2014 meeting. In accordance with Title 24 VSA Chapter 117 Section 4384, the

Commission prepared a written report summarizing changes to the plan and consistency with Title 24 VSA 4302. The Commission then referred the plan to adjacent municipalities, the Bennington County Regional Commission, the Vermont Department of Housing and Community Development, and business, conservation, low income advocacy and other community or interest groups that have requested notice prior to the date the hearing was warned. The Commission held a public hearing on October 23, 2014. The Commission then referred the revised plan to the Arlington Select Board on December 4, 2014. The Arlington Select Board held a public hearing on the proposed plan on December 29, 2014 and adopted the plan on January 26, 2015.

Thirteen specific goals (24V.S.A. Section 4302(c)) should be reflected in the Town Plan. Those goals are presented below with a discussion of how each is address in the Town Plan.

**1) To plan development so as to maintain the historic settlement pattern of compact village and urban centers separated by rural countryside.**

Preservation of the rural landscape, with its attendant cultural, historical, recreational, and aesthetic benefits is a priority for Arlington. Of particular importance is the maintenance of an open rural landscape outside of the villages along the main highway approaches to the town.

The land use element of the Town Plan states that the town prohibits permanent development in Arlington's remote forest areas, discourages scattered development in rural areas, and provides for more intensive residential and commercial growth in designated village areas. The Plan also discourages capital expenditures on roads or other infrastructure that would tend to lead to scattered development.

**2) To provide a strong and diverse economy that provides satisfying and rewarding job opportunities and that maintains high environmental standards, and to expand economic opportunities in areas with high unemployment or low per capita incomes.**

The Town Plan includes a section that discusses economic development and lists several recommendations that would support economic progress and the quality of life of the residents in Arlington. The Plan states that there is a need for a greater diversity of shopping, dining, and entertainment to revitalize the village centers. Investing in a small sewage treatment plant, among other recommendations, would support the economic development of the two centers.

The Plan also lists current opportunities in the region. Major manufacturing employers such as Mack Molding and Quadra-Tek are located in Arlington. There are also major employers nearby within the County such as Orvis, Vermont Country Store, Southwestern Vermont Medical Center and the many schools. The town's natural resource base also provides some employment opportunities in forestry, recreation, and agriculture.

**3) To broaden access to educational and vocational training opportunities sufficient to ensure the realization of the abilities of all Vermonters.**

The Town Plan discusses the importance of each school in the Arlington School District and programs that support a well-rounded education for all students. Maintaining a quality school system with programs that appeal to each individual remains a top priority in Arlington. The Plan also acknowledges that offering training programs for adults to develop skills and strategies to maximize their employment potential would be beneficial to the community.

**4) To provide for safe, convenient, economic, and energy efficient transportation systems that respect the integrity of the natural environment, including public transit options and paths for pedestrians and bicycles.**

The Transportation section states that safe, convenient, and economical transportation options are essential to the people and economy of Arlington. The section discusses the network of town and state roads and bridges in the community as well as rail lines, sidewalks, pathways, and bus service. With the road network having the heaviest use, the majority of transportation funding is spent on maintaining road and bridge infrastructure. However, the Plan does acknowledge the need for more pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, as well as better public transit service.

**5) To identify, protect, and preserve important natural and historic features of the Vermont landscape.**

The Land Use section includes the town's policy on land use that supports the concept of a village center with rural surroundings, reflects the natural characteristics of the land and its suitability for use and development, and preserves natural areas in sufficient quantity and quality to be self-sustaining ecosystems. Zoning districts, such as the Rural District and the Forest and Recreation District, also help protect and preserve the natural and historic features of Arlington's landscape.

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

The Town Plan states in the Ground Water Resources section that aquifers and groundwater recharge areas must be protected from activities or development that would adversely affect the quality of Arlington's groundwater.

The Air Quality section states that developments or activities that would adversely affect the town's air quality shall not be permitted, including the open burning of trash, and compliance with all state and federal regulations regarding wood-burning stoves and furnaces.

The Agriculture section states that agriculture lands and soils should be

conserved to allow for continuation of agriculture uses and to protect surface and groundwater resources.

The Forest Lands section states that large un-fragmented forests should remain intact to protect habitat for species dependent on that habitat, to slow and retain runoff, to protect water and air quality, to provide sustainable forest uses such as timbering and maple sugaring and to provide recreational and scenic resources.

