

## Vision Statement

*Hinesburg will plan its growth and manage its resources so that our town continues to be a desirable place to live and work. It will:*

- *Enhance the village area.*
- *Maintain its rural character.*
- *Provide for environmental sustainability.*
- *Strive to offer the highest quality social, educational, recreational and economic opportunities, and a variety of housing options.*

*These efforts will be guided by community input.*





## Introduction

Hinesburg is located in Chittenden County in northwestern Vermont. It is a rural community of just under 4,500 people located south of the Burlington metro area on the border of Addison County. Hinesburg is defined by the people that live, work, and own property here. It is characterized by a vibrant village center surrounded by a working landscape of agricultural and forest lands with interspersed low density residential development. In addition to a lively mix of industry, commerce, housing, civic & community buildings, and greenspace, the village area hosts a pre-K through 8th grade school and one of the largest union high schools in the state. It is located at the foothills of the Green Mountains with forested hills on the east side of town and a preponderance of farm land on the west side. Hinesburg's history is tied to its waterways (particularly Lake Iroquois, Sunset Lake, Patrick Brook, LaPlatte River, Lewis Creek), which remain important recreational and ecological resources today.

## Purpose of the Plan

The Hinesburg Town Plan serves as the framework for planning the future of the Town throughout the next 5-10 year planning period, especially with regard to the decisions that will guide the Town's growth. It also seeks to achieve a longer-range planning horizon by looking into the future for twenty years or more. It describes the Town's history, the existing physical, social, and economic conditions of the Town, and establishes a vision for the Town's future. This vision is supported by a series of goals and action items that are recommended in each section of this plan.

## Use of the Plan

The Plan is for the use of the Hinesburg Planning Commission, Selectboard, Development Review Board, Conservation Commission, other Town

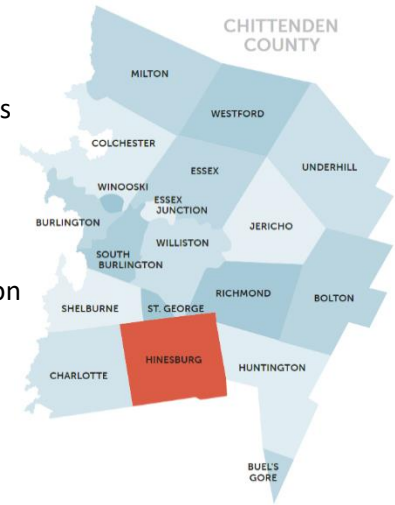
committees/boards, and regional and state agencies. It is also meant as a guide to individuals and other organizations for decisions affecting the Town. This plan is to be used as:

- a plan for the future growth and development of the town;
- the basis for revisions to the zoning and subdivision regulations;
- the basis for planning and adopting a capital budget and plan;
- a source of recommendations for studies or programs to address specific community issues;
- a standard for review under local, regional and state regulatory proceedings (including Act 250 and Section 248 reviews); and
- a source of information about the Town.

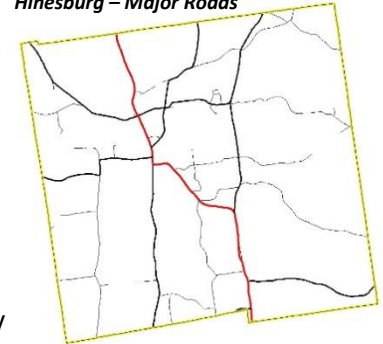
## Recent Town Plans and Adoption Process

While the Selectboard reviews and adopts the Town Plan, the Planning Commission is responsible for its preparation, as outlined in the Vermont Municipal and Regional Planning and Development Act. Hinesburg's first Town Plan was adopted in 1971. Since that time, the plan has been re-adopted and amended as needed or as required by state statute.

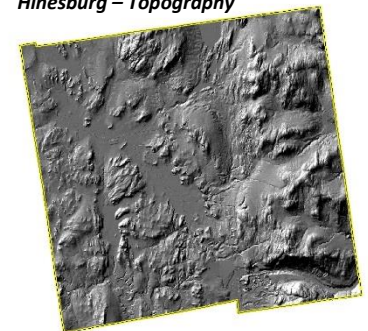
In 1989, in response to a very rapid growth rate in the 1980's, the Planning Commission initiated a State-funded citizen participation project to gain public input on planning issues facing the town. The project had three components: 1) a survey on planning issues; 2) a series of four community forums ("Mud Season Forums") on a wider range of issues; 3) the formation of nine committees to investigate specific issue areas (e.g., village, natural resources, housing, etc.). The culmination of this process was a completely rewritten Town Plan, adopted in 1992.



Hinesburg – Major Roads



Hinesburg – Topography



The Town Plan was updated in 1997. Many of the improvements and services anticipated in the 1992 Town Plan had been implemented or were near completion. They included:

- Renovated Town Hall and municipal offices.
- Establishment of a Town Police department.
- Establishment of a Recreation department.
- Sidewalk extension to the post office.
- Water system upgrade.
- New library.

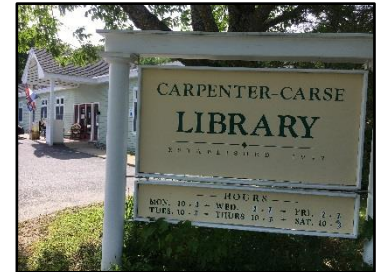
After a five-year period of moderate growth, a purely statistical update to the Town Plan was completed in 2002. Significant activities between 1997 and 2002 included:

- Creation of a new Industrial zoning district on the north side of the village (I-5 district).
- Construction of a new and enlarged post office.
- Increase in size of the fire station.
- Purchase of property adjoining the fire station for use by the police department.
- Purchase of the Masonic Building for use by Hinesburg's Cooperative Nursery School.
- Zoning update to encourage home-based businesses while protecting adjoining properties from adverse impacts.
- Implementation of a plan for Gegrags Park.
- Involvement in multi-town projects on identification and protection of wildlife habitat, wetlands and other natural resources.
- Establishment of a Development Review Board.

