



State Designation Programs

Downtowns, Villages, New Town Centers, Neighborhood Development Areas and Growth Centers

Community Planning + Revitalization

VT Department of Housing and Community Development

March 1, 2023

Community Planning + Revitalization

Providing tools, training, grants, and incentives for local leaders to plan and implement projects that support thriving, walkable communities.



Place-based Economic Development

photo credit: NPS National Register of Historic Places Nomination



Bristol, VT



Coordinating Complex Systems

- People
- Planning
- Regulation
- Funding
- Design



Bylaw Modernization

- [Model language](#) to support program access
- State, regional, and local zoning analysis
- Rooted in VT-place types
- Identifies key topics of reform important to Vermont



State Designations = 274

Core Designations:



Village Centers: 229



Downtowns: 24



New Town Centers: 3

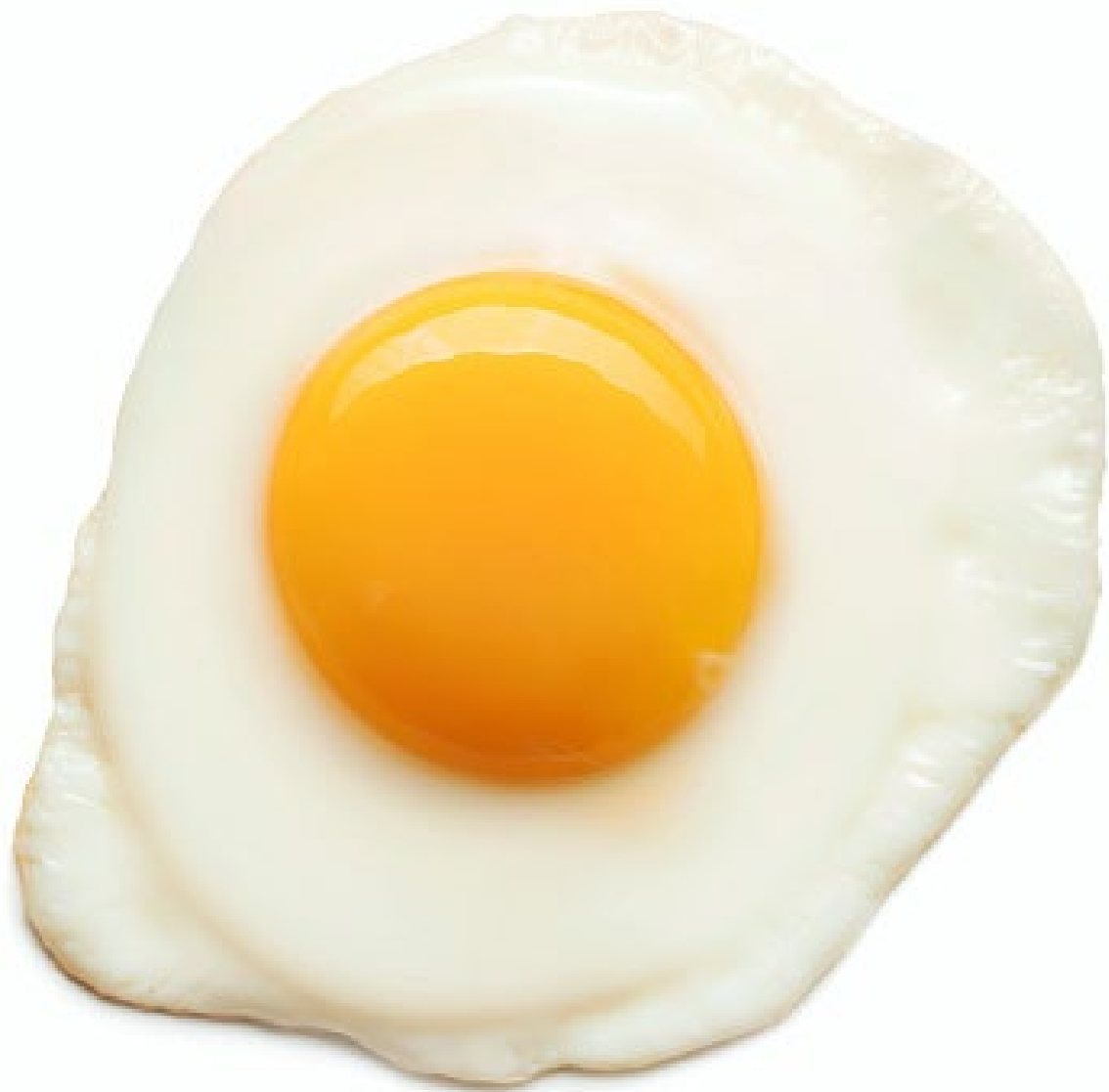
Add-On Designations (must have a core designation to qualify):