The Important Natural Resources Areas section lists Rare and Uncommon Species and Natural Communities in Arlington, their habitats, and steps that should be taken to protect them.

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

The Energy section of the plan discusses a variety of energy sources utilized in Arlington. Because energy consumption is a significant issue in this area, a variety of solutions to conserve energy are mentioned from retrofitting buildings to land use and development planning. The Town Plan also mentions that alternative/renewable energy sources should be supported.

**8) To maintain and enhance recreational opportunities for Vermont residents and visitors.**

Arlington's location among the mountains, forests, and streams of southwestern Vermont provides a variety of easily accessible outdoor recreational opportunities. The Town Plan discusses this wealth of recreational opportunities surrounding natural resources, as well as recreational facilities and activities supported by the town. The Plan also discusses the importance of maintaining and improving access to recreational areas.

The natural resource that receives the most intensive recreational use is the Batten Kill. Maintenance of the recreational opportunities afforded by Arlington's waterways must consider the need for public access to these resources, protection of environmental quality, and the needs and differences of the various user groups.

**9) To encourage and strengthen agricultural and forest industries.**

The Town Plan states that Arlington should foster the use of local forest and agricultural products. Even though they represent a small part of the labor force, they involve large land areas. It is also mentioned that the continued use and conservation of agricultural and forest resources should be encouraged.

The Plan also includes the Agricultural Land Policy in Arlington. This states that agricultural lands and soils should be conserved to allow for continuation of agricultural uses and to protect surface and ground water resources.

- 10) To provide for the wise and efficient use of Vermont's natural resources and to facilitate the appropriate extraction of earth resources and the proper restoration and preservation of the aesthetic qualities of the area.**

The Town Plan states that the extraction of earth's resources is not presently a major economic activity in Arlington. However, the Zoning Bylaw contains special regulations designed to minimize the environmental impacts of any extraction and to assure restoration of the site once work is completed.

- 11) To ensure the availability of safe and affordable housing for all Vermonters.**

The section in the Town Plan that discusses housing states that an adequate supply of safe and sanitary housing should be available to meet the needs of all Arlington's residents. Such housing should be convenient to village centers, public utilities, facilities, and services, and should be developed in accordance with the other policies of this Plan.

The Plan also states that Arlington should support the provision of affordable housing for the elderly, disabled and those with special needs or very low income. This type of housing should be located in village centers.

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

In the section that discusses the future growth in Arlington, it states that residents and non-resident property owners have expressed the opinion that Arlington should strive to retain its present character as a small New England community centered on a village core (the Village District) surrounded by low density housing, farming, and open space. Moreover, the present mix of local business and industry, tourist activity, and recreational pleasures should be maintained. Future development in Arlington will be market driven.

The section on Public Utilities, Facilities and Services states that the town should assess current facilities and services on an annual basis to determine if they are adequate to meet the needs of residents and businesses, develop a plan for managing town properties to assure they are properly maintained, evaluate options for maintaining safe and reliable water supplies for the Village of Arlington and East Arlington, and evaluate options for maintaining safe and reliable waste water disposal in areas where soils and other factors create marginal conditions for on-site septic disposal systems.

- 13) To ensure the availability of safe and affordable childcare.**

The Childcare section of the Town Plan discusses the available options in Arlington. Arlington Area Childcare (Happy Days Playschool) provides a range of childcare and early education programs, along with activities for school age children and educational programs for parents. A number of

home-based daycare providers also serve the community. Expanded and enhanced childcare services should be supported through both existing organizations and programs offered by area employers. There should also be periodical assessments of childcare to assure that the needs of current and future residents are met.

**14) To encourage flood resilient communities.**

The Flood Resiliency section reviews the hazards posed by flooding and erosion and establishes a series of actions for reducing impacts from such events. Arlington has adopted a Flood Hazard Bylaw to regulate development in flood hazard areas. The regulations are designed to protect property and the health and safety of the population against the hazards of floodwater inundation, and to protect the community against the costs that may be incurred when unsuitable development occurs in areas prone to flooding. Development in the flood hazard areas must be carefully controlled in accordance with Arlington's flood hazard regulations.

**Relationship to Other Plans**

Section XVIII reviews the Town Plan in the context of plans of adjacent towns, Other parts of the plan discuss relevant plans such as the Town Hazard Mitigation Plan where applicable.