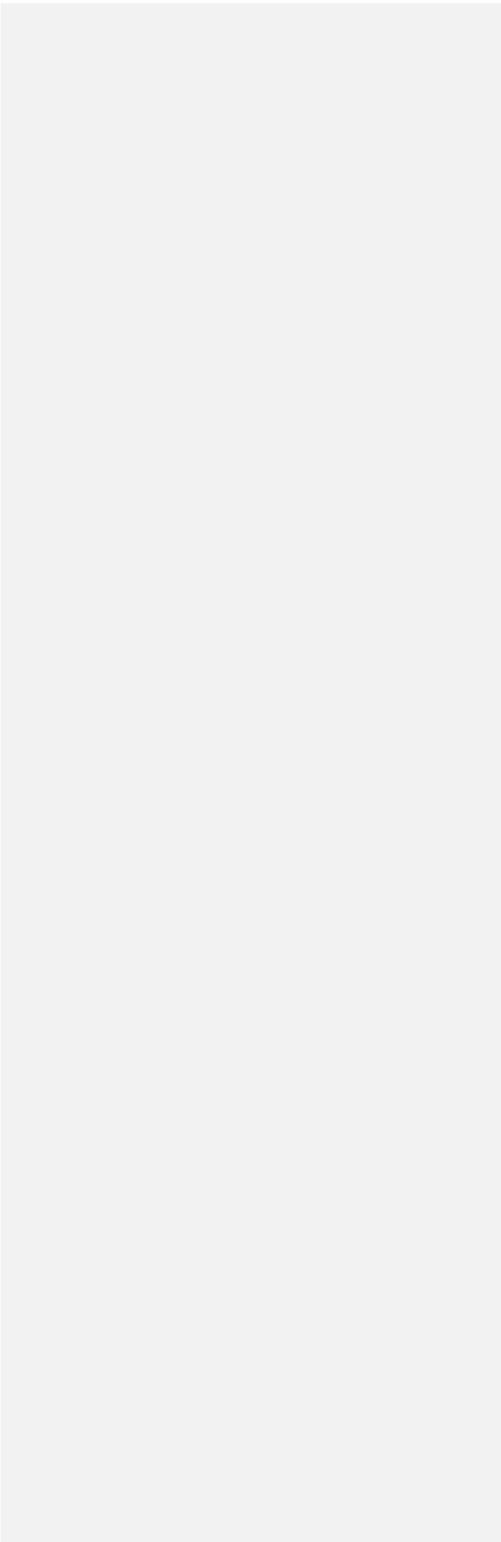


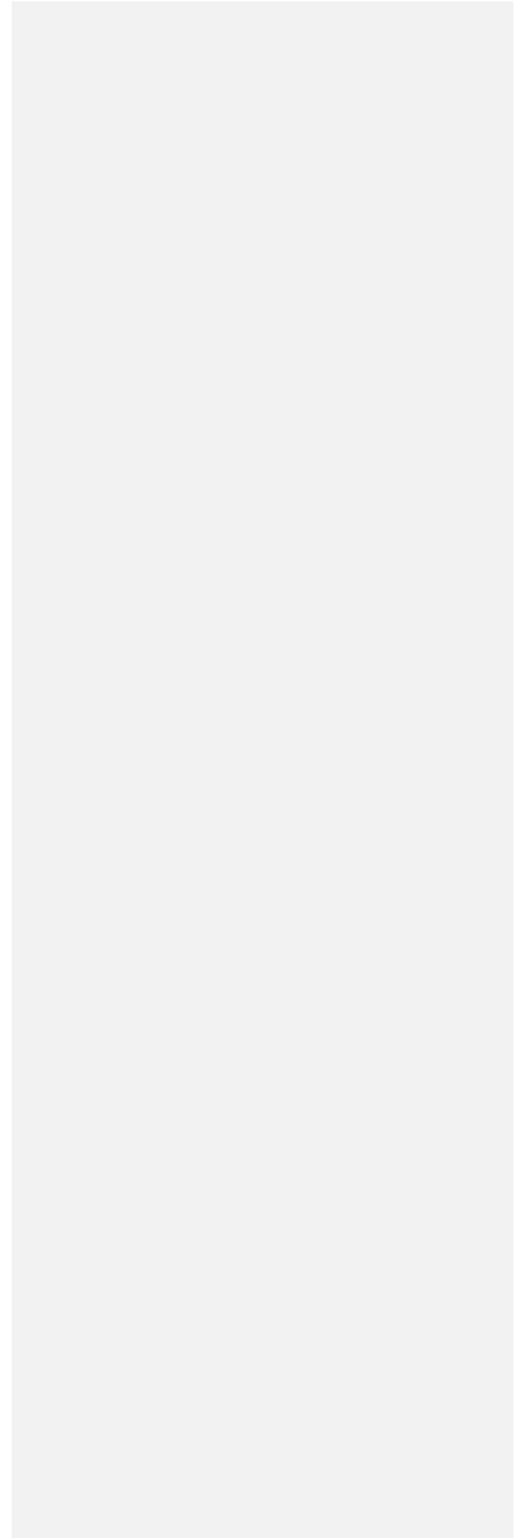
# Mount Holly Town Plan

Adopted \_\_\_\_\_



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## BACKGROUND

This plan is intended to provide a clear, written standard for orderly development that will preserve the town's distinctly rural character and appearance, while providing community services, as well as recreational and cultural opportunities. It is intended that the Plan be used in a positive manner as a tool in guiding the direction of growth and development in a way which is both economically feasible and environmentally acceptable. Results of efforts to achieve these goals will be measured by the future residents' quality of life.

The Vermont Municipal and Regional Planning and Development Act (Title 24 V.S.A., Chapter 117), authorizes, but does not require towns to develop plans.

However, the state limits the authority of towns that do not plan. For example, towns without current plans may not adopt a capital improvement program or levy impact fees, and they have no standing in Act 250 proceedings in which development proposals are evaluated for their impact upon the town.

Chapter 117 has been amended on several occasions since 1967. Major revisions occurred in 1988 and with the passage of Act 200 in 2004. These laws sought to integrate local, regional, and state agency planning in a bottom-up process; strengthened the role of town plans regarding local, regional, and state decision making; and established state planning goals.

Act 200 also created a process for regional planning commissions to approve town plans that are consistent with state planning goals.