Neighborhood Development Areas: 12



Growth Centers: 6



Vermont Planning Atlas

PLANNING ATLAS

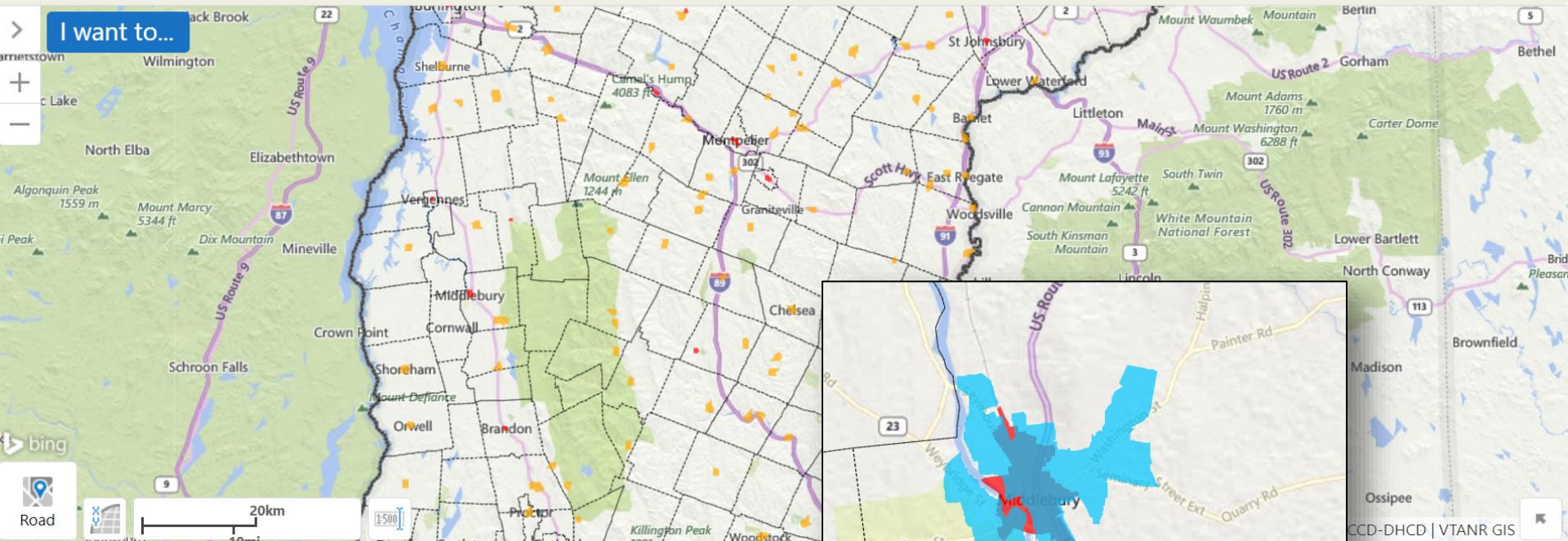
Department of Housing and Community Development