Shortly after adoption of the 2002 Town Plan, the Planning Commission began a significant public input process. This included a community-wide survey and four public forums

in 2003. The result was the adoption of a significantly rewritten and reorganized Town Plan in 2005. This plan prioritized revisions to Hinesburg's land use regulations – to better plan for both the village growth area and the most rural areas of town. In 2011, the Town Plan was updated with minor revisions to some sections and more substantive changes to other sections (e.g., village land use and energy sections) to account for progress made since 2005. Significant activities during the 2002-2011 time period included:

- Approvals for and/or construction of substantial development in the village area, including approximately 134 new dwelling units.
- Creation of Village Steering Committee, Affordable Housing Committee, Trails Committee.
- Multiple Zoning & Subdivision Regulation Revisions, including very comprehensive Village Growth Area regulations and Hinesburg's first Official Map showing locations of future community facilities and infrastructure.
- Major upgrade of the Town wastewater treatment facility (no new capacity added).
- Two new traffic lights with improved pedestrian crossings along Route 116 (at Charlotte Road and Commerce Street) and a major redesign of the Route 116, Silver Street intersection.
- New sidewalk along portions of Route 116 in the village area.
- Closure of the Saputo cheese factory in October 2008. Interim zoning adopted and Saputo Redevelopment Steering Committee formed. Final zoning revisions adopted by the Selectboard in 2011.
- Creation of the new 300+ acre LaPlatte Headwaters Town Forest on Gilman Road as part of a larger



project that conserved approximately 600 acres of the former Bissonette farm.

- Initial drafting of a Town Greenspace (i.e., Open Space) plan by the Conservation Commission.
- Major zoning revision to rewrite flood hazard regulations, including the adoption of fluvial erosion hazard zone areas/protections and updated FEMA maps.

The 2013 Town Plan revision included only minor changes to clarify what constitutes significant wildlife habitat, including the addition of a new map to show wildlife habitat blocks, core wildlife habitat, and wildlife corridors/linkages. Significant activities during the 2011-2015 time period included:

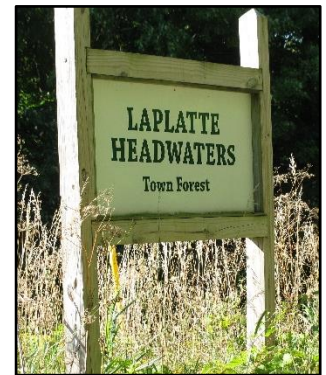
- Successful redevelopment of the Cheese Plant property to regain tax base, jobs, and connection to the agricultural economy with four new businesses, including a new restaurant.
- Launch of new commuter bus service in partnership with Chittenden & Addison County public transit providers.
- Village area stormwater assessment project followed by construction of a large rain garden at the top of Silver Street to treat a runoff hotspot.
- Completion of two large sidewalk projects: 1) 1.3 miles (7,000 feet) connecting the Post Office, CVU, and Library along Mechanicsville Rd, CVU Rd, and Ballards Corner Rd; 2) 1,000 feet along the west side of Route 116 from Charlotte Road to the Hinesburg Community School.
- Rural area zoning and subdivision regulation revisions to establish new development densities for rural subdivisions while expanding allowed uses to bolster retaining a working landscape with a

reasonable amount of rural residential development.

- Planning, permitting, and construction of a new Town Police Station.
- Acquisition (via landowner gift), planning, and permitting of new recreation fields. Fundraising for construction ongoing.
- New and more rigorous stormwater and erosion control regulations for new development.
- Received and began development review process for four village growth area projects that propose approximately 413 new dwelling units and 241,000 square feet of new commercial/industrial building space.

The 2017 Town Plan was a complete update. All sections were reviewed with most Town committees contributing revisions and/or feedback. Substantial community outreach was done. In addition to regular meetings and required hearings, other outreach included two community surveys, tabling and conversation at community events, and several topic-specific public forums that included presentations and discussion with knowledgeable speakers. The 2017 Town Plan included some significant changes in the community's vision for the future.

- Village Growth & Design – address phasing based on infrastructure limits, ensure measured growth over time, better regulations/review to ensure good design.
- Rural Residential 1 & Shoreline Areas – need to overhaul allowed development densities and uses.
- Stormwater – greater emphasis on this issue and the Town's responsibility for solutions (e.g., Town roads).
- Economic Development – be proactive to encourage job creation, new and expanded business, etc.



The 2021 update was a complete re-write of chapter eight of the Town Plan thanks to collaborative work by the Hinesburg Energy Committee and staff from the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission. In addition to new text, tables, and figures, this plan update also includes nine new maps depicting renewable energy opportunities and constraint areas. Goals of this update included:

- To better understand energy usage in Hinesburg. To set clear goals for decreasing energy usage, increasing energy efficiency, and increasing renewable energy generation.
- To recognize and help implement the State’s Comprehensive Energy Plan goals.
- To meet recommended standards for municipal energy plans set forth in Act 174 (passed in 2016), so that the recommendations in our Town Plan are given “substantial deference” when new energy facilities are reviewed by the State Public Utility Commission.