The state passed Act 115 to assist towns in their efforts to avoid some of the results of development that were dramatically changing the character of the state in the late 1960's. The state does not discourage development but believes that the plans can enable a town to:

1. Protect its residents from overcrowding, traffic, and loss of privacy and quiet
2. Direct growth and development to provide an optimal physical and cultural environment
3. Protect private property
4. Reduce property taxes

24 V.S.A § 4382 specifies twelve elements that must be included in a plan adopted by a town: a statement of objectives, policies, and programs; a land

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use plan; a transportation plan; a utility and facilities plan; a statement of policies on the preservation of rare and irreplaceable natural areas; an educational facilities plan; an implementation program; a statement indicating how the plan relates to development trends in adjacent communities; an energy plan; a housing element; an economic development element; and a flood resilience element. In addition to containing all the required elements, plans must also be consistent with a series of statutory goals listed in 24 VSA §4302. Consistency with the goals means that the goals have been considered and addressed in the process used to prepare the plan, not that the plan include all the goals.

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## A Vision for This Plan

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The vision for the Mount Holly Town Plan is to reflect the collective values and goals of the Town's residents and to develop policies designed to guide future development in alignment with these values and goals. The official adoption of the Plan represents a conscious community decision about the Town's future character, its priorities for land use, and its conservation of physical resources, based in large part on Mount Holly's sense of identity as a Town and its residents' desire to carefully preserve those qualities that distinguish it.

The Mount Holly Town Plan will help ensure some local control over the future of our community. It directs state agencies to take only those actions in Town which are compatible with the goals and policies of the Town Plan.

The Mount Holly Town Plan sets forth goals and policies that establish a standard for review in Act 250 proceedings and other state regulatory processes. The language used is intended to be sufficiently clear for any citizen to understand and be guided accordingly. Its provisions shall be "mandatory in nature" and contain sufficient specificity to withstand a legal challenge.

Mount Holly's residents believe strongly that their community is a unique and special place, a belief resulting in a sense of civic responsibility and shared commitment to the Town's welfare.

The unique and special character of Mount Holly is principally derived from the rural character of the community, its historical land uses and settlement patterns, and the natural beauty of its mountain setting, containing large areas of wooded and open land, wetlands, and other habitats.

The Town Plan is designed to protect and reinforce all of these cultural and physical elements and, particularly, to preserve the rural nature of the Town by directing well-considered and controlled growth.

These aims are beneficial to both the individual landowner and the community at large, for it is the protection of the rural character and beautiful natural setting that underpins both the economic value and the aesthetic value of all land in the Town. Achieving these aims may, from time to time, involve conflicts in specific situations between a landowner and the community. Adoption of clearly stated ordinances will be helpful in minimizing such situations, and it is equally important that there be a variety of procedures and forums for discussion and a willingness to listen respectfully to one another, so that a full and fair consideration is given to the differing viewpoints.

Mount Holly today is facing increasing pressure to develop. Mount Holly is concerned about the impact of major projects within the Town and surrounding areas. Our town is bisected by Vermont Route 103, one of the state's most important east-west travel corridors, which could easily bring development that is in conflict with the historical settlement patterns of Mount Holly. As nearby towns see a proliferation of industrial scale renewable energy generation sites, we wish to plan for the impact they would have on our town. Mount Holly is also likely to experience development pressure in all areas of town due to growth associated with the Vail Resorts' Okemo Mountain Resort. In recent years, advances in wastewater treatment technologies has made previously undevelopable land available for residential development. Major changes in communications technology, such as the imminent arrival of cellular phone signal, being one of the few towns in the state to have 100% of homes served by broadband, and the pandemic-driven ability to work remotely are increasing pressure for new rural home sites in our town. It now becomes increasingly important to re-evaluate the Town's goals and objectives and present them in a new Plan that accurately represents the Town's best collective thinking. The Town of Mount Holly acknowledges the severe threat that climate change poses to every aspect of our daily lives and specific policies outlined in the town plan serve to address this serious concern.

The people of Mount Holly recognize that Mount Holly does not exist in isolation from the region and will be affected by what happens in the surrounding municipalities. However, the Plan does not suggest that Mount Holly should reflect the type and intensity of new development occurring elsewhere; rapid or incompatible growth will destroy those qualities that make Mount Holly unique. Through the implementation of the Plan, Mount

Holly can contribute to the region and the State by protecting and preserving this special and increasingly rare place. In so doing, the Town and its residents are exercising their best stewardship for these resources which have been so abundantly endowed them.

## Goals

In order to achieve our vision, protect the natural environment, and guide future growth and development we identify the following goals:

1. Protect and preserve the rural nature, environment, scenic quality, and sense of community of Mount Holly.
2. Encourage, support, and maintain a community of residents and property owners with age, social, and economic diversity.
3. Address the town's changing needs through a continuous planning process involving input from members of the community.
4. Maintain the town's historic development pattern with a compact village center (tight, cohesive settlement patterns without strip development or sprawl) within a rural setting, surrounded by undeveloped areas.
5. Assure that basic needs of health, safety, education, housing, and recreation will be met and maintained at appropriate levels to be inclusive of a diverse population, and in accordance with the town plan.
6. Allow for future growth opportunities in a way that will effectively meet community needs regarding education, highway, fire protection, first response, and other usual public services, but will not place an undue burden, financial or otherwise, on the Town to provide community facilities and services.
7. Encourage and preserve the use of working lands for sustainable agricultural and forestry in order to keep these resources productive, preserve the rural character of the historic landscape outside the village center, support the local economy, and increase the availability of local products.
8. Encourage energy efficiency, energy conservation, and non-polluting renewable energy production, while assuring that,
9. Assure that any project to create or modify highways, roads, trails, and drives will be consistent with the general character of the town, minimize the impact on the environment, foster desired development patterns, and ensure that the Town and State roads permit safe travel within and through the Town.

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10. Require that, to the most reasonable extent possible, public utilities be located and maintained in such a way that they will not have an undue adverse effect on the scenic quality, ecology, public health, and land values of the town.
11. Protect significant educational, scenic, historical, architectural, and archeological features.
12. Encourage the development of cultural, educational, and performing arts programs and activities that may enrich the lives of town residents and visitors, and make the Town attractive as a year-round destination.
13. Preserve the character of the village center with mixed uses at a scale appropriate to the architecture and historic character of Mount Holly.
14. Prohibit incompatible and uncoordinated development activity and mitigate other development that may adversely impact any goals within this plan.
15. Conserve and protect key scenic environmental features including open spaces, steep slopes, notable ridgelines and peaks, dark skies, and clean air and water.
16. Support economic activity that will sustain a vibrant year-round resident population, while ensuring compliance with high environmental standards and which is in alignment with the Town's goals.
17. Protect and seek to expand large unfragmented forest blocks, habitat connectors, significant natural communities and habitats, vernal pools, lowland wetlands and riparian corridors.