Theme Tools Measure Draw Links

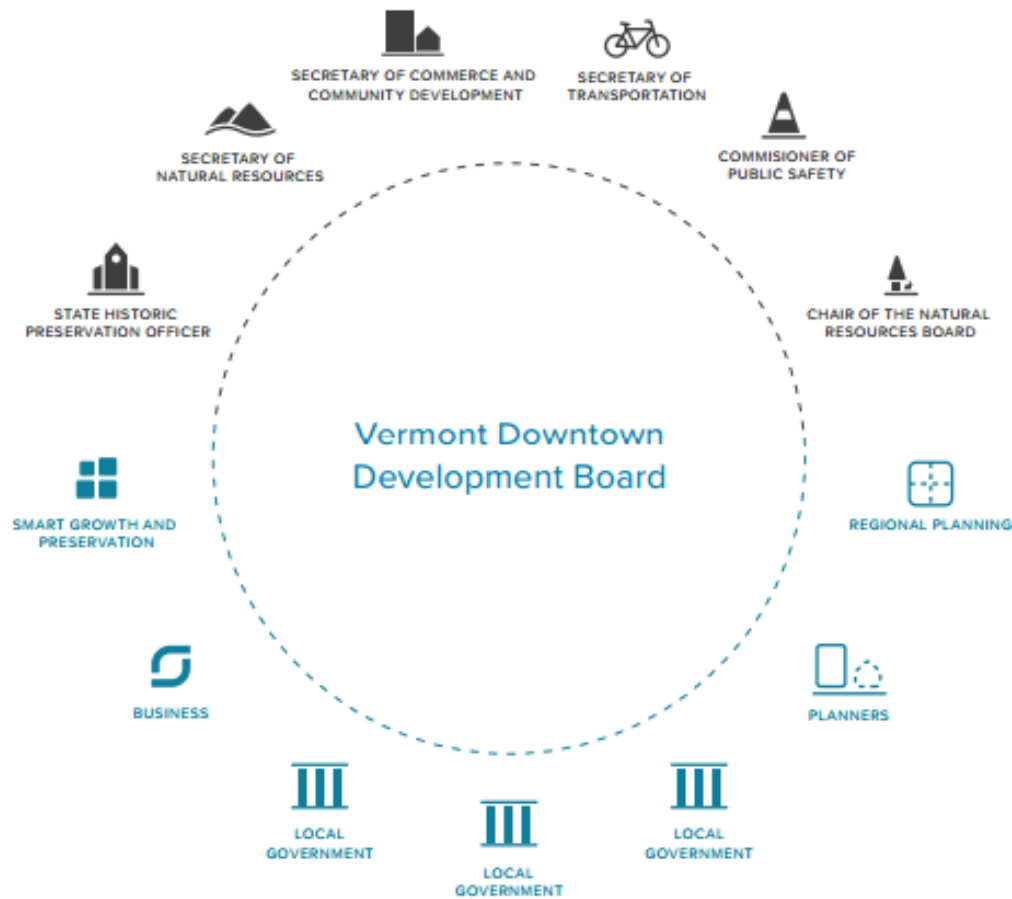
Planning Atlas Act174 - Planning Resources

Search...




<https://maps.vermont.gov/ACCD/Html5Viewer/index.html?viewer=PlanningAtlas>

Vermont Downtown Development Board

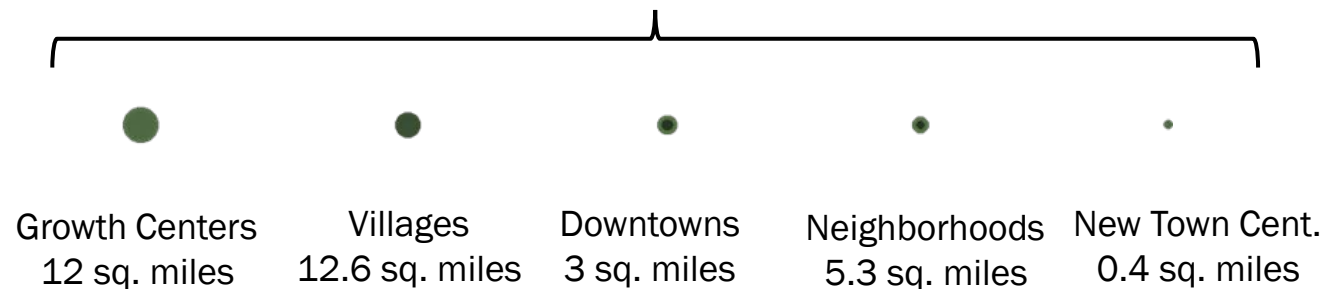


Relative Size of Land Areas

Area of Designated Centers
is 1/350 total area of Vermont



Vermont
9623 sq. miles



Designation Benefits

- Downtown and Village Center Tax Credits
- Downtown Transportation Fund
- State Grant Priority
- Sales Tax Reallocation
- Reduction of Fees
- Exemption of Land Gains Tax
- Act 250 Exemptions for Priority Housing Projects