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## Community Profile

### GEOGRAPHY/RESOURCES

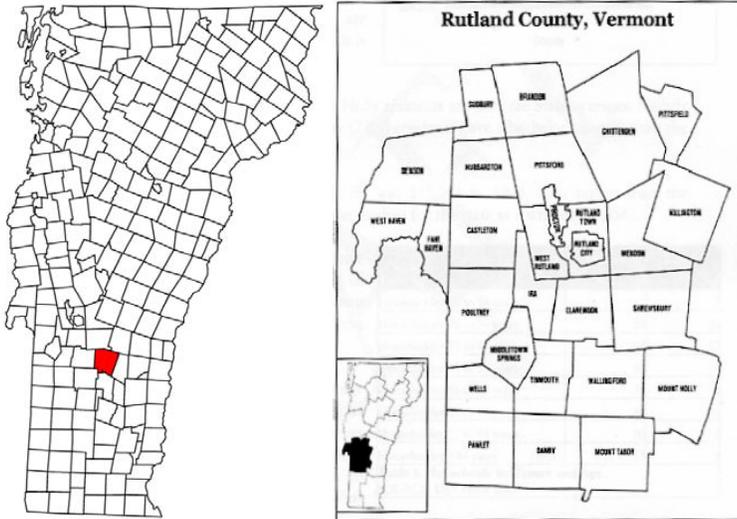
Mount Holly is a rural Vermont town surrounded by mountains. The estimated population is 1,237 (2010 US Census Bureau). Mount Holly is officially classified by the Vermont Municipal Planning and Development Act as a rural town.

Mount Holly shares common boundaries with the following towns: Wallingford, Mount Tabor, Weston, Ludlow, Plymouth, and Shrewsbury.

Most of the common boundary with Wallingford and all the common boundary with Mount Tabor occurs within the Green Mountain National Forest. The town expects that for the foreseeable future all such lands will continue to be managed by the United States Forest Service. The remaining boundary with Wallingford and the entire border with Shrewsbury and Plymouth involves lands rural in nature with low density housing and related farming or forestry uses.

The common boundary between Mount Holly and Ludlow occurs on the east slope of Okemo Mountain and primarily within Okemo State Forest. The primary activity along this border is skiing.

The area adjacent to the Mount Holly-Weston boundary is an area of very low density. Part of the boundary is within the Green Mountain National Forest and will continue under United States Forest Service management. Some of this area is within the Okemo State Forest and will continue under Vermont Department of Forest, Parks and Recreation management. The remaining land in this area, due to its remote location, will likely remain in very low-density use.



**TABLE 1 MOUNT HOLLY HAMLETS**

<b>Mount Holly</b>	intersection of Old Turnpike Road and Hortonville Road
<b>Bowlsville</b>	area surrounding the intersection of Bowlsville Road North and Packer Road
<b>Healdville</b>	area surrounding the intersection of Healdville Road, Shunpike Road, and RT 103
<b>Hortonville</b>	area surrounding the intersection of Hortonville Road and Shunpike Road
<b>Tarbellville</b>	area surrounding the intersection of Tarbellville Road and RT 155
<b>East Wallingford</b>	area surrounding the intersection of RT 155,140, and 103

## HISTORY

In 1759 General Jeffrey Amherst ordered a road built from Fort Number 4 in Charlestown, New Hampshire, to Crown Point, New York. The road crossed the Green Mountains at Mount Holly near Lake Ninevah, bringing settlers into south central Vermont, and later became part of the stage coach route between Burlington and Boston.

Needing money to support the Revolutionary War, Vermont's General Assembly decided to sell off "ungranted" lands. On February 23, 1781, Abraham Jackson, along with 29 others, paid 270 English pounds for 9,700 acres between Ludlow and Wallingford, which then came to be known as Jackson Gore. Among those who settled here were men who fought at Bunker Hill, the Battle of Lexington, and Ethan Allen's capture of Fort Ticonderoga.

Abraham Jackson's party moved to Mount Holly from Wallingford and built log cabins near the site of former Mount Holly General Store. Within a few years, another group of settlers worked their way around Okemo Mountain and built homes near the railroad track crossing at today's Healdville Road. Though living within 3 miles of each other, each group of settlers was unaware that the other settlement existed until 1786. Before long, paths and roads created a single community.

On October 31, 1792, Vermont's General Assembly formally created Mount Holly from Jackson's Gore and portions of land from Wallingford and Ludlow.

During the late 1840s, a race developed between the Central Vermont Railroad and the Rutland Railroad. Each wanted to be first to get a train through from Boston to Burlington. Working from both ends, the Rutland Railroad's tracks met and joined at the summit of the Mount Holly pass. There was a great deal of celebrating since they had won by a two-week margin. While making the cut through Mount Holly, the railroad workers found the remains of a mammoth preserved in a peat bog. A portion of a tusk and a molar were at one time on display at the Department of Geology at the University of Vermont.

In 1882, the Crowley Cheese Factory was built. Today it is designated a National Historic Place and listed in the National Register of Historical Places. It is the oldest, continuous operating cheese factory in the United States. Two years later, residents of Mount Holly constructed a church, which later became the town library and community center. The 1880s saw both the opening of the Crowley Cheese Factory and the closing of the Chase Toy

factory in Mechanicsville, which was renamed Belmont to appeal to the influx of tourists visiting Vermont in greater numbers.

Chase Toy moved to Rutland, which over time became a manufacturing center. The 1920s saw the introduction of electricity to Belmont village and the establishment of Route 103. With the further growth of manufacturing in Rutland and later Ludlow, and the availability of automobile travel, increasing numbers of Mount Holly residents found employment out of town in neighboring population centers.

The establishment of Okemo Mountain as a ski area in 1956 brought additional employment opportunities for Mount Holly residents and spurred demand for Mount Holly land as sites for second homes. The closing decades of the twentieth century saw a decline in dairy farming and the transition of Mount Holly to a residential community where a substantial number of townspeople commute to work. Mount Holly nonetheless still comprises many small-scale production and service businesses, often tied to natural resources, and remains a strong, vital community.

## Land Use

Mount Holly currently consists of 1,221 properties. Of the 1,221, properties 623 are nonresident owned and 598 are resident owned. Land use consists of public lands, conserved lands, and the village center for purposes of this section's goals and policies.

## Village Center

The state of Vermont has identified Belmont as a village center. In 2003 the property owners were granted a Village Center Designation. This qualified Belmont for VCD funding, which was used to plant roadside trees.

### Policies for Village Center:

1. Future development in the village should continue the historic development patterns and remain consistent with the scale of a traditional Vermont village. Continued residential uses in the village center should be encouraged, lest the village become solely a tourist-oriented commercial area.
2. Pathways for safe pedestrian travel should be considered.
3. A plan for off-road parking should be developed.

## Conserved Land

The Yale/Bowen Forest is a 462-acre tract adjacent to Okemo State Forest. It was willed to Yale University School of Forestry in 1924, in perpetuity by the Elmer and Edward Bowen family to be: "kept as a forest". The forest was left in memory of Joseph Brown Bowen, a forestry graduate of Yale University. The deed obligates the school to maintain the integrity of the forest indefinitely. The land is managed [as a working forest as part of the Yale School Forests system](#).

**Deleted:** by the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation

In 2003, the 77-acre Dana-Seward Farmland project on RT 155 was conserved as a joint effort by the Vermont Land Trust, the Freeman Foundation, and 150 contributing residents of Mount Holly. The Vermont Land Trust received donations of conservation easements: 46 acres opposite the Dana-Seward Farmland from John Fiske and Lisa Freeman, and 64 acres from Lorena and Peter Doolittle.

The Mount Holly Wildlife Corridor Forest Legacy project is an effort to connect the two units of the Green Mountain National Forest – north in Shrewsbury and south in Weston – with a corridor of conserved land for wildlife, primarily for black bear. A tract of 391 acres was protected with a conservation easement in December 2002. Forest Legacy funds in the amount of \$303,000 were paid to the Ninevah Foundation for the acquisition of land. The Ninevah Foundation property is approximately 1100 acres. In addition, the Vermont Land Trust has an easement on 273 acres of Forest Echo Farm.

Approximately 13,000 acres are protected or conserved; none of these acres are under town control. This is an important consideration, given that Okemo State Forest and Green Mountain National Forest are under the control of state and federal governments, respectively, with the town accorded no rights in determining any future use of the land.

## Natural, Scenic, Historical, and Cultural Resources

### PUBLIC LANDS

Public lands are set aside and protected for future use. The State of Vermont owns two wildlife management areas, which are managed by the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department. Star Lake wildlife management area comprises 92.3 acres located on the northeast side of the lake. It was donated by Judson and Margaret Lyon in 1979.

### WETLANDS

Wetlands are intermediate habitats between upland and aquatic ecosystems. Wetlands offer a wide variety of functions, which benefit wildlife and contribute to the health and safety of the public. These lands provide habitat, food, erosion protection, nutrients, filtration, groundwater recharge, aesthetic diversity, and opportunities for education and recreation.

### VERNAL POOLS

Vernal pools are seasonal wetlands, wet during spring and dry in summer. These pools lack fish; however, they do serve as habitat to a wide variety of wildlife including amphibians. Mount Holly is home to approximately 32 vernal pools.

### RIPARIAN HABITAT

Riparian areas are ecosystems comprised of streams, rivers, lakes, wetlands, and floodplains that form an intricate hydrological system.

Riparian ecosystems are special in their high biological diversity. Riparian vegetation is significant in filtering overland run off, protecting water quality, and stabilizing stream banks, and prevents excessive streambank erosion and sediment buildup in aquatic habitats. This habitat is significant for both wildlife and human populations.

#### CORE FOREST

Approximately twenty thousand acres, or 63% of the town, were identified as core forest. Core forest is forested wildlife and bird habitat that is far removed from human activities.

### BLOCKS, CONNECTIONS, AND CORRIDORS

Forest blocks are a contiguous area of forest in any stage of succession that is not currently developed for non-forest use. The Mount Holly landscape presents a complex array of roads, open fields, village clusters, and wildlands such as forests, wetlands, and forested streamside environments.

A habitat connector is land, water, or both that links sections of wildlife habitat, allowing the movement, migration, and dispersal of animals and plants, as well as the functioning of ecological processes. A habitat connector may also be called a wildlife corridor. There are approximately 55 potential corridors or connectors identified in Mount Holly.

Vermont forestlands should be managed to maintain and improve forest blocks and habitat connectors. Mount Holly forests support a wide variety of plant, animal, and insect life.

#### PREVENTION OF FRAGMENTATION

Mount Holly's forestlands should be managed.

1. Maintain and improve forest blocks and habitat connectors.
2. Encourage the preservation of significant wildlife habitat as identified on town plan maps to preserve such habitats.
3. Discourage the development in habitats that support endangered or rare species.
4. Encourage home businesses suitable for rural residential districts.
5. Preserve scenic vistas and open spaces.

## AGRICULTURE & SILVICULTURE

While Mount Holly has seen a decline in dairy farming, current agricultural operations involve the following: beef and dairy cattle, horse farms and riding schools, sheep, goats, pigs, fruit trees, nurseries, haying, corn fields, vegetables, poultry, and maple syrup.

Wood harvesting is an ongoing operation in town. Forest management is practiced in Okemo State Forest, the Yale-Bowen land, and Green Mountain National Forest.

### GOAL

To preserve Mount Holly's rural character and historic working landscape for future generations.

### POLICIES

1. Enhance the economic viability of agriculture and forestry enterprises in Mount Holly by:
  - a. Encouraging local participation in current use program.
  - b. Supporting the creation of local enterprises which provide a market for locally produced agricultural activities by promoting seasonal recreational diversification and multiple uses of farm and forest land;
2. Maintain an adequate land base to support present and future forestry and agriculture activities by:
  - a. Protecting agricultural resources by encouraging preservation of prime agricultural soil.
  - b. Supporting the use of locally grown food products.
  - c. Fostering the tradition of working landscapes by promoting conservation easements, along with federal and state programs which promote the presentation of open spaces.

### Recommendations for Action

The Mount Holly Planning Commission will consult with landowners applying for subdivision permits.