Designated Centers & Act 250

Act 250 Benefits

- Exemption for 'Priority Housing Projects' (DC, NTC, GC & NDA)
- Presumption of Compliance of Compliance for Criterion 9L (ALL)
- Agricultural Soil Mitigation Fee Reduction (DC, NTC, GC & NDA)
- 50% Fee Reduction (NDA)

Priority Housing Projects

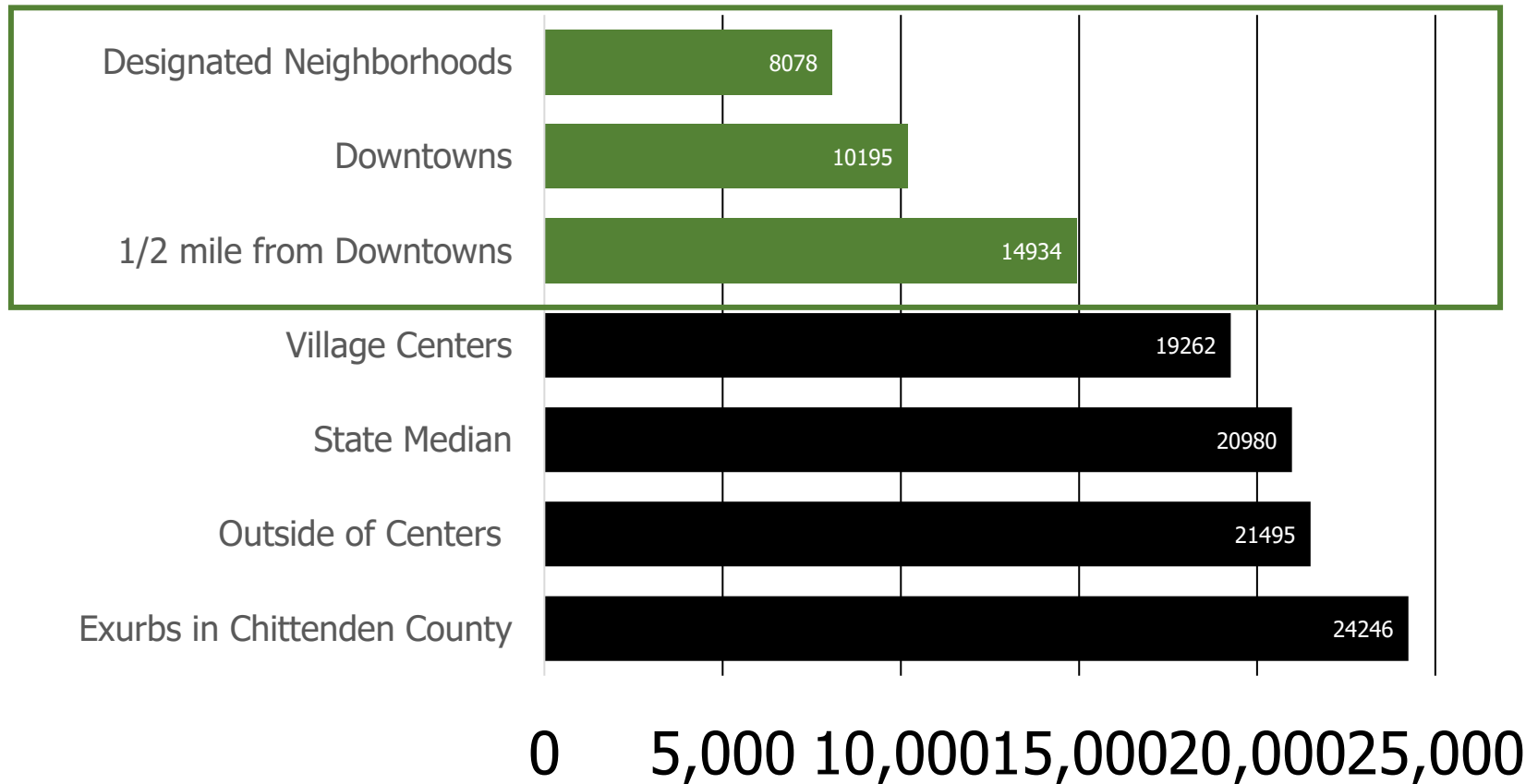
- Exemption to Act 250 created in 2013
- Mixed-income housing projects
- For rent or owner-occupancy
- At least 20% affordable
- May be mixed-use (40% residential)
- Eligibility limited to projects with less than
 - 75 dwellings in towns with <10k pop.
 - 50 dwellings in towns with <6,000 pop.

IMPACT | 2017-2022

- Approximately 2,700 dwelling units exempted as priority housing projects
- Approximately 3,000 dwelling units jurisdictional to Act 250 (Natural Resources Board)



Median Household Annual Vehicle Miles Traveled by Area





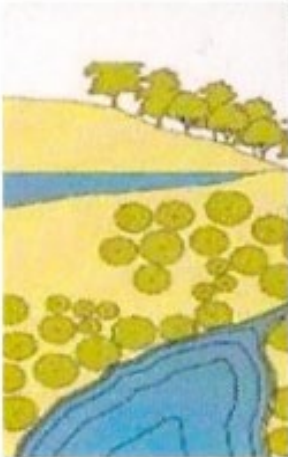
91% of Vermonters would walk to work, school, shopping or other activities if they were close enough...

Designation Program Review and Assessment

Rural

TRANSECT

Urban



Natural Place:
Wilderness, natural landscape, woodland, forest, lakes and vacation spots



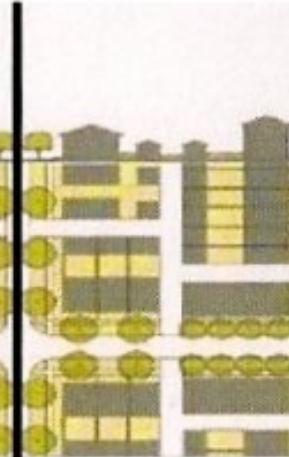
Rural Place:
Agricultural, wetland, woodland, farmers market and cabin spots, golf courses



Suburban Place:
Single family homes, landscaped lawns, parks, families, neighborhoods



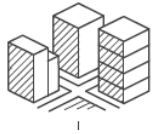
Traditional Neighborhood Place:
Mixed housing, neighborhoods, and scattered commercial, locally run shops



Downtown Place:
Mixed-housing/lofts and commercial shops and offices shops, galleries and local restaurants



Supplemental Slides

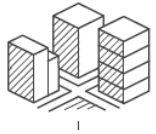


Downtown Designation

24 designated downtowns

This community revitalization program is designed to preserve the character and enhance the future of medium to large sized historic centers by incentivizing public and private investments, improving quality of life and encouraging economic development. Municipalities that receive designation collaborate with local non-profit downtown organizations supporting efforts through funding, staff, partnerships and volunteers.