## TOWN GOVERNMENT, COMMUNITY FACILITIES, SERVICES & RECREATION

### Goals:

To plan for and provide an efficient system of town government, community facilities and services to meet future needs, and to offer diverse recreational opportunities to all residents.

### Municipal Government:

The official business of Mount Holly is conducted at the annual March town meeting. The legislative body conducts most of the business of the town between meetings. Elected or appointed officers with administrative and planning responsibilities include:

**TABLE 2 MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT**

Selectboard	3	Elected
Town Clerk	1	Elected
Town Treasurer	1	Elected
Listers	3	Elected
Planning Commissioners	5	Appointed

Town government budgets have increased because of inflation and because administration has become more complex in recent years due to mandatory requirements imposed by state and federal statutes.

Mount Holly does not provide water or sewer systems.

### Public Buildings and Land:

The town owns the following public properties: town office and garage, the community center, two firehouse locations, and a rescue location, the transfer station, well property, and boat access.

### Emergency Services and Law Enforcement:

Mount Holly has an all-volunteer fire department with a firehouse located on School Street and a substation in Belmont Village. The fire department responds to a variety of calls.

Emergency medical services are provided to Mount Holly residents by the Mount Holly Rescue Squad, located next to the firehouse on School Street.

Mount Holly has an elected constable. The Vermont State Police, based in Rutland, are responsible for handling traffic, criminal matters, and civil issues in Mount Holly.

### Health and Social Services:

Health and social services are largely based in Rutland. These services include Rutland Regional Medical Center, a variety of doctors, Rutland Area Visiting Nurses, and Rutland Mental Health. Services are also available in Ludlow and Springfield.

### Electricity and Telecommunications:

Satisfactory electricity and landline telephone services are available in Mount Holly. Currently, cell service and broadband are available in only some sections of town.

### Cemeteries:

There are ten recorded cemeteries in Mount Holly. There are also many family plots from early times found on private property throughout town.

Town cemeteries: Carlton, Mount Holly, Old Belmont, and Tarbellville

Town Maintained cemeteries: Hortonville, and Green

Organized cemeteries: Mechanicsville and Packer

Private cemeteries: Hortonville, Martin, and one located on Tarbell family property.

### Library:

The Mount Holly Community Library began as a volunteer effort in the early 1900s. The library was originally located in houses. In 1913 the Belmont Improvement Association established a new location for the library in the

lower level of the old Methodist Church/Town Hall. In the late 1960s the library introduced modern methods of library science

Under the sponsorship of the Mount Holly Community Association, the library was moved to the main floor of the former church building. In 2001 the library received grants from the Vermont Library Association to support a paid part-time librarian. The town later voted to continue the annual stipend to support the position and the addition of part time staff. The library houses over 10,000 volumes, in addition to other media formats.

### Solid Waste:

Mount Holly's transfer station is located on Sharon Lane off Gates Road. The town transfer site accepts recycling, electronic devices, food scraps, household garbage, and some construction refuse. Mount Holly is a member of the Rutland County Solid Waste District. The RCSWD provides waste disposal services to the town, in addition to 16 other towns. They also operate the Gleason Road Transfer Station.

### Recreation

A diverse array of recreational activities are available within Mount Holly for both resident and visitor populations. Traditional recreational pursuits within Mount Holly include the following: hunting, fishing, swimming, hiking, snowmobiling, cross country skiing, snowshoeing, mountain biking, and horseback riding. Wildlife habitats, streams, lakes, an unpaved rural road system, and undeveloped land are essential to the quality of life in Mount Holly.

### Town Government, Community Facilities, Services, and Recreation Policies:

1. Require that proposals for development must address the impacts of growth on police, fire, and emergency services, and prohibit new development that exceeds the town's ability to provide community facilities and services. Developments that impact public services should be permitted only if it can be shown that such impacts will not subject taxpayers to any economic hardships.

2. Encourage nonprofit organizations to continue to operate and provide services to the community and to maintain their properties in good condition for continued public use.
3. Ensure that adequate healthcare, police and fire protection, and emergency services remain available to the community, and that the town continues to support these critical service organizations through annual appropriations.
4. Support efforts to upgrade and expand telecommunications systems in the area so that residents can take advantage of the extensive information and services that are available.
5. Continue to support and appropriate funds to defray the costs of operation of Mount Holly Library, Fire Department, Rescue Squad, and Mount Holly Historical Museum.
6. Continue to participate in the regional solid waste program and the regional planning commission.
7. Encourage the preparation of a town capital budget and program indicating future needed and desired capital expenditures to coordinate the financing of major public expenditures. The budget should be prepared according to state guidelines, so that the town would be eligible for state and federal grant monies.
8. Ensure the preservation of the town's outstanding natural environment for outdoor recreation.
9. Encourage that any development of recreational facilities be as informal and economical as possible and not contribute to the deterioration of our natural environment.

#### Recommendations for Action:

1. Ensure that town residents comply with the state's illegal dumping, open burning, and recycling laws.
2. Prepare and implement capital budget program.
3. Encourage broadband internet access and cell phone service for all parts of Mount Holly.
4. Explore opportunities for renewing and encouraging volunteerism and civic commitment to the Mount Holly community.
5. Explore opportunities to enhance Star Lake for recreational use.

## TRANSPORTATION

### ROAD NETWORK

According to 2015 data from Vermont Agency of Transportation, Mount Holly has 73.58 miles of traveled highways, including both state highways and town roads.

**TABLE 3 ROAD TYPES**

Type of Highway	Number of Miles
Class II	10.61
Class III	47.53
Class IV	11.78
State Highway	15.44
Total Highways	73.58

Mount Holly is served by three state highways: VT-103, VT-140, and VT-155. Class II roads within the town include Tarbellville Road, Belmont Road, Hortonville Road, and Healdville Road.

It is noted that a sizable portion of Okemo Mountain Road, accessible only from VT-103 in Ludlow, is in Mount Holly. Citizens have access to the summit of Okemo Mountain via Okemo Mountain Road granted by Act 250 permit number 20351-7A-EB.

### BRIDGES AND CULVERTS

There are sixteen bridges in Mount Holly. Nine of these bridges are on town highways and exceed spans of twenty feet. These nine bridges are surveyed

by the Vermont Agency of Transportation every other year to determine any needed repairs.