Downtown Designation



Burlington



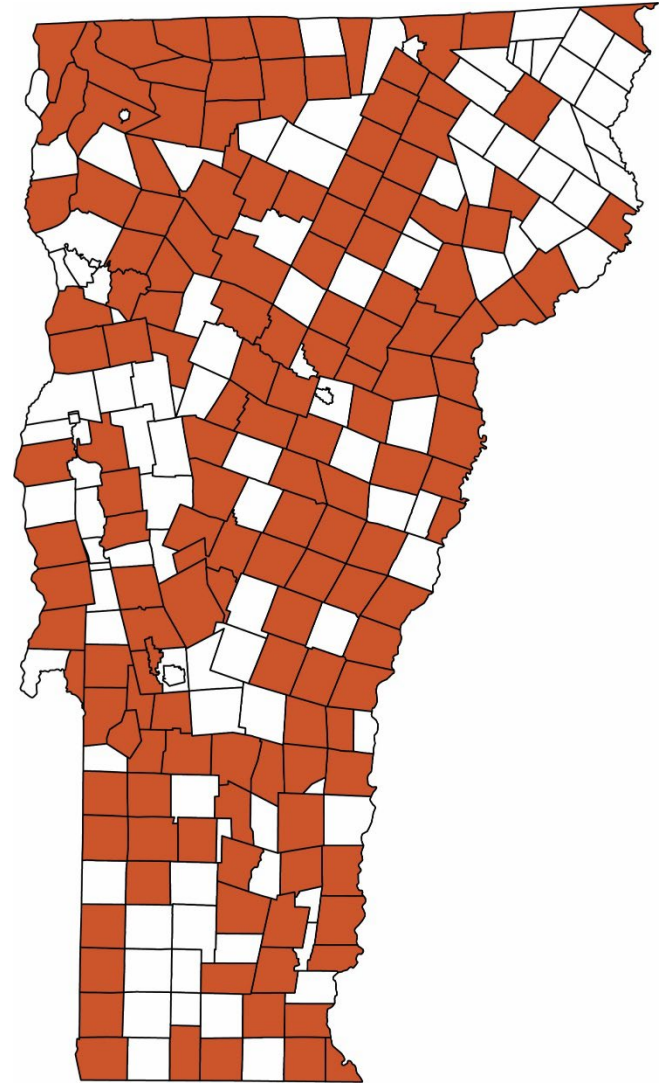
Bristol



Village Center Designation

229 designated village centers

This community revitalization program is aimed at small to medium-sized historic centers with existing civic and commercial buildings. The designation supports the historic center and targets training and financial incentives to bring additional public and private investment to spark village revitalization.





Village Center Designation



Richmond



Maple Corner



New Town Center Designation

3 designated new town centers

The New Town Center program provides a framework for creating compact, walkable, mixed-use centers for municipalities that have no designated Downtown or Village Center. Public buildings serve to anchor Town Centers with town halls, schools or libraries, attracting people and stimulating the kind of activity and mixed-use development that bring character and vitality to a community. By creating a compact, walkable civic and commercial core area, New Town Centers provide a nucleus for future smart growth.



South Burlington



Growth Center Designation

6 designated growth centers

Designated Growth Centers encompass areas beyond the commercial center to shape the way a community develops over time. Once designated, infrastructure and building investments, both public and private, combined with a local framework of policies and regulations, ensure that 20 years of future development will enhance the vitality of the designated commercial center, while protecting farm and forest land outside the Growth Center.



- **Designated Growth Centers**
6 designated growth centers:
Bennington, Colchester, Hartford,
Montpelier, St. Albans, and Williston