There are 269 culverts in the town. Culvert repairs are determined by both the town and Vermont Agency of Transportation.

## TRANSIT NETWORK

Marble Valley Transit District (The Bus) is a regional, non-urban public transportation system that provides service throughout Rutland County.

### GOAL

To provide an efficient, cost effective, multi-modal transportation network that provides for the needs of the community.

### POLICIES

1. Transportation policies will seek to preserve the rural, historic, scenic character of Mount Holly by;
  - a. Retaining existing paved and unpaved roads with no widening or increase in paving unless necessary for public safety;
  - b. Maintaining safe and passable roads throughout the year consistent with the Vermont "Safe Roads at Safe Speeds" policy;
  - c. Requiring that all road maintenance activities focus on safety, efficiency, cost effectiveness, and prevention of deterioration
2. Class 2 & 3 roads shall be maintained, as needed, to promote the efficient movement of traffic within and through town, without undermining historic character or pedestrian safety.
3. The current state standards and regulations shall serve as the town standard for public roads.
4. The selectboard shall accept new roads, only if related to the existing road system, to minimize the impact of new roads on natural resources and areas of historic or scenic significance. The town shall require, to the extent possible, that new roads form an interconnected network of roads, especially in proximity to higher density residential districts, and the town will avoid roads that transect contiguous forest areas.
5. The selectboard shall protect and maintain the historic and scenic features located within the rights-of-way of scenic roads.
6. All road construction, public or private, shall have as insignificant an impact as possible on important natural areas and shall preserve historic and scenic features of the landscape.

7. The town shall retain stone walls along roads as part of the rural, scenic, and historic character of the town.
8. The town shall remove healthy trees from the right-of-way only where necessary for safety, visibility, snow removal, utilities, or drainage.

#### TASKS

1. Regulations and driveway rules, as enacted by the Mount Holly selectboard, will govern access to public roads in accordance with appropriate standards.
2. The Mount Holly Planning Commission should, through the town's subdivision regulations, consider opportunities to connect roads that are part of a proposed development to existing or planned roads.
3. The Mount Holly selectboard, planning commission, and road foreman should facilitate the creation and extension of bicycle and pedestrian trails along Class IV roads where appropriate.
4. The town will implement a multi-year plan to stabilize the town road drainage system, in compliance with Act 64 as required by the state.

#### EDUCATION

On September 19, 1956, the Mount Holly Elementary School began educating 76 students (grades 1-8). Kindergarten was added to the school in 1971, which sent grades 7 & 8 along with the upper classmen, to Black River Union High School in Ludlow.

Mount Holly Elementary can house a population of 140 students. The current school population, including pre-school is 108 students. The town has seen a decline in population as have other towns in Vermont. In 2018 Mount Holly and Ludlow unified to create their own district.

The school offers many amenities for learning and recreation. The nature trail with its outdoor classrooms can be used as a teaching tool. Students can explore, experience, and learn in a natural environment.

Mount Holly Elementary offers an afterschool program to assist working parents with after school childcare. The Mount Holly Afterschool Program is a part of the TRSU After-School Program. The TRSU Afterschool program serves children in grades K-10 at Mount Holly School during the school year and for 9 weeks during the summer. For more information visit: <https://sites.google.com/trsu.org/trsu-asp/home>

The Mount Holly School Parent Teacher Student Association is committed to employing the talent and energy of our community to further cultivate students' and families' experiences at the school. The association is a positive step toward building a sense of community and involvement.

## GOALS

To provide educational facilities and shared services that ensure a comprehensive educational experience for Mount Holly children in a stimulating and supportive environment.

To maintain the Mount Holly Elementary School as a valuable and functional asset in the community at a time of declining enrollment.

## POLICIES

1. Encourage the active participation and input of town residents in the decision-making process.
2. Participate in the Act 250 process to ensure that proposed development considers any increase to the school population.
3. Continue to support the Mount Holly Library as an asset to the continued education of the community.
4. Encourage Mount Holly Elementary School to continue utilizing local cultural, historical, and natural resources as part of their education program.

## ENERGY

Energy is a scarce resource that should be considered in any comprehensive land use planning process. Homes and businesses use a variety of energy sources for heating: fuel oil, propane, wood, wood pellets, solar, hydro, geothermal electricity, and coal. A Vermont heating season is approximately seven months long. It is evident that home and business energy consumption is a significant issue. Substantial economic savings can be realized through energy conservation. In addition, a reduction in energy usage also reduces the production of environmental pollutants.

Energy conservation can be facilitated through effective land use planning, building standards and design, and improved transportation efficiency. As a rural community, development densities in Mount Holly are relatively low. Home occupations also support the objective of energy conservation by

reducing the need for some residents to commute to work. Decisions concerning public capital expenditures on roads and other infrastructure should consider energy conservation.

The siting, design, and construction strongly influence the amount of energy required for heating and cooling, as well as the amount of electricity needed for lighting. Proper building orientation, construction, and landscaping provide opportunities for passive solar space and domestic hot water heating, natural lighting, and photovoltaic electricity production. Additional energy savings can be realized by retrofitting existing buildings with insulation, weather-stripping, energy efficient windows, compact fluorescent lights, and efficient appliances.

**TABLE 4 CURRENT MUNICIPAL RESIDENTIAL HEATING ENERGY USE**

<b>Fuel Source</b>	<b>Municipal Households (ACS 2011-2015)</b>	<b>Municipal % of Households</b>	<b>Municipal Source Footage heated</b>	<b>Municipal BTU (in billions)</b>
PROPANE	75	12.8%	7,394,400,000	7
ELECTRICITY	4	.7%	403,200,000	0
FUEL OIL	262	44.8%	25,767,900,000	26
WOOD	208	35.6%	20,635,200,00	21
OTHER	32	5.5%	2,811,600,000	3

\*This table displays data from the ACS that estimates current municipal residential heating energy use.

Given the rural nature of Mount Holly, most residents travel for employment and commodities. Available public transportation is minimal currently. There are no additional recommendations for reducing energy consumption. In the future there may be changes in economic development that would possibly improve the data in the accompanying tables.

**TABLE 5 CURRENT MUNICIPAL TRANSPORTATION ENERGY USE**

TRANSPORTATION DATA	MUNICIPAL DATA
Total # Vehicles (ACS 2011-2015)	1,177
Average Miles per Vehicle (VTrans)	12,000
Total Miles Traveled	14,124,000
Realized MPG (2013-VTrans 2015 energy profile)	18.6
Total Gallons Use per Year	759,355
Transportation BTUs (billion)	91
Average Cost per Gallon of Gasoline (RPC)	2.30
Gasoline Cost per Year	\$1,746,516

\*This table uses data from the American Community Survey (ACS) & VT Agency of Transportation to calculate current transportation energy use and energy costs.

**GOAL**

To encourage the efficient use of energy in Mount Holly

The Mount Holly Planning Commission established a moratorium on all solar, wind, and hydro-electric projects that are not residential (15kw or less). This policy will remain in effect moving forward, as approved by the Selectboard. All alternative power produced by residential projects must be owned and operated by Mount Holly property owners.

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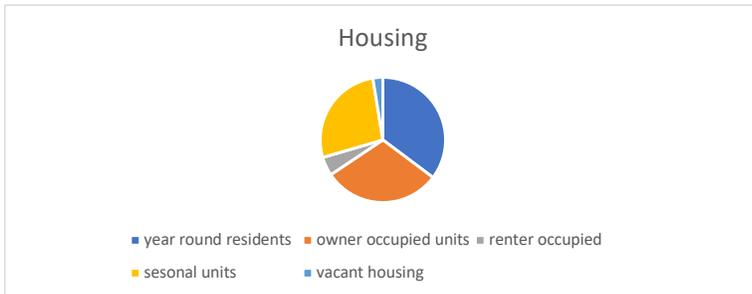
## POLICIES

1. Encourage all new development to follow the energy conservation guidelines developed by the Public Service Department for Act 250 permits.
2. Encourage the layout of streets, lots and buildings to be oriented to the south where feasible to take advantage of natural light and heat. New and rehabilitated buildings should be designed to maximize solar gain.
3. Encourage that new construction take into consideration shelter from winter winds and the use of trees for summer shade.
4. Encourage the use of clean and renewable energy sources for heating and support programs that are designed to increase public awareness.
5. Encourage town residents to use state and local weatherization and energy efficiency programs that identify areas of heat loss in buildings and provide solutions.
6. Suggest that the full cost of energy be considered in any new construction or rehabilitation.
7. Protect all renewable energy resources.

## TASKS

1. Explore options for an electric car charging station.
2. Continue to distribute the Vermont Residential Building Code Energy Code Handbook.

## HOUSING



Mount Holly's housing consists of two primary categories, year-round and seasonal. Mount Holly's rural character and its proximity to major commercial district, have established the town character as a commuter's suburb, in which most residents travel to other locations for work.

Because of Mount Holly's proximity to Okemo Mountain Resort, over 50% of the housing is seasonal home stock. Of those living in town year-round, 90% own the home they occupy. The town acknowledges the need to seek out opportunities to grow the school community, local employment, and opportunities for first time homebuyers.

The town faces several obstacles in providing affordable housing. These constraints include the unfeasibility of public sewer and water systems because of the cost, geography, and soil. Lack of available land in the village center poses an obstacle to future expansion of the village.

### GOAL

To assist and facilitate with the permitting and subdivision processes.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### GOAL

To support well-planned and orderly development of Mount Holly's economy in a manner which is compatible with the town's identity as a traditional New England rural town, a residential town for families and second homeowners, and a town with a vision for economic development that does not change the character of the town. The Belmont village center encompasses the library, museum, general

store with apartments above, post office, fire station, Star Lake and beach, the Odd Fellows Hall, the Mount Holly Community Center and the church. At this current time there is no space to expand the current village center; however, there is opportunity to create a better maintained lake for recreational uses.

## POLICIES

1. Economic development will be compatible with the town's vision of rural development, home business, expansion of existing business. Small scale commercial and industrial activity will be encouraged.
2. Mount Holly's continued development as a residential and second home community will be actively supported by the town to the extent that such residential development enhances Mount Holly's economy, tax base, and the quality of life for all town residents, and does not adversely impact facilities and services, community character, or the local government.
3. Mount Holly's existing economic base should be strengthened and diversified through:
  - a. The enhancement of telecommunications infrastructure to encourage the creation and relocation of businesses and professionals engaged in information dependent technologies;
  - b. Ensuring the continued viability of existing manufacturing and technology enterprises;
  - c. Support for home occupations and compatible home-based businesses (cottage industries);
  - d. Strengthening resource-based enterprises (farming and forestry) through the protection of resource-based manufacturing and marketing of value added products, and the use of locally grown and manufactured goods.
4. Private initiatives to expand cultural events will be supported.
5. The town will continue to make public facilities available for performance and exhibit space and dedicated events which benefit the community.
6. Economic development initiatives will be coordinated where appropriate with the efforts of Rutland Economic Development Corporation and the Vermont Department of Economic Development.

## FLOOD RESILIENCE PLAN

Flooding is one of Vermont's most frequent and costly types of disaster. Inundation is the rising of water levels onto low lying lands. Flash flooding is a sudden, violent flood which often entails erosion. According to the Vermont

Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security, the state incurred costs of more than \$850 million from Tropical Storm Irene.

Vermont, in an effort to reduce erosion and improve water quality in surface waters because of erosion has passed statutes requiring towns to address road erosion conditions. It is the hope that creating road drainage systems will reduce aquatic organisms from traveling to bodies of water like Lake Champlain and aid in the prevention of road erosion.

Mount Holly will continue to work with the Regional Transportation Council to meet state standards, update road systems and reduce flood risks. This process looks at the hydrologically connected roads, plans for their updates and then initiates a process to complete these plans. This method is part of the Vermont Clean Water Act and is fulfilled through the highway general permit guidelines.

Mount Holly annually updates the LEOP (Local Emergency Operations Plan). This plan establishes lines of responsibility during a disaster and identifies elevated risk populations, hazard sites, procedures and resources.

#### Goals

1. Avoid new development in flood hazard, fluvial erosion and river protection areas. Any new development in such areas, should not exacerbate flooding and fluvial erosion.
2. Encourage the protection and restoration of flood plains and upland forested areas that constrict and reduce flooding and fluvial erosion.

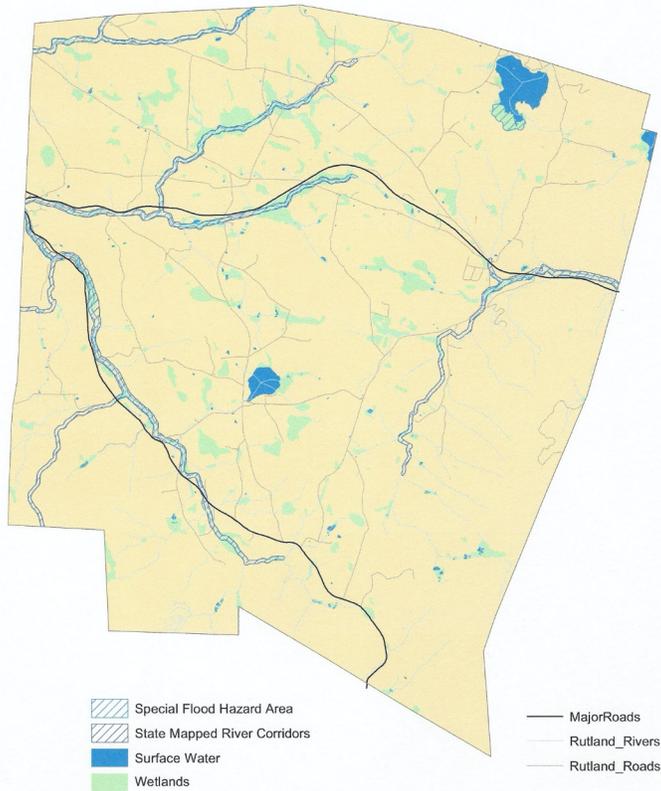
#### Policies

1. In accordance with VSA §4302(14), Mount Holly discourages new development in flood hazard areas and river corridors.
2. Structural deficiencies in transportation infrastructure should be addressed as soon as possible.
3. Encourage on-going emergency preparedness and response planning.

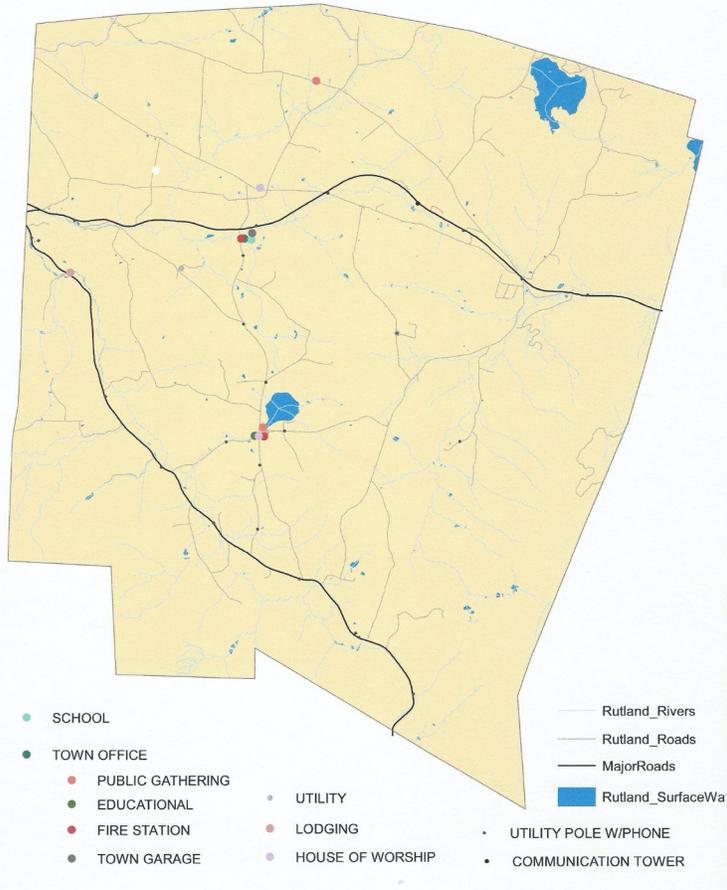
## CONCLUSION

This revised town plan gives a sense of the history of Mount Holly and indicates where we are today. Information has been gathered from many sources including 2010 U.S. Census, various agencies of the State of Vermont, the Rutland Regional Planning Commission, Carroll Tarbell's *History of Mount Holly, Vermont* community surveys, and past town plans.

# Mt Holly Water Ways and Flood Areas

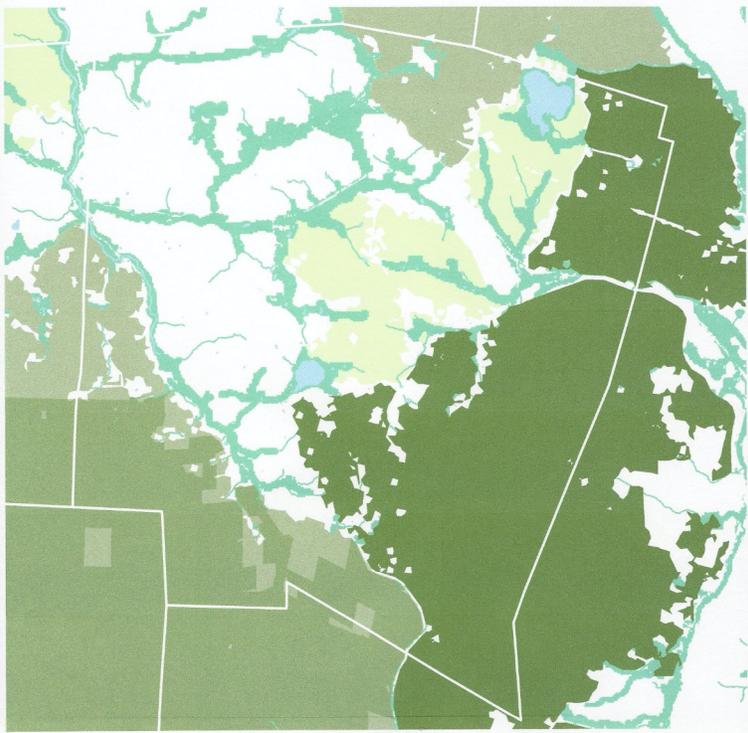


## Mt Holly Town Facilities



## Mt Holly Forests and Habitat Connectivity

- VT\_Green\_Mountain\_National\_Forest\_Mc
- Highest Priority Interior Forest Blocks
- Highest Priority Connectivity Blocks
- Rutland\_SurfaceWater
- HighestPrioritySurfaceWaterandRiparian
- Priority Interior Forest Blocks



### Mt Holly Future Land Use