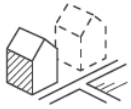
Growth Center Designation



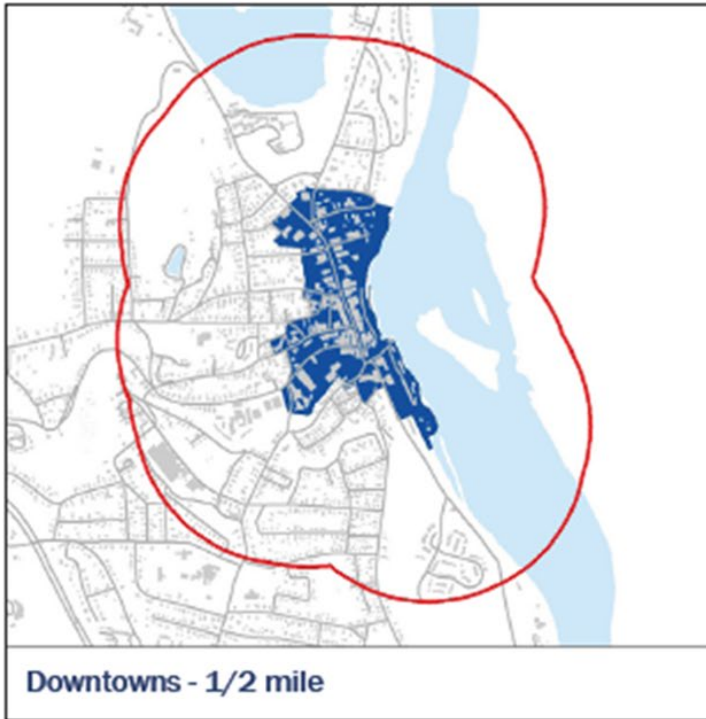
St. Albans



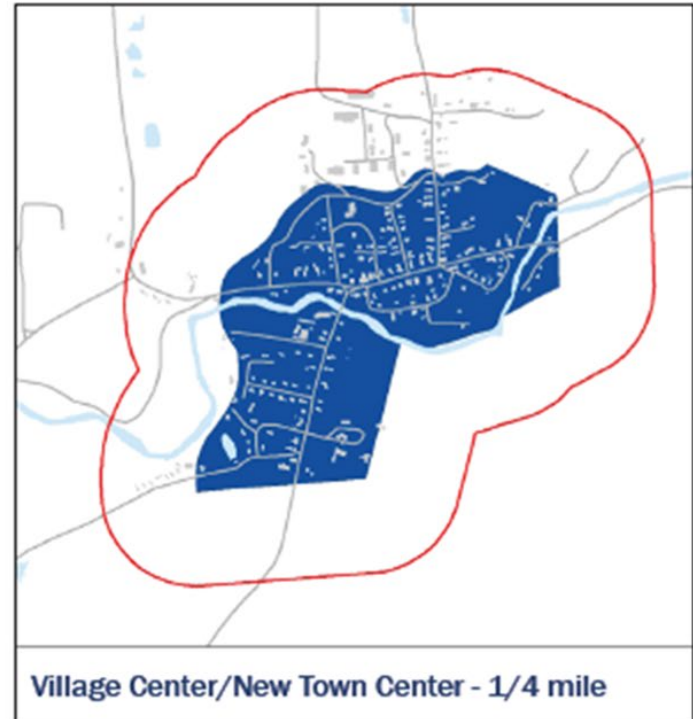
Bennington



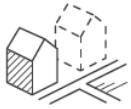
Neighborhood Development Areas



15 min walk



5-10 min walk



Neighborhood Development Areas

1

Density

Minimum 4 DU/Acre

2

Building Design

Pedestrian Oriented

3

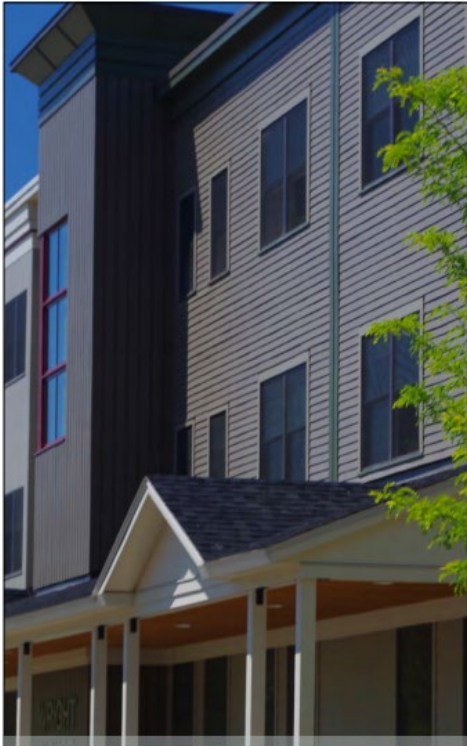
Transportation Network

Complete Streets

4


Natural Resources

No floodplains, avoid others




**Neighborhood
Development Area
Designation
Program**

**Application
Guidelines**



State Designation Programs
Community Planning + Revitalization
October 2021



VERMONT
AGENCY OF COMMERCE & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT